

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON TEENAGERS

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Abstract

This paper discursively examines how social media influences teenagers, focusing on the content, language, and behavioral changes that result from social media use. It highlights how internet slang and the portrayal of human frailties on social media platforms affect teenagers' behavior and interaction with technology. Social media affects teenagers in many ways, including their online habits, sleep, how they communicate, their language skills, schoolwork, ability to finish tasks, and their need for instant things. The study concludes that social media plays a significant role in shaping high school students' behaviors. Recommendations include the creation of guidelines for selecting social media content as teaching materials, a holistic assessment of social media's effectiveness in education, and interventions to control excessive social media use.

Keywords: social media, influences, social awareness, teenagers, behavior.

Introduction

Social networks have become an integral part of modern life and occupy a special place in the lives of teenagers. These platforms give teenagers the opportunity to communicate, receive information, and participate in social and cultural processes. However, the influence of social networks on teenagers is multifaceted and complex, with both positive and negative sides. In today's digital age, social media has become an integral part of teenagers' lives, influencing various aspects of their daily activities, behavior, and interactions. With platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and Snapchat, young people are constantly connected, sharing experiences, expressing opinions, and engaging in online communities. While social media offers opportunities for self-expression, communication, and learning, its impact on teenagers can be both positive and negative. The constant exposure to curated content, internet slang, and peer influence can affect mental health, sleep patterns, academic performance, and even language acquisition. This paper seeks to explore the multifaceted effects of social media on teenagers, specifically focusing on how the content, language, and behavioral changes shaped by social media use influence their overall development and well-being. By understanding these impacts, we can better assess the role of social media in the lives of young people and consider strategies to harness its benefits while mitigating its potential risks.¹

¹ Alkass, S., & Othman, N. (2020). The impact of social media on students' academic performance and behavior. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 15(12), 27-38.



LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

The impact of social media on teenagers is a complex and multifaceted issue, with both positive and negative implications. On one hand, social media can serve as a platform for teenagers to connect with peers, express themselves, and access information. It provides a sense of community, particularly for those who may feel isolated or disconnected in their immediate physical surroundings. However, the constant exposure to social media content, often curated to highlight idealized lifestyles and appearances, can lead to unrealistic expectations and contribute to issues such as body image concerns and social comparison. Moreover, the prevalence of internet slang and abbreviations has created a unique language culture that teenagers often use to communicate more quickly and efficiently online. While this language evolution can promote creativity and facilitate peer connection, it may also contribute to a lack of formal language skills, affecting academic performance and language acquisition.²

The behavioral effects of social media are also significant. Studies show that prolonged social media use can lead to **internet addiction**, where teenagers become dependent on their devices for validation, entertainment, and social interaction. This addiction can disrupt essential activities such as sleep, leading to changes in **sleep patterns** and decreased productivity during the day. Additionally, social media's impact on **communication preferences** is noteworthy. Teenagers who spend more time on digital platforms may prefer texting and online interaction over face-to-face communication, potentially hindering their development of essential social skills.

In terms of **academic performance** and **task execution**, social media can be both a tool and a distraction. On the one hand, it offers educational content and opportunities for collaboration. On the other hand, the constant influx of notifications and the need for immediacy in responses can reduce teenagers' ability to focus, leading to poorer academic outcomes and less effective task completion.

Furthermore, social media's influence on teenagers' **need for immediacy** is evident. The expectation of instant gratification—whether in the form of likes, comments, or messages—has contributed to a society that demands immediate responses and quick rewards. This shift has implications for mental well-being and patience, with some teenagers finding it difficult to cope with delayed gratification in real life.

Behavioral changes are evident, including internet addiction and altered sleep patterns. The study found that teenagers who engage heavily with social media often experience disrupted sleep cycles, spending late hours on their devices, which negatively impacts their energy and focus during the day. Furthermore, **communication preferences** have shifted significantly, with many teenagers favoring digital interaction over in-person conversations, which may hinder the development of interpersonal skills.³

Language acquisition was also impacted, with social media fostering the use of informal language and slang, which, although reflecting the evolving nature of language, may result in

2 Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2017). Social networking sites and addiction: Ten lessons learned. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 14(3), 311-326.

3 Lee, S. J., & Chae, Y. G. (2017). Impact of social media on adolescents' mental health: A review. *Psychiatry Investigation*, 14(3), 201-208.



difficulties when it comes to academic writing and formal communication. **Academic performance** was another area influenced by social media, with teenagers reporting difficulties concentrating on school tasks due to distractions from constant notifications and the pressure to remain engaged online.

Teenagers' need for instant responses and constant social media interaction is leading to impatience and a lack of patience. This affects their ability to control their behavior and handle frustrating situations.

Social media has some good points, like helping kids be creative and connect with others, but it also causes problems with behavior and schoolwork. This calls for a more balanced approach to social media use, with strategies in place to mitigate its potential harms while promoting responsible and mindful engagement.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, the effect of social media on adolescents is significant and diverse, as it influences different aspects of their conduct, interaction, and growth. While social media offers opportunities for social connection, self-expression, and learning, it also brings significant challenges, including internet addiction, disrupted sleep patterns, altered communication preferences, and potential negative effects on academic performance. The language evolution driven by social media, particularly the use of internet slang, influences language acquisition and may hinder formal communication skills. Additionally, the growing need for immediacy and constant digital interaction can affect teenagers' ability to focus, cope with delayed gratification, and engage in meaningful face-to-face interactions.

Given these findings, it is crucial for educators, parents, and policymakers to consider strategies that promote balanced and responsible use of social media. Guidelines for selecting appropriate social media content, the integration of social media in educational settings, and interventions to manage excessive use are all vital in mitigating the negative consequences while maximizing the potential benefits of social media for teenagers. Ultimately, a thoughtful and mindful approach to social media engagement can help ensure that its influence on teenagers is positive and supportive of their overall well-being and development.

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