

Social media and its effects on adolescents' mental health

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate the relationship between social media and its effects on adolescents and their mental health and body image. Adolescents born in the time of social media, are not aware of how much it affects them. The theory suggests that by using social media, and all other social media networks, your mental health will start to decline, meaning that social media, mental health, and body image are somewhat connected.

The research used a quantitative research approach. An online survey was conducted. The self-reported data was from a sample of 78 participants aged between 15 – 36. Participants were instructed to complete a battery of validated scales measuring social media use, mental health symptoms, and body image perceptions. The data was analyzed using suitable statistical methods.

In this sample, the results suggest that social media use alone may not be a significant indicator of signs of mental illness such as depression and anxiety or body image concerns. That is in contrast with other research (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016, Marino et al., 2018, McDougall et al., 2016, Sha & Dong, 2021).

It is recommended that more studies be conducted to get a more in-depth understanding of this complex relationships and to investigate other variables that may contribute to the results of social media usage, mental health problems and body image concerns of adolescents.

Keywords: Social Media, Mental Health, Body Image, Adolescents, Social Media Usage, Social Media and its Effects