
Student Stress: Role of Social Media

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ABSTRACT

The last few decades have seen rapid acceleration of technologies and social change. Emergence of smart phones and social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, and various other platforms has fundamentally altered the social fabric and the ways we relate.

*The world has become hyper connected (characterized by the widespread or habitual use of devices that have internet connectivity). It has created many opportunities and potentially creates chaos-a **recipe for stress**. Now question arises as how does it affect mental health. Hyper-connected world gives us even more access to an endless array of choices and information that overwhelms and confuses us. Psychological researches on choices show that in many cases, more choices lead to more anxiety. In addition, we now have either endless access to information that might be psychologically disturbing via constant news of troubling stories (Syria war, Radicalisation or possible threats like Global Warming) or constant exposure to extremely attractive, wealthy individuals who command attention and create problematic downward social comparisons (Brad Pitt/Tom Cruise/Jennifer Lawrence).*

How evolution of technology is creating mental health problem is to think in terms of growing mis-match between world we live in (sitting at a computer screen and interfacing over technology) and world we evolve to live in (Natural-social world). We can make an argument that greater the mis-match, greater the likelihood that we will create an environment that will cause stress and not meet fundamental needs (needs regarding our diet, our potential lack of group bonding, lack of spending lots of time in natural world).

Using social media Web sites is among the most common activity of today's children and adolescents. Any Web site that allows social interaction is considered a social media site, including social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter; gaming sites video sites such as YouTube; and blogs. Such sites offer today's youth a portal for entertainment and communication and have grown exponentially in recent years. For this reason, it is important that parents become aware of the nature of social media sites, given that not all of them are healthy environments for children and adolescents. Engaging in various forms of social media is a routine activity that research has shown to benefit children and adolescents by enhancing communication, social connection, and even technical skills. A large part of this generation's social and emotional development is occurring while on the Internet and on cell which in turn generates problems like Internet addiction, concurrent sleep deprivation, anxiety, changing food habits, Narcissism and many more, all resulting into some amount of stress. Therefore it becomes necessary to understand the ill effects of social media and to know that how it can be reduced.

The objective of the paper is to discuss student stress in special reference to social media and how does it affect them.

INTRODUCTION:

21st centurion world is a global village. Everyone here is connected to a vast network created by the INTERNET. As said by *Marshall McLuhan*, a philosopher of communication theory, *“The new electronic independence re-creates the world in the image of a global village”*. The electronic independence to which he referred to is entirely dependent on internet. It illuminates the lives of thousands by spreading knowledge internationally, which there by turning us into global citizens.

In the olden days, communicating and free sharing of thoughts and beliefs among people were restricted by long distance nationally and/or religion. But now even the barriers of domestic boundary and varying religious beliefs cannot stop the flow of information and knowledge. The new Social networking world allows free sharing of thoughts and beliefs. Online social networks are created by websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube etc.

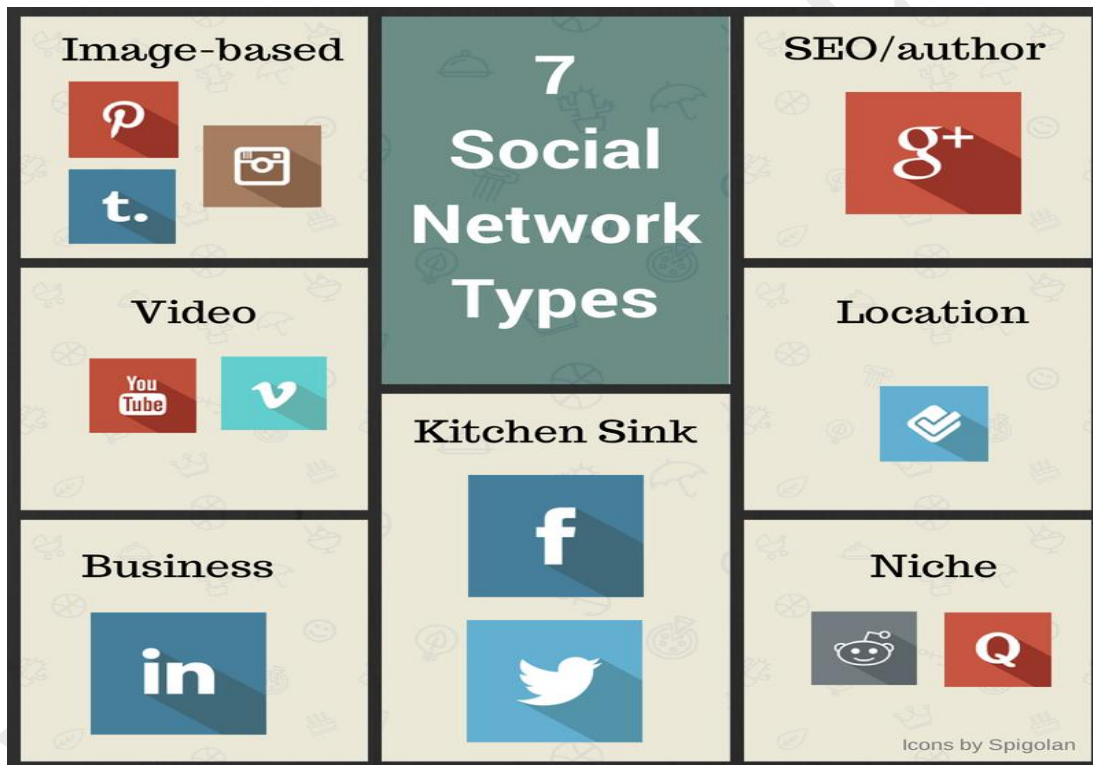


DIAGRAM DEPICTING 7 MAJOR TYPE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

They all have emerged as giants in this social world. As of 2015 the world’s largest social networking company FACEBOOK has 1.49 billion active users and the stats is increasing every year. The penetration of social sites country wise is the major thing to look upon.

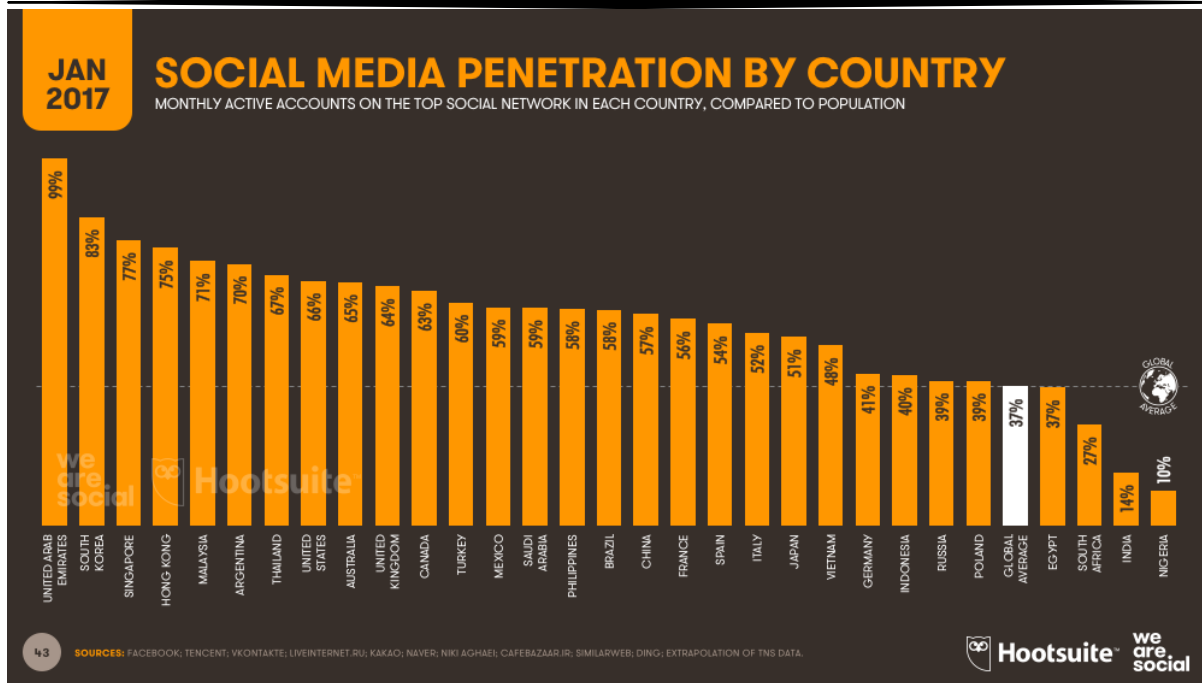


DIAGRAM DEPICTING SOCIAL MEDIA PENETRATION

OBJECTIVE

- The objective of the paper is to discuss student stress in special reference to social media and how does it affect them.
- Understand how stress works and develop sustainable behaviours
- Develop their personal resources and avoid stress “overdraft”
- Recognise negative stress and its symptoms
- Identify the causes of unwanted stress
- Develop a balanced lifestyle in order to control stress in the long term
- Develop a Personal Action Plan for Stress Management

METHODOLOGY

The present study is theoretical and analytical in nature. It is mainly based on secondary data and analysis of various psychological theories. In-depth interactions/discussions with Literature and other information have been critically analysed in the study. The above study is solely based on the reports and publications on the concerned study from various research papers published, government official and other websites.

INCREASING STUDENT USERS

The most interesting thing to look is increasing number of student users on such sites. India is the third biggest country in terms of internet users in the world with a high social and mobile

audience. Students spend more time on social media rather they do using personal e-mail. The focus of students shifts from education to such sites, which can be a complete wastage of time. As per the survey conducted by Pew research centre 72% of high school, 78% of college students spend time on facebook, instagram, twitter etc. This number indicates that how much this student community is involved in virtual world of social networking.

Many reasons can be stated why students love to spend time socializing

- Provides the freedom to do whatever they want
- To upload what they want
- To be appreciated in terms of likes for their uploaded content
- To make new friends and to comment on the lives of different people

All these factors enthralls them that all these freedom they can avail just by sitting in front of their computer and then they start demanding for more freedom. Parents objecting in such condition may result into depression and even suicides. Many cases of mobile dependence resulting in suicides are increasing nowadays. Never before has it been so easy for young minds to create a digital image of their actions through such a spontaneous medium.

The darker side, which has gained attention of many parents and even eminent psychologists all over the world, is about **IDENTITY CRISIS**. As said by *Prof. S Shyam Sunder*, a renowned researcher at Penn state, *“The type of action users take and the kind of information’s they are adding to their profiles are a reflection of their identities.”*

The most important thing in student life is to study, learning good habits, and gaining knowledge to become a person with a moral character. But today, as we see in various studies this optimal learning process is seriously jeopardized by students becoming entrapped by the ploys of social networking. Students neglect their studies by spending time on social sites rather than studying or interacting people in person. This actively affects their grades and mental health, which in turn leads to various problems of depression, sleep deprivation, anxiety, untimely food habits etc.

ILL -EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENTS

For any student and teenager education is a significant part and is more important than anything but today they spent more time on social media, which regrettably affect their education as well as study hours. A research has calculated that more than 85% of college students and teenagers use social media. To access to social media there are many small communication devices available in the market like cell phone, tablets, computers, laptop, i-phones, palm tops and they all support internet. Social networking sites grabs the attention of students and teenagers and deflects them towards non-educational, immoral and unsuitable actions like useless chatting, unnecessary searching on internet. The social network addicts become a useless nod for parents, friends and other associated people.

Advancements in Information technology is definitely a boon and specially for a developing country like India but IT at one point provides ease of accessing social media but at another point also kills time when used beyond a certain time limit and this is very true in the case of students and teenagers. They surf internet for incalculable time, which results, into problematic habits like:

- *Fluctuating study schedule*
- *Anxiety*
- *Varying food habits*
- *Sleep deprivation*
- *Narcissism*
- *Other health problems*
- *Identity crisis*

FLUCTUATING STUDY SCHEDULE:

The most important thing for a student is to study and learn good habits and to gain knowledge in order to become a person of moral character but due to the addiction of social network and internet they kill their time by surfing unnecessarily. They neglect their studies and become very conservative as they start to enjoy more of their virtual life rather the natural-social life.

ANXIETY:

Compulsive consumption of social media is one factor experts are pointing to as factor in rising anxiety among students. Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter seem to be a modern means of facilitating our connectedness with others, sharing activities and news, and keeping in touch with friends both old and new. However, new technologies are usually a mixture of both good and bad, and modern social media are no different. The relatively modern phenomenon of social media and its associated technology adds a new dimension to loneliness and anxiety by offering the young person a way of directly quantifying friendships, viewing the friendship networks of others for comparison, and providing immediate information about social events. They can compare their own popularity with that of peers, by continually monitoring what's going on socially. So it's easy to see how technology use can take the place of more traditional social interaction and provide a yardstick for one's popularity – or more significantly, one's feelings of loneliness and alienation.

"Just clinically, and in interactions with students there definitely is a greater amount of worry about what's happening on social media," Rajita Sinha, PhD , director of the Yale Stress Centre, told Business Insider. Sinha noted that student anxiety stemming from social media often was the result of inappropriate content - such as bullying or harassment - as well as the propensity for students to compare themselves to classmates.

REFERENCE:<http://www.businessinsider.in/Yale-psychiatrist-has-one-explanation-for-why-students-these-days-are-so-anxious/articleshow/47620580.cms>

NARCISSISM:

Social media is the incident of understanding the other users by viewing their profiles, likes, comments, actions and other activities performed. The lives especially of students are largely influenced by what other people post on their profile. They upload their photos and events from their varying phases of life in order to earn likes and appreciations that in some way or the other

prove satisfier to them, which they cannot earn, in real life. Students are worried about their looks and so they always try to upload nicer pictures than their friends- a narcissism tendency.

Narcissism is a noun, which means excessive interest in or admiration of oneself and one's physical appearance.

In Psychology, "extreme selfishness, with a grandiose view of one's own talents and a craving for admiration, as characterizing a personality type."

Observing the narcissist tend we can say that *we are living in the age of narcissism* and sites like facebook, twitter foster this tendency majorly in students and teenagers as this age is considered to be mostly influenced by other people. Teens and students are very keen to know that what is going on in other people's life, they compare it with themselves, and when they find differences they start behaving in the way others do.

IDENTITY CRISIS:

Psychologist today is worried about the problems of identity crisis that students may face these days. Teens and students are influenced by what other people are doing or posting. The habits that students learn are decided more by what their friends do and less by the teachings of parents or professors. Students have become more prone to frequent fluctuation in mood and self-control. If one friend posted his/her relationship with someone then the other one's are pressed to do the same thing as action that attracts more public attention gets more value.

A recent survey stated that whenever someone uploads a profile picture it immediately affects the moods of friends. It often produces anxiety, stress, or fear about their identities as people. Consistently thinking in this way may result into depression.

VARYING HABITS:

Getting too involved in social media result into its addiction which leads to wastage of time and inculcation of bad habits. Students prefer to chat with friends for hours which they have used at other productive places like playing, studying, learning new skills and interacting in person rather virtual.

Traditionally it was believed that long term friendship or relationship is developed when people meet each other, spend time and share experiences but this e-way of communicating with each other does not lead to a natural , friendly experience and hence do not produce healthy relationships and they easily get terminated after a very short period of time as there was no personal contact.

Spending long hours surfing on internet reduces the time for sleeping or eating as it becomes an addiction to the students and they are so carried away with the virtual world that they forget their basic needs.

Considering the above-discussed matter, it is necessary to develop certain regulations over the use of such social networking sites especially for students and teenagers but they should also be given time socializing in an effective way. It should not hamper their studies and their school or college performance and it should be kept in mind that social world creates a virtual reality

which drastically differs from reality. Students should develop the intuitive and cognitive ability to analyze how much time they want to spent on social media. It should be left up to the students wisdom to decide what actually matters in their life and how much of this virtual life translates to real life.

CONCLUSION

Stress management is a technique to remove stress from life by identifying the factors that cause stress. Stress is a very normal psychological condition of the human mind arising due to unfulfilled expectations. Stress has become a very worldwide poison experienced by students universally. Stress is necessary to challenge students to learn. Approaches are needed that reduce the negative aspects of stress (distress) which lessen students' learning and performance. The key to reducing distress is providing students with a feeling of control over their education, information about what to expect, and feedback regarding what can be done to improve their performance.

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