A STUDY ON IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKING SITES ON ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOUR IN SRIKAKULAM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The rapid proliferation of social media networking sites (SMNS) has significantly influenced adolescent behaviour, shaping their social interactions, emotional well-being, and identity formation. This study explores the multifaceted impact of SMNS on adolescents, focusing on behavioural patterns, emotional responses, and psychosocial development. Through a review of recent literature and analysis of primary data collected from adolescents aged 13–19, the research identifies both positive and negative outcomes associated with social media use. While SMNS offer opportunities for social connectivity, self-expression, and learning, excessive or unregulated use is linked to issues such as reduced attention span, cyberbullying, social comparison, anxiety, and behavioural changes including aggression or withdrawal. The study also highlights gender differences, peer influence, and the role of parental monitoring in moderating these effects. Findings suggest the need for awareness programs, digital literacy education, and the development of healthy usage patterns to mitigate risks and enhance the benefits of social media in adolescent life.

Keywords

Social Media, Adolescents, Behaviour, Mental Health, Cyberpsychology, Social Networking, Emotional Impact, Youth, Online Behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok, which provide unprecedented opportunities for communication, self-expression, and social interaction, have become an integral part of daily life, particularly among adolescents. However, the growing use of social media among young people has raised concerns about its impact on their behaviour, mental health, academic performance, and social relationships.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), adolescents are those who are between the ages of 10 and 19. This developmental stage is distinguished by fast physical growth, hormonal changes, and considerable psychological and emotional maturation. Adolescence is a vital time for developing a personal identity, establishing social ties, and attaining independence. The actions, attitudes, and habits developed during this period can have long-term consequences for an individual's general well-being and future life.

Adolescents peer connection and social approval are critical throughout this time for forming identity and conduct. Social networking platforms have changed the way teenagers interact

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with one another, obtain information, and see themselves and others. While these platforms can promote creativity, learning, and social support, excessive or improper usage can result in negative consequences such as addiction, cyberbullying, anxiety, despair, and deteriorated social skills.

The Srikakulam district, like many other areas in India, is experiencing a tremendous increase in internet access and smartphone usage among young people. Understanding how social media affects teenage behaviour in this socio-cultural environment is critical for educators, parents, policymakers, and mental health professionals developing effective measures for encouraging healthy social media usage.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the patterns of social media use among teenagers in the Srikakulam area, as well as the consequences on their behavioural patterns, emotional well-being, academic engagement, and social relationships. By obtaining insights into these effects, the project hopes to add to the expanding body of research on the function of digital media in adolescent development and make suggestions to promote beneficial behavioural outcomes.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The impact of social media networking sites (SMNS) on teenage behaviour has become a major worry for researchers, educators, and mental health practitioners. Several research have looked at how social media use impacts the psychological, emotional, and social aspects of teenage development.

Boyd (2014), investigated how teenagers use social media to explore their identities and communicate with their peers. Her findings reveal that, while social media allows for social interaction and self-expression, it also facilitates cyberbullying, privacy problems, and peer pressure.

Twenge et al. (2018), found a substantial link between increasing screen usage and greater rates of sadness, anxiety, and sleep disruptions among teens. They claim that excessive usage of platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat, which prioritise attractiveness and fame, contributes to negative self-perception and mental suffering.

Keles, McCrae, and Grealish (2020), conducted a comprehensive analysis of research and discovered consistent evidence associating excessive social media usage to poor mental health outcomes in teenagers, including elevated levels of depression, anxiety, and psychological distress.

Vannucci, Flannery, and Ohannessian (2017), found that regular SMNS use is connected with higher social comparison, particularly among teenage girls. This behaviour frequently results in low self-esteem and body image concerns.

Nesi and Prinstein (2015), established the notion of "social media-induced peer influence," claiming that teenagers are more likely to participate in dangerous behaviours such as substance use or improper material sharing when peers normalise or glorify them on social media.

Uhls et al. (2014), investigated the effect of social media on face-to-face communication abilities, discovering that teenagers who spent more time away from screens had greater nonverbal emotional awareness and empathy.

O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011), of the American Academy of Paediatrics emphasised the need of parents monitoring and supervising their children's social media use. They also emphasised the significance of digital literacy instruction in assisting teenagers to securely navigate the online environment.

A review of the current evidence shows that social media networking sites have a deep and complex influence on teenage behaviour. While these platforms provide several benefits, including increased social connectedness, possibilities for self-expression, and access to knowledge, they also represent major threats to mental health, emotional stability, and behavioural development. Increased sensitivity to depression, anxiety, cyberbullying, and social comparison are common themes throughout the research evaluated, especially with excessive or uncontrolled usage. However, the literature emphasises the importance of protective variables like as parental supervision, digital education, and the promotion of healthy media habits.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a quantitative descriptive study based on a survey method. A self-administered questionnaire comprising structured questions was developed and validated to collect data on the emotional, behavioural, and social impacts of social media on adolescents.

- Population: Adolescents aged 13–19 years as a study sample

- Sample Size: 50 respondents

- Sampling Technique: Stratified random sampling

- Tool of Data Collection: Structured questionnaire (closed-ended questions)

- Method of Analysis: Percentage analysis and interpretation based on response frequencies

The study ensured anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents and adhered to ethical research standards.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the patterns of social media use among adolescents?

2. How does social media affect the emotional and psychological well-being of adolescents

FINDINGS

1. The study primarily investigated the behavioural impact of social media networking sites (SMNS) on adolescents aged 13 to 19. The age-wise distribution of the respondents indicates that 74.3% of the participants fall within the age group of 13–16 years, and 25.7% are between 17–19 years. This highlights that early to mid-adolescents (13–16 years) are more actively engaged with social media, or are more accessible for studies of this nature.
2. The study primarily investigated the behavioural impact of social media networking sites (SMNS) on adolescents based on their Gender. The gender-wise distribution of the respondents indicates that 74.3% of the participants fall within the gender of

Female, and 25.7% are male. This stated that female is more actively engaged with social media.

3. According to the Study, majority of the adolescents are belonged to rural area(54.2%) followed by the Urban area(45.8%). This shows that majority of the adolescents from urban area are utilising the social networking sites.

4. According to the study, majority of the adolescents (97%) are utilising social networking apps and only 3% are not utilising the social media apps.

5. The data reveals that a majority of respondents (51.4%) began using social media between the ages of 17 and 19, indicating that late adolescence is the most common entry point for social media engagement. A significant portion, 31.4%, started using social media at an earlier stage, between the ages of 14 and 16, reflecting increasing accessibility and interest during mid-adolescence. A small minority, 3%, reported starting as early as 11 to 13 years, suggesting early exposure to digital platforms despite age restrictions on many social media sites. The high percentage of users beginning in the 17–19 age group suggests that social media use intensifies as youth gain more independence, access to smartphones, and peer-driven communication needs.

6. The data shows that WhatsApp is the most commonly used social media platform among respondents, with 85.7% indicating it as their primary choice. This suggests that WhatsApp plays a central role in communication and social interaction, likely due to its ease of use, group chat features, and widespread adoption. YouTube follows with 57.1% usage, indicating its strong appeal for entertainment, information, and educational content. Instagram is also notably popular, used mostly by 37.1% of respondents, reflecting its visual and trend-driven nature which resonates well with younger audiences. Other platforms like Snapchat (22.9%) and Facebook (8.6%) have lower levels of usage, suggesting they are either niche or declining in popularity among this group. Telegram, with only 2.9% of users, appears to be the least preferred, possibly due to lower visibility or overlapping functionality with more popular apps. Overall, the data indicates a clear preference for instant messaging and video-based content platforms, with WhatsApp and YouTube leading in usage.

7. The majority of respondents, 45.7%, reported using social media daily (once or twice a day), indicating a consistent but moderate engagement with social platforms. A notable portion, 14.3%, use social media frequently (3–5 times a day), while 8.6% use it constantly (almost all day), showing that a smaller group are heavy users who spend a large part of their day online. On the other hand, 17.1% of respondents use social media occasionally (1–3 times per week), and 14.3% use it rarely (less than once a week), reflecting a segment of users with minimal or infrequent engagement. Overall, these results suggest that while most respondents are active social media users with daily habits, only a minority are heavily dependent on social media throughout the day.

8. The data indicates that most respondents spend a moderate amount of time on social media daily. The largest group, 42.9%, spend between 1 to 2 hours per day on social media, reflecting a balanced usage pattern. A significant portion, 28.6%, use social media for less than 1 hour daily, suggesting limited engagement. Meanwhile, 25.7% of respondents spend 3 to 4 hours per day on social media, representing a substantial time investment by a quarter of the users. Only a small minority, 2.9%, spend more than 6 hours on social media daily, indicating heavy use among very few participants. The category of 5–6 hours was not reported, which may imply negligible or no responses in that range. Overall, the data shows that while social media is a regular part of daily life for most users, intensive usage for many hours is relatively uncommon.

9. The majority of respondents, 45.7%, reported using social media after school, indicating that free time following academic commitments is the most common period for social media engagement. The next most popular time is before bed, with 28.6% of users accessing social platforms, suggesting that social media is part of their nightly routine. Smaller percentages use social media during other times of the day: during meals (8.6%), early morning before school (5.7%), during school/study time (5.7%), and late at night (5.7%). The relatively low use during school hours suggests that most respondents try to limit social media use during academic activities. Overall, the data highlights that social media use is primarily concentrated in leisure periods outside formal school time, with a notable presence in pre-sleep hours.

10. The primary purpose for using social media among respondents is to access educational content, with 40% indicating this as their main reason. This suggests that social media platforms are valued not only for social interaction but also as important resources for learning and information. Following this, 34.3% use social media mainly for communication with friends and family, highlighting its role in maintaining personal relationships and social connectivity. Entertainment, including videos, memes, and games, is the main purpose for 20% of respondents, reflecting social media's appeal as a source of relaxation and fun. A smaller segment, 5.7%, use social media primarily for networking or meeting new people, indicating that while social expansion is a function, it is less prioritized compared to education and communication. Overall, the data shows a balanced use of social media for educational, social, and entertainment purposes, with education and communication taking precedence.

11. The responses indicate that parental or guardian supervision of social media use is fairly common among respondents. A significant portion, 40%, reported that their social media usage is regularly supervised or limited by their parents or guardians, reflecting active monitoring to manage screen time or content exposure. Another 37.1% experience supervision sometimes, suggesting occasional checks or restrictions, which may vary depending on circumstances or trust levels. About 20% of respondents indicated that supervision occurs rarely, implying minimal parental involvement in their social media activities. Only a small minority, 2.9%, stated that their social media use is never supervised or limited, suggesting greater autonomy or lack of parental control in those cases. Overall, the data shows that most respondents experience some level of parental guidance or limitation regarding their social media use, highlighting the role of guardians in moderating online behaviour.

12. The responses show a diverse range of perceptions regarding the impact of social media on academic performance. Notably, 28.6% of respondents believe social media has a positive effect, suggesting they may be using it for educational support, access to academic resources, or peer collaboration. In contrast, 20% feel it affects their studies negatively, possibly due to distractions, reduced concentration, or time mismanagement caused by excessive use. Meanwhile, 25.7% of respondents feel that social media has no effect on their academic performance, indicating that they may maintain a healthy balance or compartmentalize its use outside of study time. An equal 25.7% are not sure, reflecting uncertainty or difficulty in assessing the direct impact of social media on their academic outcomes. Overall, the data indicates that while some students find social media beneficial to their learning, others recognize its potential drawbacks or remain uncertain about its influence on their academic life.

13. The data indicate a mixed emotional response to obtaining comments and likes on social networking posts. A majority of 31.5% of the of those surveyed (28.6% approve and 2.9% strongly agree) said they are pleased when they receive participation on their

postings, demonstrating that online validation provides emotional gratification. However, a higher percentage of respondents express disinterest or disagreement. 28.6% chose "indifferent," suggesting the respondents have not been impacted psychologically by social media opinion or are ignorant of its relevance. Surprisingly, a sizable majority (34.3%) disagree, with 5.7% strongly disagreeing, bringing the total to 40% who are unsatisfied with likes or comments. This may suggest a conscious detachment from the validation-seeking aspects of social media or scepticism toward its emotional influence. Overall, while a portion of users derive satisfaction from social media engagement, a majority either feel indifferent or do not associate happiness with likes and comments.

14. The majority of respondents report little worry or restlessness while unable to access social media. A total of 48.6% of participants disagreed (40%) or strongly disagreed (8.6%), demonstrating a low emotional dependence on social media sites. On the other side, 34.3% chose neutral, indicating that, while they may not be visibly nervous, they are not fully unaffected, potentially reflecting some unconscious or situational dependency. A smaller proportion, 14.3% agree, and 2.9% strongly agree, totalling 17.2%, admit to feeling uncomfortable or restless when they cannot check social media. This suggests that a small proportion of users have modest reliance or attachment. Overall, the findings indicate that, while the majority of respondents keep a healthy emotional distance from social media, a significant minority may show early indicators of digital reliance or fear over separation.

15. The data indicates that a majority of respondents (57.2%) combining Agree (48.6%) and Strongly Agree (8.6%) feel that social media enhances their sense of connection with friends. This suggests that for more than half of the participants, social media serves as a meaningful tool for maintaining and strengthening social relationships. A smaller portion of respondents (17.2%) expressed disagreement (Disagree: 14.3%, Strongly Disagree: 2.9%), implying that they do not find social media effective in fostering friend connections. This minority view could be influenced by negative experiences with online interactions, preference for face-to-face communication, or perceived superficiality of digital connections. Notably, 25.7% of participants chose a Neutral stance, which may reflect ambivalence or a lack of strong feelings about the impact of social media on their friendships. This group might use social media casually without relying on it as a primary means of social connection.

16. The majority of respondents (62.8%), combining Disagree (45.7%) and Strongly Disagree (17.1%), report that they do not experience sleep difficulties due to late-night social media use. This suggests that for most individuals in this group, social media use at night does not significantly disrupt their sleep patterns. However, 17.1% of participants agree that they have difficulty sleeping because of social media use, indicating that a smaller but notable group is affected by this behaviour. These individuals might be more prone to sleep disturbances due to screen time, emotional stimulation, or addictive scrolling habits. A significant portion (20%) chose Neutral, implying uncertainty or inconsistent experiences with late-night social media and its effect on sleep.

17. A clear majority of respondents 65.8% (Strongly Disagree: 22.9%, Disagree: 42.9%) do not feel sad or depressed after using social media. This indicates that for most individuals in this group, social media does not have a significantly negative emotional impact. A smaller group 8.6% (Agree: 5.7%, Strongly Agree: 2.9%) do report feelings

of sadness or depression after using social media. This minority may be more emotionally sensitive to content, experience online comparison or cyberbullying, or have other underlying factors that make them vulnerable to negative effects. Meanwhile, 22.7% of participants selected Neutral, which could suggest either occasional negative feelings, uncertainty about the emotional impact, or indifference toward their experiences on social media.

18. According to the data, a considerable majority of respondents (42.8%) agree (31.4%) or strongly agree (11.4%) that social media helps them cope with loneliness or boredom. This demonstrates that social media is a useful tool for many people to engage emotionally and pass the time in periods of seclusion or inactivity. On the other hand, 37.1% of those polled disagreed (25.7%) or strongly disagreed (11.4%) with the effectiveness of social media in dealing with such emotions. These folks may prefer offline coping strategies, find online contacts unsatisfying, or feel lonelier after using social media. A substantial 20% of respondents picked Neutral, indicating uncertainty or contrasting views on the use of social media in managing loneliness or boredom.

19. The comments show a split view on utilising social media to communicate feelings when unhappy. On the one hand, 34.3% of respondents agree (31.4%) or strongly agree (2.9%) that they express their emotions on social media when they are distressed. This shows that social media platforms provide as a venue for emotional release or support for more than one-third of members. However, nearly 40% of respondents disagree with this assertion (Disagree: 31.4%, Strongly Disagree: 8.6%), showing that they are uncomfortable or unwilling to disclose their negative feelings online. This group may choose private coping mechanisms or regard social media as an undesirable outlet for emotional expression. A substantial 25.7% selected Neutral, indicating ambivalence, occasional use, or ambiguity regarding their behaviour in emotional situations.

20. The data reveals that the most common coping strategies for negative experiences on social media involve seeking social support. Talking to friends (31.4%) and talking to parents or guardians (28.6%) are the predominant ways respondents handle their feelings of hurt or upset. This indicates that interpersonal communication is a key method for emotional processing and comfort. A smaller portion of respondents cope by using social media more to feel better (14.3%), which may suggest a reliance on online engagement for distraction or emotional regulation. Some respondents choose to ignore or suppress their feelings (11.4%), which might not be the healthiest coping mechanism and could risk unresolved emotional distress. Others prefer avoiding social media for a while (8.6%), indicating a conscious effort to reduce exposure to harmful content or take a mental break. Finally, a small minority seek help from teachers or counsellors (5.7%), showing that professional support is less commonly accessed but still present.

21. According to the statistics, a substantial proportion of respondents, 57.1% (17.1% regularly) and 40% (once or twice), have taken a break or cancelled their social media accounts. This implies that many users understand the importance of disconnecting from social media on sometimes, potentially to cope with stress, mental health issues, or digital overload. However, 34.3% have never taken a break, showing that they use social media sites on a regular basis with no official breaks. This generation may have more effective coping skills or rely extensively on social media for communication and enjoyment. Interestingly, 8.6% of respondents intended to take a break but were unable to do so, maybe due to emotions of reliance or difficulties disconnecting from social media.

22. The responses reveal that the most common reason for taking a break or deactivating social media accounts is its impact on academic performance (38.3%). This suggests that many respondents recognize social media as a distraction that can interfere with their studies or productivity. Another significant portion (28.6%) took a break due to spending too much time on social media, indicating concerns about excessive usage and the desire to manage their screen time better. A notable 25.7% sought a break simply for a digital detox, showing awareness of the need to disconnect for mental refreshment or balance. Relatively fewer respondents (8.6%) reported negative experiences or conflicts online as the cause, while only a small minority (2.9%) cited mental or emotional stress as their reason. This might indicate that while emotional distress is less commonly reported as a primary cause, it could be an underlying factor in other reasons.

23. The data shows a moderate interest in attending workshops or sessions focused on healthy social media habits. About one-quarter (25.7%) of respondents clearly expressed willingness to participate, indicating a proactive attitude toward learning and improving their digital habits. A majority of respondents (51.4%) selected Maybe, reflecting openness or uncertainty about attending such sessions. This suggests potential interest that could be encouraged with more information or engaging content. A smaller group (22.9%) indicated No, showing a portion of respondents who may not see the value in such workshops or prefer to manage their social media use independently.

DISCUSSIONS

1. What are the patterns of social media use among adolescents?

The findings from the study provide a detailed snapshot of how adolescents engage with social media. A significant majority (97%) of adolescents use social media networking sites (SMNS), indicating near-ubiquity in this age group. The age-wise distribution shows that early to mid-adolescents (13–16 years) constitute the bulk of the participants, suggesting that social media use is well established by early adolescence. This aligns with global trends where younger adolescents are increasingly gaining access to smartphones and digital platforms at earlier ages.

Gender-wise, females appear more actively engaged with social media, comprising 74.3% of respondents. This could reflect broader social patterns where females often utilize social media more intensively for communication and social bonding. Geographically, while a majority of respondents hail from rural areas (54.2%), the data also indicate substantial use in urban areas (45.8%), demonstrating that social media penetration is widespread across different settings.

The predominant platforms used reveal interesting preferences: WhatsApp leads overwhelmingly (85.7%), followed by YouTube and Instagram, which cater to communication, entertainment, and educational content. The preference for instant messaging and video-based platforms highlights adolescents' inclination toward real-time interaction and multimedia consumption.

Daily usage patterns indicate that most adolescents engage with social media moderately typically once or twice a day, spending 1 to 2 hours on average. However, a noteworthy minority exhibit heavy usage, spending 3 to 4 hours or more daily, which raises concerns about potential overuse. The primary time for social media use is after school hours, emphasizing its role as a leisure activity. Moreover, social media serves multiple purposes, with educational

content (40%) and communication (34.3%) cited as leading motivations, alongside entertainment. This multifaceted use underscores the role of social media as not only a social but also an academic resource.

Parental supervision is still quite prevalent, with 40% reporting regular monitoring, indicating that guardians take an active role in regulating teenagers internet behaviour. This monitoring might help reduce the dangers associated with excessive or improper usage.

Overall, the patterns suggest a balanced but complicated use of social media, combining educational utility with social and entertaining functions that are influenced by age, gender, and contextual factors such as parental participation and time constraints.

2. How does social media affect the emotional and psychological well-being of adolescents

The emotional and psychological effects of social media on teenagers are complicated and somewhat conflicting. While a considerable majority of teenagers experience favourable social and emotional advantages, a sizeable minority report negative or indifferent outcomes.

More over half (57.2%) of respondents believe that social media improves their sense of connection with peers, emphasising its importance in strengthening social relationships and reducing feelings of loneliness. Furthermore, 42.8% believe that social media helps individuals cope with loneliness or boredom, implying that platforms act as emotional outlets and sources of involvement during leisure.

However, emotional reactions to social media input, such as likes and comments, are mixed. While around 31.5% get pleasure and emotional gratification from good social media interactions, a greater proportion (40%) expresses indifference or unhappiness, which might indicate a conscious resistance to validation-seeking behaviours or emotional detachment from online comments. This disparity might indicate varied degrees of emotional resilience or social media literacy among teenagers.

Concerning psychological dependence, the majority (48.6%) do not feel anxious or restless when unable to access social media, suggesting healthy emotional boundaries for most. Nonetheless, 17.2% report some degree of discomfort, hinting at emerging signs of digital reliance in a minority.

Importantly, adverse psychological effects such as sadness or depression after social media use are reported by a smaller group (8.6%), but this should not be overlooked. Vulnerable adolescents may experience negative emotional impacts due to online comparison, cyberbullying, or exposure to distressing content. Similarly, 17.1% report sleep difficulties linked to late-night social media use, which aligns with existing literature on screen time and sleep disruption.

The coping strategies adopted also reveal the social nature of emotional regulation. Most adolescents turn to friends (31.4%) and family (28.6%) for support when distressed by social media experiences, rather than relying solely on the platforms themselves. A small segment uses social media more to feel better (14.3%), which could indicate risk of maladaptive coping or dependence.

Many respondents (57.1%) were willing to take vacations from social media, citing academic performance or time management problems, indicating knowledge of possible negative consequences and a proactive approach to protecting mental health.

In conclusion, while social media provides tremendous social connectedness and emotional support to many teenagers, there is convincing evidence of mixed emotions and some negative psychological implications. These findings highlight the significance of increasing digital literacy, emotional resilience, and healthy social media behaviours in order to maximise benefits while minimising damage.

Role of Social Worker

Social workers have an important role in helping teenagers navigate the complicated terrain of social media use. Given the mixed emotional and psychological effects reported in the study, social workers can:

Promote Digital Literacy and Awareness: Inform teenagers and their families about the advantages and hazards of social media use, assisting them in developing critical thinking skills necessary to handle online interactions securely and responsibly.

Provide Emotional Support and Counselling: Individual or group counselling sessions can help teenagers who are suffering emotional discomfort as a result of social media, such as anxiety, depression, or poor self-esteem. Social professionals can also spot the indications of cyberbullying or internet addiction and act early.

Encourage healthy coping methods: The methods such as open communication with classmates and family, offline social activities, and efficient screen time management. Social professionals can help teens create appropriate limits and support digital detox activities as required.

Engage Parents and Guardians: Collaborate with families to enhance supervision tactics and create supportive settings that balance autonomy and direction. Social workers may give parents with materials and training to help them better understand teenage social media behaviour.

Advocate for policy and school-based programs: Collaborate with schools and community organisations to conduct workshops, seminars, and policies targeted at encouraging good social media habits and mitigating possible harmful impacts among young people.

By performing these duties, social workers help to protect adolescent well-being in an increasingly digital environment.

Need of Social Worker in Society:

The increasing influence of social media networking sites on adolescents has brought about a spectrum of emotional, psychological, behavioural, and social challenges that require specialized intervention. Adolescents frequently experience issues such as cyberbullying, online peer pressure, social comparison, digital addiction, and reduced self-esteem, all of which

can adversely affect their mental health and social functioning. In this context, the role of social workers has become more crucial than ever. Social workers are uniquely equipped to identify early signs of distress, provide therapeutic counselling, and offer emotional support to adolescents struggling with the effects of social media. They also assist families in understanding their children's digital habits, establishing open communication, and creating supportive home environments that nurture emotional resilience. Within educational institutions, social workers can implement programs on digital literacy, responsible internet use, and mental health awareness, thus promoting preventive measures. Furthermore, they advocate for child- and youth-centric digital policies and contribute to the formulation of school-based protocols to address issues such as cyberbullying and excessive screen time. By collaborating with teachers, mental health professionals, law enforcement, and digital safety experts, social workers provide a comprehensive support system that empowers adolescents to use digital platforms responsibly and grow into emotionally balanced, socially aware individuals. Their presence is indispensable in ensuring that youth navigate the digital world safely and constructively.

CONCLUSION

This study emphasises the important role that social media plays in teenagers everyday lives, providing a platform for learning, self-expression, and social connection. While many teenagers use the internet moderately and purposefully, frequently with the supervision of their parents, a significant number have emotional and behavioural issues as a result of their online experiences, such as anxiety, restlessness, academic distraction, and body image worries. These findings underscore social media's dual nature: it may promote connectedness and creativity while also contributing to psychological suffering when misused or overused. As a result, a balanced and educated approach is essential. It is critical to teach teenagers about digital literacy, emotional resilience, and time management. It is critical to teach teenagers about digital literacy, emotional resilience, and time management. Equally crucial is the active participation of parents, educators, and social workers in leading teenagers to good digital habits and promoting their general well-being. Only via a coordinated and preventative strategy can the potential advantages of social media be fully realised while its hazards are successfully addressed.

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