

Impact of Social Media on Depression

Vocabulary:

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| 1. Integral | 6. Risk factors |
| 2. Curated | 7. Curb |
| 3. Inadequacy | 8. Adverse |
| 4. Phenomenon | 9. Trigger |
| 5. Fear of missing out (FOMO) | 10. Mindful |

Social media has become an integral part of modern society. From sharing photos and videos to connecting with friends and family, social media platforms have made it easier than ever to stay in touch with others. However, recent studies have shown that social media use may be linked to an increased risk of depression and other mental health issues.

One study published in the Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology found that social media use can lead to feelings of social isolation and loneliness, which are risk factors for depression. The study found that participants who spent more time on social media reported feeling more lonely and isolated, even when they were surrounded by other people.

Another study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health found that social media use may be particularly detrimental to the mental health of young people. The study found that adolescents who spent more than three hours a day on social media were at a higher risk of developing depression and anxiety compared to those who spent less time on social media.

One reason for the negative impact of social media on mental health may be the unrealistic portrayal of life on these platforms. Many people use social media to present a curated version of their lives, highlighting the positive aspects while downplaying or hiding the negative aspects. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem in those who compare their own lives to the idealized versions presented on social media.

Social media may also contribute to a phenomenon known as "FOMO," or fear of missing out. When people see their friends and acquaintances posting about their social activities on social media, they may feel left out or like they are missing out on fun experiences. This can lead to feelings of anxiety and depression.

Despite the negative impact of social media on mental health, there are steps that people can take to minimize the negative effects. For example, people can limit their social media use, avoid comparing themselves to others on social media, and seek support from friends and family offline.

Overall, the impact of social media on depression is a complex and ongoing issue. While social media platforms can provide valuable opportunities for connection and communication, they can also contribute to feelings of social isolation and depression. It is important for individuals to be mindful of their social media use and to seek support if they are experiencing negative effects.

Comprehension questions:

1. What did a study published in the Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology find about the relationship between social media use and mental health?
2. How does the unrealistic portrayal of life on social media impact mental health?
3. What is "FOMO" and how does it contribute to anxiety and depression?
4. What are some steps that people can take to minimize the negative impact of social media on mental health?
5. Is the impact of social media on mental health a simple or complex issue?

Discussion questions:

1. What social media platforms do you use? How many hours a day do you usually spend on social media?
2. What are some positive aspects of social media?
3. Have you ever experienced negative feelings after spending time on social media? If so, what were they and how did you deal with them?
4. Do you think social media can be addictive? Why or why not?
5. How can people use social media in a healthy way?
6. In your opinion, how can social media companies reduce the negative impact of their platforms on mental health?
7. Have you ever experienced FOMO? How did it make you feel?
8. Do you think social media is a good way to stay connected with friends and family who live far away? Why or why not?
9. How do cultural differences impact the use of social media?
10. Have you ever thought about becoming a social media influencer?