

The Influence of social media on the Mental Health and Self-esteem among Budding Management Students: A Comprehensive Study

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: social media helps students connect, collaborate, and build digital skills, enriching their learning experience up to a point. In this regard, our research study aimed to investigate the impact of social media on the mental health and self-esteem of budding management students.

Design/methodology/approach: We have conducted extensive literature search and based on the reviews, we have arrived at the conceptual framework and survey questionnaire, thereby ensuring all the variables are covered. To assess mental health we have integrated our questionnaire with GAD-7, PHQ-9 scales and for self-esteem we have used Rosenberg Questionnaire. The questionnaire was shared to around 50 students of 3rd BBA in the form of google form for their responses. We used MS EXCEL TOOLS to analyze the data, providing insights.

Findings: Our research showed that social media had an impact on the mental health of these budding management students (BBA 3rd Year) with very low intensity of anxiety as per GAD-7 scale indicating higher maturity levels. When it comes to self-esteem, our research also showed that social media does not have any impact on the self-esteem of the respondents except for social media platform selection.

Practical implications: Mental Health is key for good health and academic performance of the students which further enhances self-esteem among students in the form of confidence. We suggest students to view selected media platform for information purpose and relaxation purpose for a specific short duration which is fixed per day avoid falling in to the trap of anxiety curve (as currently low anxiety) for leading a high QoL beyond academics.

INTRODUCTION

The expansion of social media platforms in recent years has significantly reshaped social interactions, providing students with novel avenues for connection, information exchange, and self-expression. However, emerging literature increasingly highlights the potential negative effects of extensive social media engagement on mental health, particularly among students in formative, cognitive and emotional stages. Research continuously associates high social media usage with elevated symptoms of anxiety, depression, and diminished self-esteem. A recent meta-analysis (2023) underrates the central role of social comparison, cyberbullying, and the fear of missing out (FOMO) as key mechanisms through which social media adversely affects psychological well-being, heightening stress and feelings of inadequacy among adolescent users.

Furthermore, platforms that highlight visual content, such as Instagram and TikTok, contribute to a larger culture of comparison by promoting idealized, filtered portrayals of life that reinforce unrealistic beauty and success standards. This phenomenon disproportionately affects young users' self-image and body dissatisfaction. Current research also suggests that the immersive and potentially addictive nature of these platforms disrupts

essential functions like sleep and concentration, with significant impacts on academic performance and overall psychological health. While social media provides valuable spaces for support and information, its psychological impact is complex, influenced by variables such as usage duration, content type, and individual resilience. This study aims to examine these dynamics comprehensively, offering insights for educators, parents, and policymakers in mitigating social media's potential mental health risks among students

2.Literature Review: A boom in social media usage for its Utility: (Horst H et al.,2010) social media significantly impacts communication, social interaction, and skill development among children and teenagers. (Jessica MH et al.,2021) further indicated that social media usage has risen across various age groups during the COVID-19 pandemic, with younger individuals, particularly Generation Z, being notably affected. (Hilal B et al.,2017) already indicated that excessive use of social media is a significant concern for parents, researchers, and society, especially regarding its impact on mental health. Social media usage has grown rapidly, becoming an integral part of daily life, especially for the younger generation. For instance, Facebook alone reported around 1 billion daily active users in August 2015. (Elia

ABI et al.,2020) showed the utility of social media as it has been used in medical education but remains controversial. Health educators are cautious about using social media due to limited evidence of its effectiveness and concerns about maintaining professional standards. (Gunnhild JH et al.,2021) in their research from Norway demonstrated that adolescents are particularly active on social media, with nearly half reporting they are "almost constantly" online mainly with 47% of senior high school students spend more than two hours on social media daily. (Niall M et al.,2019) identified the 13-17 age group as particularly heavy users of social media users, with 87% having access to a computer, and 58% to a tablet device.

(Sarah MC et al.,2020) further demonstrated social networking sites (SNSs) are now a normal part of adolescent life, with many spending an average of 1 hour per day on these platforms.

(Elia ABIJ et al.,2020) in their systematic review of 20 studies showed an association between social media use and body image issues, including disordered eating behaviors. (Bhaskara et al.,2020) from India showed the presence of a significant association between hours spent on social media and mental well-being scores. Participants with lower well-being scores spent significantly more time on social media, while those with higher scores spent less time. (Maartje B et al.,2021) further indicated that adolescents with increased social media Usage (SMU) reported higher depressive symptoms and lower life satisfaction till one year, which later showed a progressive upward trend with respect to social comparisons and cybervictimization.

Social media: Frequency of usage: (Deepa M et al.,2020) showed that a significant portion of adolescents and youths use social networking sites frequently, with many loggings in multiple times daily. Similarly (Jessica MH et al.,2021: Hilal B et al.,2017) indicated further that due to COVID-19, college students relied more on the internet for education and other activities, thereby increasing their engagement with social media with their frequent urge to know the activities on real time basis. (Maartje B et al.,2021) indicated that while there is increase in SMU predicted higher Social Media Usage (SMU) problems, it also correlated with more face-to-face interactions with peers, suggesting that increased intensity may not always be harmful. In this research they neutrally investigated about the positive as well as the negative aspects of social media. The "virtual generation" (Net & i-Generation) often checks their social networking applications frequently, indicating a compulsive use pattern. (Niall M et al.,2019) Low social support is linked to higher risks of depression, anxiety, and distress, while supportive online interactions are associated with reduced mental health issues.

(Elia ABIJ et al.,2020) in their large longitudinal study found high-frequency digital media use was associated with the emergence of ADHD symptoms in adolescents over a two-year period, even without pre-existing symptoms and after adjusting for confounders. (Maartje B et al.,2021) discovered that increased adolescent social media use aligns with rising reports of mental health problems among youth. (Bhaskara et al.,2020) Students are advised to monitor their screen time and prioritize human connections, with an emphasis on nurturing family and friendships to improve mental well-being.

Impact on mental health: (Niall M et al.,2019) derived that social media can benefit adolescents by allowing self-expression and social support but is also linked to psychological issues like depression (Deters & Mehl, 2013; McCrae et al., 2017). Similarly (Bhaskara et al.,2020) also conveys that social media can be beneficial for spreading awareness and providing support for mental health issues but is also linked to increased depression, mood, and anxiety disorders, especially among adolescents. (Gunnhild JH et al.,2021) calculated that some studies find a small

but statistically significant association between social media use and mental health issues. However, the practical impact of this association is questioned; for example, Orben and Przybylski found that the effect of social media use on well-being was as minor as eating potatoes, and wearing glasses had a larger impact. Further (Deepa M et al.,2020) investigated negative aspects of social media's influence on mental health, particularly depression and anxiety, is a topic of ongoing research and debate.

The aspects of social media impact due to covid-19 (Jessica MH et al.,2021) The novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) and COVID-19 have had a significant impact on mental health worldwide, affecting various populations. College students are among those most affected by COVID-19's mental health consequences.(Hilal B et al.,2017)stated that social media usage has potentially harmful effects on young people's mental health, with issues that begin in youth potentially persisting and affecting them throughout life.(Elia ABIJ et al.,2020)Studies show that spending more than 2 hours a day on social media and personal devices is associated with higher rates of suicidality and depressive symptoms, particularly among adolescent girls.(Benjamin M et al.,2019) discovered that in 2015, 17.9% of U.S. adults (about 43.4 million) were identified as having a mental illness, excluding substance use disorders. Only 41% of U.S. adults with mental illness used mental health services in the past year. (Sarah MC et al.,2020) studied in the research that an 8-year longitudinal study that investigates the association between time spent on social media and mental health issues (depression and anxiety) in adolescents. Similar to this (Maartje B et al.,2021) derived that adolescents with poor mental health may be more sensitive to social comparisons on social media, potentially avoiding it to prevent further deterioration of mental health.

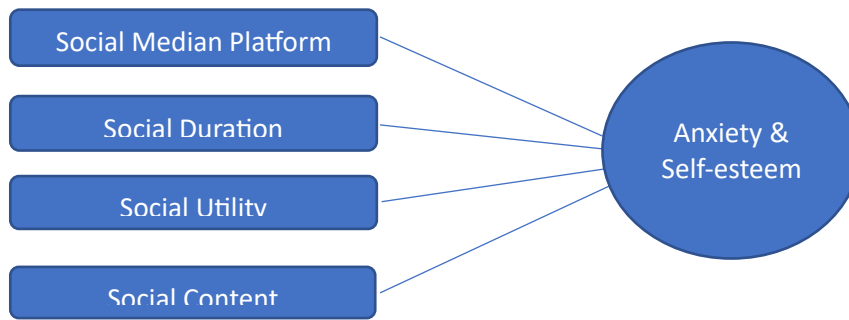
3.GAP from Literature review: (Jessica MH et al.,2021: Hilal B et al.,2017) Investigated the impact of social media on the mental health of college going students belonging to gen Z during COVID-19 pandemic based out of Boston, USA. The study highlighted the increase of risk in suffering from mental conditions with excessive use of social media. (Elia ABIJ et al.,2020: Maartje B et al.,2021) in their large longitudinal study found excessive usage of social/digital media among school children from Norway use was associated with the emergence of mental symptoms taking the shape of ADHD in adolescents over a two-year period, even without pre-existing symptoms. (Niall M et al.,2019) from their systematic review further confirmed the presence of positive correlation between the influence of social media on depression, anxiety and psychological distress in adolescence.

Only 2 Indian Investigators (Bhaskara et al.,2020: Deepa M et al.,2020)) assessed the effect of social media usage on the mental well-being of both medical college students and MBA students in Bangalore, Karnataka, India, has indicated to control on the screen time for maintaining optimal mental health as excessive screen time while a student is on social media can put him/her at risk for mental health conditions thereby affecting the academic performance.

Although studies are being undertaken globally in assessing the impact of social media on the mental health (anxiety, depression) there is less evidence on impact of social media in students' mental health, academic performance and self-esteem. Through our research study we intend to investigate the above among gen Z budding management students (BBA) with respect to Indian context with an aim to work on the actionable points derived out of this research for better mental health, performance and self-esteem leading to better QoL

4. CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK:

Based on the literature review and gap, we have arrived at the following conceptual frame work for further taking to analysis.



5. METHODOLOGY: Sample: Individuals BBA students aged 18-30, with a target sample size of at least 50 were targeted mainly users of social media by mailing the survey questionnaire through google form with a 4-point Likert scale was shared to 70 students of which 38 students responded. As a part of data cleaning/incompleteness 8 responses were discarded. The analysis was carried out with 30 completed responses, in assessing the impact of social media habits and mental health, academic

For assessing the mental health outcomes like Anxiety, Depression and Self-esteem, we have deployed valid instruments like GAD-7, PHQ-9 and Rosenberg self-esteem 4-point Likert scale. A brief information has been provided in the below section.

GAD-7 (Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale) Scores in anxiety levels with a total score for 7 items ranging from 0-21. 0-4: minimal anxiety 5-9: mild anxiety 10-14: moderate anxiety 15-21: severe anxiety.

PHQ-9 (Patient Health Questionnaire) Developed at Stanford medicine. 1-4 Minimal depression 5-9 Mild depression 10-14 Moderate depression 15-19 Moderately severe depression 20-27 Severe depression.

Rosenberg self-esteem 4-point Likert scale : The purpose of the 10 item RSE scale is to measure self-esteem. Originally the measure was designed to measure the self-esteem of high school students. However, since its development, the scale has been used with a variety of groups including adults, with norms available for many of those groups. Scoring: As the RSE is a Guttman scale, scoring can be a little complicated. Scoring involves a method of

combined ratings. Low self-esteem responses are “disagreed” or “strongly disagree” on items 1, 3. (Rosenberg, M. (1979). *Conceiving the Self*. New York: Basic Books.) We have performed descriptive analysis and T-test for hypothesis testing using MS Excel software.

5.1 Research questions:

- What is the correlation between time spent on social media and levels of anxiety and depression?
- How does the type of content consumed (e.g., news, social connections, entertainment) relate to mental well-being?
- Do patterns of social media use differ in their impact on self-esteem.

5.2 Hypothesis formulation:

H10 = There is no significant impact of social media to the mental well-being.

H1A= There is significant impact of social media to the mental well-being.

H20 = There is no significant impact of social media on the self-esteem.

H21 = There is significant impact of social media on the self-esteem.

6. Analysis: The below analysis was performed

6.1 Test for internal consistency:

Test for internal consistency for the received responses was carried out by calculating Cronbach alpha which will indicate the quality of the questionnaire and the responses captured.

TABLE 1

Cronbach alpha value	0.6
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6.2 Descriptive statistics: As shown below table 2 the results of descriptive statistic were displayed that majority of the participating students from both the genders displayed their

TABLE 2

Parameter	LHD	AGE	Gen	PO
Mean	1.4	2.2	1.533333	2.4
SD	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.15
Median	1	2	2	3
Mode	1	2	2	3
Standard Deviation	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.8
Sample Variance	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.7
Kurtosis	-1.9	0.5	-2.1	-0.9
Skewness	0.4	0.5	-0.1	-0.9
Range	1	2	1	2
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	2	3	2	3
Sum	42	66	46	72
Count	30	30	30	30

6.3 Hypothesis testing: Hypothesis testing was performed separately to access the impact of social on mental health and social media on self-esteem through regression analysis

6.3.1 Impact of social media on mental health:

TABLE 3

highest qualification was 10+2 and their background was mostly from government and private working class.

H10 = There is no significant impact of social media to the mental well-being.

H1A= There is significant impact of social media to the mental well-being.

SMP VS Anxiety	
<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.5904
R Square	0.3485
Adjusted R Square	0.2761
Standard Error	0.3206
Observations	31.0000

TABLE 4

ANOVA	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	3	1.484977	0.4949923	4.8148909	0.008200751
Residual	27	2.7757208	0.1028045		
Total	30	4.2606978			

TABLE 5

Parameter	Coefficients	SE	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Intercept	0.7217	0.3158	2.2851	0.0304	0.0737	1.3697
SMD	0.0092	0.0732	0.1254	0.9011	-0.1410	0.1594
SMP	0.1890	0.0500	3.7765	0.0008	0.0863	0.2916
RFUSM	0.0656	0.0672	0.9762	0.3376	-0.0723	0.2034

As shown in the table 3-5, p is less than 0.05. So, we reject the null hypothesis to accept the alternative hypothesis which indicates the presence of impact of social media on mental health of the students who were mostly with very less grade of anxiety as depicted by the analysis of GAD-7 anxiety severity scale with the score of 4, representing minimal anxiety.

TABLE 6

SM VS SE

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.446306008
R Square	0.199189053
Adjusted R Square	0.071059302
Standard Error	0.386223174
Observations	30

TABLE 7

ANOVA	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	4	0.92758162	0.2318954	1.55458862	0.217236809
Residual	25	3.72920851	0.14916834		
Total	29	4.65679012			

TABLE 8

Parameter	Coefficients	SE	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Intercept	2.26765	0.39392	5.75657	0.00001	1.45635	3.07895
SMD	0.07728	0.08871	0.87107	0.39201	-0.10543	0.25998
SMP	0.13605	0.06329	2.14963	0.04145	0.00570	0.26639
RFUSM	0.11066	0.09309	1.18878	0.24569	-0.08106	0.30238
content on SMP	-0.09834	0.07197	-1.36635	0.18399	-0.24657	0.04989

As shown in table 6-8, although there was a trend of social media platform (one of the factors) affecting the social esteem of the students, however on overall factor level we found p to be more than 0.05. So, we reject the alternative hypothesis to accept the null hypothesis which indicates that social media does not have any impact on the students in-fact our Rosenberg scale for self-esteem has indicated high level among respondents.

CONCLUSION

Our research study involving 30 BBA 3rd year students from our institute demonstrated their prior educational background as 10+2/state board with parents' occupation primarily based out of private sector and / or entrepreneur. With regard to the impact of social media, our analysis demonstrated that the former has an impact on the mental health causing low grade level of anxiety among the respondents indicating higher maturity levels, living in the present moment with an optimal emotional balance. Our research also showed that social media does not have any impact on the self-esteem of the respondents except for social media platform selection. This is clearly evident that students with low anxiety often live with high self-esteem as they seem to take charge of their future confidently. Our research finding is

6.3.2 Impact of social media on self-esteem:

H20 = There is no significant impact of social media on the self-esteem.

H21 = There is significant impact of social media on the self-esteem.

consistent with previous findings with the addition of data from graduate management students (BBA) from a metro city Hyderabad indicating the impact of social media on mental health of the students, without any affect seen on their self-esteem, an additional contribution from our research to the domain of social media and its impact on students.

8. Limitation: Our research study involved respondents from KLGBS based out of Hyderabad. A large sample size with students from other institutions across various geographies can contribute to this research with deeper insights.

9. Acknowledgment: We sincerely thank 3rd BBA students of KLGBS of Kondapur Hyderabad for survey participation.

10. Conflict of interest: None declared

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