



Mental Health of the Gen-Z

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Date of Submission: 03-04-2023

Date of Acceptance: 14-04-2023

ABSTRACT

While previous researches have highlighted the benefits of social media during the pandemic, this research covers all topics related to Generation Z mental health, which includes how environmental factors affect their mental health, how social media overall has deteriorated their mental health, and how social media created a negative impact in COVID-19, as well as the effects of COVID-19 lockdown on the mental health of Generation Z and also how peer pressure and parental pressure play an important role in mental health. Adolescence creates a considerable sensitivity to mental health disorders that can last throughout adulthood, generating significant mental health problems for both the individual and society as a whole. The majority of what is known about teenage mental health, however, comes from developed countries.

I. INTRODUCTION

The American Psychological Association (APA) reports that 81% of Gen Z teens (ages 13–17) have experienced more intense stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. While Generation Z has been called the most depressed generation, members of this group are more likely than their older peers to seek out mental health counselling or therapy. Some 37% of Gen Z are higher than any previous generation report having worked with a mental health professional. The issues that define the current generation are both related to mental health and climate change. It is well established that the deteriorating climate contributes to a wide range of environmental catastrophes and physical health issues. However, little is known about its psychological effects. Public health precautions to combat COVID-19 in danger to mental health and emotional well-being, particularly among today's young adults. Their excessive use of lonely, screen-mediated social media, combined with undeveloped in-person interaction skills, makes them more vulnerable to mental health issues such as loneliness, anxiety, and depression.

Social media is no longer a minor phenomenon; platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube have taken the world by storm. Social media has changed personal relationships, enabling individuals to contribute to a variety of topics, and created new opportunities and obstacles to facilitate collaboration. Organisations urgently need to focus not just on the development of new products and services, but also on effective information exchange, which is critical to their success.

Appearance-related social pressure contributes significantly to the development of a negative body image and self-esteem, as well as serious mental problems throughout adolescence (example, eating disorders, depression, phobias, anxiety, etc.). Identifying who is most vulnerable to social pressure can improve focused prevention and intervention, but findings have been either weak or contentious.

Social media can have both positive and negative impacts on mental health, depending on how it is used and the individual's circumstances. Some potential negative impacts of social media on mental health include:

Comparison and self-esteem issues: Social media often presents a highly curated and idealized view of other people's lives, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy and lower self-esteem.

Cyberbullying: The anonymity of the internet can make people more likely to engage in bullying behavior, which can be extremely harmful to mental health.

Addiction: Social media can be highly addictive, and excessive use can lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation.

FOMO (fear of missing out): Social media can create a sense of pressure to constantly stay connected and up-to-date on what others are doing, which can lead to stress and anxiety.

Sleep disruption: The blue light emitted by screens can disrupt sleep patterns, which can negatively impact mental health. However, social media can also have positive impacts on mental health, such as:



Social support: Social media can provide a sense of community and support, which can be especially valuable for people who feel isolated or have difficulty accessing in-person support.

Increased awareness: Social media can raise awareness of mental health issues and reduce stigma, encouraging more people to seek help.

Access to resources: Social media can provide access to mental health resources and information that may not be easily accessible otherwise.

Expression and creativity: Social media can provide an outlet for self-expression and creativity, which can be beneficial for mental health.

Overall, it's important to be mindful of how social media use is impacting your mental health and to take steps to manage its negative effects, such as setting boundaries and taking breaks when necessary.

SOCIAL MEDIA

People use social media to stay in touch and interact with friends, family and various communities. Businesses use social applications to market and promote their products and track customer concerns.

Billions of people around the world use social media to share information and make connections. On a personal level, social media allows you to communicate with friends and family, learn new things, develop your interests, and be entertained. The benefits of embracing and implementing social media are considerable. Although interest in social media is growing, on the other hand knowledge workers and managers attend to participate in this collaborative environment because they may lack motivation or are unaware of the benefits of using these technologies for professional reasons. organisations, on the other hand do not typically allow their employees to utilise social media Technology Because they are concerned about the risk and consequences of potential misuse

HOW SOCIAL MEDIA AFFECTS GEN Z

Social media started to ingratiate itself into the mainstream media in the late 2000s. It is now a regular part of our daily lives. Social media has long been directly linked to declining mental health and teenagers and young adults because of its prevalence and nature. Teens spend a good amount of their time on social media and hence the potential of having negative thoughts increases. Many countries implemented lockdown Measures in 2020 to come back the spread of Coronavirus. During this time, social media became the primary source of

pandemic information (Laato et al., 2020). Social Media use during the pandemic lockdown was found to have the potential to influence individual psychological well being, particularly among generation Z. Multiple studies have found a strong link between heavy social media and an increased risk for depression, anxiety, loneliness, self-harm, and even suicidal thoughts. This is as they start comparing their lives with others which brings a sense of insecurity in their minds like the way they look their appearance etc online platform are known for always over exaggerating things and thus post only about all the happy moments for the sake of likes and getting famous. It gives unrealistic views of others lives. Which influences a lot of teens which results in a fear of missing out and loneliness. Social Media is also a sort of addiction and distraction in the lives of the students. Gen Zers are aware that social media affects their emotional wellbeing. Therefore, they're ready to leave it to reduce stress and balance their emotions out. Despite them loving to make purchases and follow brands on social media, they know that social platforms are capable of harming their lives. Gen Z's use of devices continues to increase. Recent data revealed that 98% of them own a smartphone and that in the third quarter of last year, they averaged more than 4 hours a day on apps — and that figure doesn't include gaming time. The majority (97%) of Gen Z consumers say they now use social media as their top source of shopping inspiration; 65% say they use social media to find entertaining content; and 61% of them are specifically interested in watching more video content. Brands that want to capture this audience's attention need to prioritise authentic, organic content rather than the more polished output they became accustomed to producing for millennials. Today's generation of young people, Gen-Z, has a very different relationship with social media and the internet as it can be seen when the world was hit by the covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and most work and school went virtual, social media became even more prevalent in our lives.

Social media has become an integral part of the lives of Generation Z, which is the demographic cohort born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. While social media can have positive effects on this group, such as providing a platform for self-expression, creativity, and connection, it can also create several challenges, including:

1. **Cyberbullying:** Social media can be a breeding ground for cyberbullying, which can have



severe negative impacts on the mental health and well-being of young people.

2. Body image issues: The idealized and often unrealistic images and expectations presented on social media can lead to body image issues, eating disorders, and low self-esteem.

3. Online addiction: Social media can be highly addictive, leading to decreased productivity, lack of focus, and social isolation.

4. Information overload: With the amount of information available on social media, it can be challenging for young people to navigate and discern what is factual and trustworthy.

To address these issues, it is essential to create awareness, educate young people on healthy social media habits, and promote digital citizenship. Parents, educators, and policymakers can play a vital role in promoting positive social media use and reducing the negative effects on the well-being of Generation Z.

EFFECT OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

The Pandemic of the new covid-19 has posed Severe threat to the Global Health system. according to the UN assessment, “ why is the covid-19 situation is, in the first instance, a physical health catastrophe, it also has the seeds of a serious mental health crisis if action is not taken”. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant worldwide impact on the lives of more than 1.6 billion students at its peak and their schooling. The covid 19 Pandemic has had an unparalleled impact on individual lives. to limit the spread of virus, government around the world have instituted measures of isolation and social separation since January 2020 which has resulted in mandatory quarantine For people who are ill or at the risk of infection, limits on social activities such as the closure of schools, pubs, restaurant and entertainment events as well as larger restrictions on freedom of movement and assembly They were not able to socialise which led to isolation and loneliness .Online schooling brought a big toll on their focus level and academics a lot of students who secured straight as in academics earlier were now struggling to understand everything. The issue of degrading mental health due to pandemics has been reported in the past (Hawryluck et al., 2004; McAlonan et al., 2007; Lau et al., 2010; Xiang et al., 2014). The circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic have increased the stress and anxiety in people (APA 2020; Tandon 2020; Wang et al., 2020), including high school students. Liang et al. (2020) report a much higher fraction of youth

with psychological issues during the COVID-19 pandemic when compared to prior pandemics.

II. PEER PRESSURE

The word peer comes from the Latin word par which means equal. When we are at par with someone, we are their peer. The ‘teenage’ is the age when peer pressure plays a vital role. Peer pressure can be both positive as well as negative. It's up to the individual to make the best out of every situation. Peer pressure may always be there-we have to use it wisely as we navigate through life. Peers are those people who are our friends or family members or somebody who we want in an event with us. Who goes to school with us and works with user pressure or influence is when you do something because you want to feel accepted and valued by your friends. Impact of peer pressure can be negative or positive .

It's about getting a right balance of being yourself and our fitting with your group Negative peer pressure can lead teens to bad direction Some of them worry that other kids can tease them if they don't go along the group

The effects of such behaviours can decrease self-confidence, self-worth and distance from family members and friends.

Peer influence during adolescence is normal and tends to peak around age 15, then decline. Teens get better at setting boundaries with peers by age 18 Some kids give into peer pressure because they want to be liked, to fit in, or because they worry that other kids might make fun of them if they don't go along with the group. Others go along because they are curious to try something new that others are doing. The idea that "everyone's doing it" can influence some kids to leave their better judgement, or their common sense, behind. Peer pressure

PARENTAL PRESSURE

Parental pressure and social media usage can be a challenging combination for teenagers to navigate. While parents may have valid concerns about their child's social media use, excessive pressure or control can have negative impacts on the teenager's well-being and relationship with their parents.

Some potential issues that can arise from parental pressure and social media usage for teenagers include: Resentment and rebellion: If teenagers feel that their parents are overly controlling or critical of their social media use, they may rebel or become resentful, which can strain the parent-child relationship. Secrecy and dishonesty:



Excessive parental pressure may lead teenagers to hide their social media activity or lie about their usage, which can damage trust and communication. Anxiety and stress: Constant monitoring and criticism of social media use can create feelings of anxiety and stress in teenagers, which can negatively impact their mental health. Social isolation: If parents prohibit social media use entirely, teenagers may feel socially isolated and miss out on opportunities for connection and self-expression.

To promote healthy social media use, it is essential for parents to engage in open and supportive communication with their teenagers. Instead of imposing strict rules or criticizing their child's social media use, parents can set clear boundaries, provide guidance on safe and responsible usage, and foster a trusting and open relationship with their child. Encouraging a healthy balance between screen time and offline activities and modeling positive social med

While a secure and happy family environment is considered a bare necessity for healthy growth and development, there is a fine line between caring and caring too much. Many parents want their children to be the star of the class, the top of the school. Which is not wrong every person should have a high aim in their life. When students are burdened with such high expectations, good intentions go astray. Children are expected to score high in order to make their parents proud. Some parents obsess over these scores so much that the need for their child to achieve the top score overtakes all else. Parental pressure leads to stress and anxiety

Findings on gender variations In parental pressure have been sparser, but less controversial. They overwhelmingly agree with the conclusion that goals place a higher value on looks as a result goals received more parental beauty norms and modelling behaviour (Helfert & Warschburger, 2013).

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