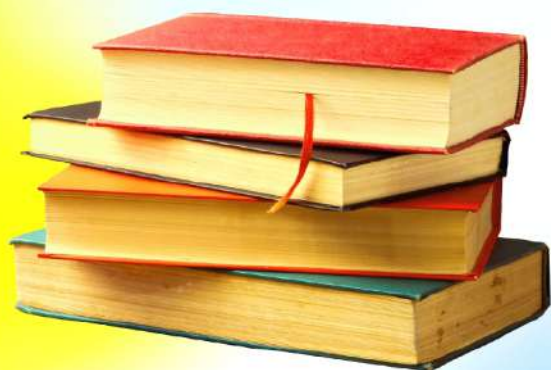


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IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

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ABSTRACT

Social media is a catch-all term for a variety of internet applications that allow users to create content and interact with each other. People who are emotionally healthy are in control of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. They are able to cope with life's challenges. It helps them to interact with other people and contribute productive work to society. **Social media interactions can help decrease negative emotions and boost emotional well-being.** But using social media has its risks. Hence this paper focuses on overview of social media and emotional wellness, its effectiveness, impact and emotional benefits of using social media

Key Words: Social media, effectiveness, interaction, relaxation, self-care, inner strength

INTRODUCTION

Social media has gotten a bad rap lately: it's been blamed for growing feelings of low self-esteem, loneliness, and bouts of depression. Still, people rally behind their beloved Instagram's, Face book's, and Snap chat's or they at least keep signing on. They insist that they've either adapted healthier user habits or that social media doesn't have a negative impact on them at all, instead it's a positive influence on their everyday lives, they say. Social media allows to stay connected with distant friends and relatives and it can be used to promote positive and productive ideas; it can serve as a creative outlet.

EMOTIONAL WELLNESS:

Emotional wellness inspires self-care, relaxation, stress reduction and the development of inner strength. It is important to be attentive to both positive and negative feelings and be able to understand how to handle these emotions. Emotional wellness also includes the ability to learn and grow from experiences. Emotional well-being encourages autonomy and proper decision making skills. It is an important part of overall wellness.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, micro blogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis are among the different

types of social media. Social media is becoming an integral part of life online as social websites and applications proliferate.

EMOTIONAL BENEFITS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media interactions can help decrease negative emotions and boost emotional well-being. The researchers found that people who feel nervous during one-on-one conversations find refuge in social media especially during trying times. “When people feel badly, they have a need to reach out to others because this can help reduce negative emotions and restore a sense of well-being. But talking to someone face-to-face or on the phone might feel daunting because people may worry that they are bothering them,” explained **Eva Buechel**, a professor at the University of South Carolina. **Buechel** explains social media can be beneficial especially for the socially apprehensive: “There is a lot of research showing that sharing online is less ideal than having communication in person, but these social networks could be an important communication channel for certain individuals who would otherwise stay isolated.”

SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BE DETRIMENTAL TO EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Some of the undesirable effects of social media on emotional health are:

- **Depression:** The young adults spend longer time on social media, the more likely they are to be depressed because of the false lives they create and curate online.
- **Loss of Focus:** The feeling of people get from likes and comments on their posts is addictive, and this Pavlovian-like conditioning makes them go back again and again to ring that proverbial bell. Over time, people lose focus, changing the way their brain works so they can't give full concentration to longer form task
- **Prevalence of Eating Disorders:** The young adults who spent the most time on highly visual social media had over two times the risk of eating and body image concerns.
- **Bye to Memories:** peoples are losing their memories when they trust digital devices to store information and remember things for them.

EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON EMOTIONAL HEALTH

- **Relieve social isolation and loneliness by opening up new communication pathways.** Social media offers the chance to connect with others, and offers enough anonymity to allow people with **emotional illness** to express themselves without revealing their identities. In other words, it allows self-expression without the danger of **stigma**.
- **Inspire healthy lifestyle changes.** Social media can be used as a motivational tool to achieve healthy lifestyle goals such as quitting smoking or attending the gym on a regular basis.

Announcing a goal via social media and regularly posting about it promotes accountability to others, creating positive reinforcement from friends and stimulating an online “social support system” which may lead the aspirant to form or join other communities dedicated to similar pursuits. This is a classic case of “positive emotional contagion.”

- **Make social support and interventions possible.** An increasing number of websites are now offering support through social media channels. These sites often provide anonymous forums for people to connect, share personal experiences, and many even allows them to sign up for an SMS service to receive daily advice, motivational messages, and information useful for seeking or promoting recovery.
- **Build community by Joining Local Meetups.** Meetup is one of the most popular and widely used. Meetup is not the only place to connect with local organizations, groups, and clubs, or to network with people having similar interests. Twitter has a feature called Tweetups, which are face-to-face meetups that are organized online involving people with similar interests. These may range from people who share a love of playing bridge to groups of recovering addicts.
- **Strengthen existing relationships.** Social media can help manage relationships, especially with those who live far away from each other, thus breaking down geographical barriers. Far from increasing isolation, social media can provide alternative means of finding support, even helping to lift depression, and as Tweetups have shown, provide a healthy excuse to go outside rather than stay cooped up indoors or hunched over a computer.
- **Provide teens with opportunities to develop technical and other skills needed to function in society.** More and more young people are turning to the internet for health advice, including topics such as contraception, acne treatments, etc. Many teens will post online what they are reluctant to share with their parents. For troubled youth, this makes early intervention by concerned friends and peers more possible. For others, it provides a rich opportunity to experiment with different modes of creative self-expression, which is in itself therapeutic. While it is impossible to deny the dangers of social media, parents may choose to focus on the positive uses of online media in order to promote better online habits in their children.

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Social media can have positive and negative impact on emotional wellness:

- **Negative Impacts:** Most people who use social media want to put their best foot forward. Often, this means they are presenting a skewed view of their life that is all about happiness and achievements. This can lead their friends to compare their own lives to this "perfect" scenario which can have a negative impact on their emotional well-being.
- **Positive Impacts:** Social media could be used to spread happiness. Posting happy, encouraging, and uplifting posts may lead others to do the same. The original goal of social media sites was to create an easy way for people to connect to others. This is a good tool for friends or family who don't live nearby to keep up with what is happening.
Another positive impact could be the ability to help identify certain emotional illnesses. One in particular is social anhedonia which is the inability to enjoy normally enjoyable activities.

CONCLUSION

From the above, it is concluded that emotionally healthy does not mean they are happy all the time. It means they are aware of their emotions. They know how to manage their negative feelings. Social media may help improve emotional health by boosting self-esteem and providing a source of emotional support.

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