Effects of Social Media on Society

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Mental Health:

The usage of social media has a direct impact on one's emotional, mental, and physical health. Like everything, social media has advantages and disadvantages. Our tendency to spend a lot of our time on social media can influence our moods positively and negatively. For many, social media may be a source of affirmation and validation. This is when it gets dangerous. People then began to allow comments, likes, and follows to dictate their lives. Social media is not inherently harmful or beneficial. It all comes down to how we decide to use it.

However, social media has a dark side that is not talked about enough. Social media can promote cyberbullying, addiction, misinformation, depression, and social anxiety. Social media is not face-to-face communication, which humans are made for. This is not to argue that social media lacks benefits; on the contrary, there are plenty. These benefits include the capacity to reach a wider audience, the availability of knowledge, and creative potential. As I mentioned, social media is about how you use it. It's more crucial to manage the quality of social media content you consume rather than the quantity.
Relationships:

Relationships suffer more from social media than most people realize. Social media usage may lead to less time for your partner, fuel jealousy, cause missed connections, set unrealistic expectations, and generate unfavorable comparisons. Social media often worsens relationships. Overusing social media often results in less meaningful moments with the person you are in a relationship with, which can lower relationship satisfaction. Social media can reduce real-life interactions, which increases the likelihood of misunderstandings and disagreements.

People also tend to post their relationship information online. This is not necessarily bad, but you open your relationship to judgment from strangers. We tend only to put the good stuff on our socials; there is nothing wrong with that. We must understand that social media is not real life and is often unauthentic, but that is what it's made for, right? To make everyone think we are living our best lives. This is when the unrealistic expectations roll in. This often causes division in relationships. In summary, using social media in moderation is always best, especially when in a committed relationship.
Social networking sites frequently post pictures of users with what appear to be flawless looks and physiques; these users often use filters and other photo-editing software to improve their appearance. Unrealistic beauty standards can result from this, which can cause low self-esteem and physical dissatisfaction in both men and women. Social media frequently presents inflated ideals of prosperity and attractiveness. Due to this ongoing exposure, people may start to doubt their value and appearance. Socials can promote body dysmorphia and dissatisfaction.

Furthermore, those with self-concept issues tend to use social media more often. Individuals in that group are more prone to internalize the slender body ideal and self-objectify. After spending time on social media, women and those with previous body image issues are more likely to feel less confident about their bodies and themselves. Social media use has been linked with an increased risk of eating disorders, negative body image, and disordered eating. This review demonstrated how using social media may lead to low self-esteem, comparisons with others, a lack of emotional control, and idealized self-presentation that harms body image.
Self Esteem:

We have all had a moment of scrolling through socials and instantly comparing ourselves to the person we see on the screen. More often than not, this comes with negative feelings. Social media can cause us to have insecurities we would have otherwise never had. It may also cause us to feel inadequate in our appearances and our lives. It can cause self-absorption, causing us to worry or think about our appearance constantly. This can be highly stressful and tiring. Sometimes, the content we see can make us feel like we are less than or insufficient.

Social comparison has become so popular. This is also why we fish for compliments, seek validation, and crave attention online. Social media is the easiest way to do that, but happiness may be found in more fulfilling places than this. When we base our worth on our followers, likes, comments, etc., it takes a toll on us. It is no way to live. Fishing for praise is draining and unfulfilling. Many are unaware that it damages their sense of self-worth, as it has become routine.
False Information:

Social media can be both a trustworthy and unreliable information source. Social media platforms do not impose strict regulations on disseminating misleading data, making it simple and easy for anybody to publish information and for many individuals to access and use it. More people are exposed to false rumors than accurate facts. The way social media can spread news has significantly impacted what comprises media and what is mistaken for the truth.

The way most people get their news is from their socials. False or deceptive information is referred to as misinformation. Sometimes, all it takes is a simple reporting mistake. Occasionally, incorrect information is purposely overstated, employing attention-grabbing headlines or facts taken out of context to make a story difficult to ignore. Online misinformation is spreading. Additionally, with the help of new technology, anyone may significantly alter pictures and videos to create an actuality that doesn't exist.
Exposure to Inappropriate content:

This is more common for children new to social media. The online world is dangerous and full of inappropriate content. Kids who use the internet more often are more likely to encounter obscene material. This may include offensive jokes, violence, or graphic imagery. Internet information is not rated according to suitability or age. Consequently, a child may unintentionally or intentionally stumble across this sexually explicit, violent, or inappropriate content if adult supervision and guidance are lacking.

Such material may have detrimental psychological impacts. All generations struggle with the same questions of curiosity and investigation, but thanks to the internet, knowledge is much more readily available. A child who is exposed to sexually explicit content may normalize and become insensitive to risky behavior. It may even mold a child's notions of what relationships are like.
FOMO:

The abbreviation FOMO means "fear of missing out." This is a typical occurrence that has escalated because of social media use. The drive to fit in is the root of FOMO. People yearned to fit in long before phones, but social media has only intensified this fear of missing out. The average user typically spends two hours a day on social media. As such, we are more aware than ever of how other people choose to spend their time.

Some people may develop FOMO, or the fear of missing out, due to this continuous flow of information. Feeling a part of something is one of our basic needs. One other name for this need is "social hunger". This drive clarifies why FOMO may negatively affect specific individuals and highlights how important a sense of belonging may be for others. Having a sense of belonging and being socially engaged are both beneficial. Being socially connected offers many advantages. There is proof that social connectivity is associated with a higher quality and longer lifespan.
Addiction:

It has been shown that social media addiction has a detrimental effect on the relationships and mental health of individuals who suffer from it. Throughout the past years, checking and scrolling through social media has grown in popularity. Some users develop an addiction to social networking sites and use them excessively or compulsively. Addiction to social media doesn't happen by accident. Actually, websites are meant to be compulsive.

The platforms are designed to cause the brain to release dopamine. People post more because they wish to experience that emotion in the future. This system of intrinsic rewards affects us all. This is the process that leads to addiction to social networking. When we receive rewards that make us happy, we begin to crave them more and more until it becomes difficult for us to restrain our urges. We continue to do it despite the drawbacks.
Self-absorption:

What does it mean to be self-absorbed? People are self-absorbed if they constantly obsess about their ideas, feelings, and behavior. People who are obsessed with themselves rarely consider the feelings of others. Self-centered conduct is yet another result of using social media. Sharing intimate photos and personal thoughts on social media might result in an unhealthy self-centeredness where you put more effort into upholding your online persona than in building authentic connections with those around you. People love to be perceived in a certain way, and they love to feel validated.

They want to appear like they’re living that happy, idyllic lifestyle. Wanting this attention is often caused by a lack of confidence, not by too much of it, as most people assume. Occasionally, people who give off the impression of being self-centered are really behaving out of desperation rather than vanity. Nobody posts anything on social media intending to receive no response. You anticipate attention of some kind when you upload it. Social media is an excellent tool for drawing attention. This becomes problematic when we become utterly fixated on others and reliant on them for approval.
Social Isolation:

Social media usage may amplify feelings of isolation by replacing in-person social connections with virtual ones. With social media tools at our disposal, virtual connections frequently replace in-person interactions. Social disengagement and alienation often result from spending more time on social media checking in on friends rather than actually seeing them. Individuals with an addiction to the Internet experience greater levels of social isolation and loneliness compared to those without such an addiction. Having cell phones and other devices with us all the time often keeps us from forming personal relationships.

Many people have developed the bad habit of picking up their phones whenever they have free time; this tendency may contribute to our growing sense of loneliness. Humans were made for genuine connections, not ones made virtually. Our mental and physical health can significantly benefit from in-person encounters. As I was researching, I found that face-to-face interactions cause some areas of our nervous system to produce dopamine and oxytocin, two feel-good hormones, that assist in controlling our reactions to stress and anxiety. Additionally, it aids in lowering the primary stress hormone, cortisol.