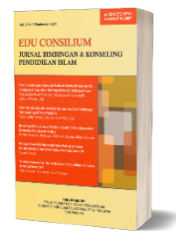




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## Psychological Impact of Social Networking Sites on Indian Adolescents

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### Abstract

**Keywords:**

Adolescents;  
Age Range;  
Gender;  
Socioeconomic Status  
(SES);  
Educational Background.

Social media plays an important role in our life. All the youths living in India and different parts of the world are engaged in social media platform they are busy in themselves to meet new people, make new friends and chat with them. It has been seen that not only young people but also old people are also engaged in social media platform. It is true that there are some merits and demerits in everything. Sometimes excessive use to social networking sites can cause a negative psychological impact on the minds of young people. This research paper will focus on the positive use of social networking sites, effect on the mind on the adolescents due to the excessive use of social networking sites and to suggest some solution to it. Social media has also caused some prominent changes in the attitudes and lifestyles of the adolescents.

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### Abstrak

**Kata Kunci:**

Remaja;  
Rentang Usia;  
Jenis Kelamin;  
Status Sosial Ekonomi (SES);  
Latar Belakang Pendidikan.

Media sosial memainkan peran penting dalam kehidupan kita. Semua remaja yang tinggal di India dan berbagai belahan dunia terlibat dalam platform media sosial; mereka sibuk bertemu orang baru, membuat teman baru, dan mengobrol dengan mereka. Tidak hanya orang muda, tetapi juga orang tua yang terlibat dalam platform media sosial. Memang benar bahwa ada beberapa kelebihan dan kekurangan dalam segala hal. Terkadang, penggunaan media sosial yang berlebihan dapat menyebabkan dampak psikologis negatif pada pikiran remaja. Penelitian ini akan fokus pada penggunaan positif media sosial, efeknya pada pikiran remaja akibat penggunaan media sosial yang berlebihan, dan untuk mengusulkan beberapa solusi untuk masalah ini. Media sosial juga telah menyebabkan beberapa perubahan yang menonjol dalam sikap dan gaya hidup para remaja.

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## Introduction

Social media has become a daily habit in most people's lives. Individuals across different age groups use social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram for communication and networking, and Indians spend approximately 2.4 hours a day on social media alone (LaRose et al., 2010). Young individuals aged 18-24 years spend excessive time on these applications, with Facebook and

Instagram having 97.2 million and 69 million users from this age group alone in India, clearly showcasing growing dependency on social media (Valentine, 2013). The constant use leads to exposure to risky content, changes in behavioral patterns, feelings of inferiority, and even cyberbullying, resulting in grave mental health challenges and illnesses (Owusu, 2014). However, this use of social media helps us to connect with our friends and families who are far away, and also we can meet new friends, but excessive use of this platform can create negative problems in our lives (Patmanthara et al., 2019).

In India, the most popular social networks are YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp (Thakur, D., & Chander, 2018). Studies indicate that the threat of internet dependence seems to be rising, especially among youthful people. Social networking spots like Facebook, Twitter, online games, online shopping, gambling, etc., lead to an increase in the figures of internet dependency and can produce a serious problem in the near future among adolescence. Internet addiction can have wide-ranging adverse consequences on an individual's life, affecting interpersonal, social, occupational, psychological, and physical functioning. Studies have shown that internet dependence has resulted in stress, depression, and anxiety in adolescents and scholars. In India, the use of the Internet is high among young people and scholars (D'Aurizio et al., 2023; MendoLázaro et al., 2019; Özdin& Bayrak Özdin, 2020). The objectives, tried to point out the merits of social networking sites on Indian adolescents and also to find out the negative psychological impact of social networking sites on the mind or health of Indian adolescents. Lastly, to find solutions to those problems.

**Method**

This research employs a theoretical approach, synthesizing findings from recent articles, research papers, and newspapers to examine the psychological impact of social networking sites (SNS) on Indian adolescents. The study focuses on understanding the various dimensions of internet addiction and its physical and mental health impacts through a comprehensive review of existing literature.

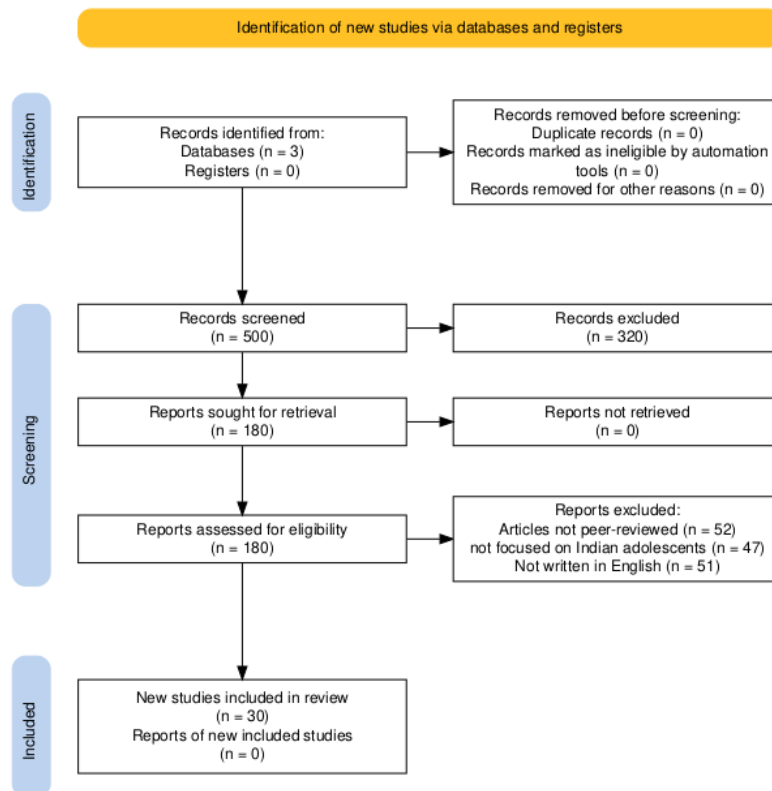


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram Source: Prepared by authors after Haddaway et al., 2022

To initiate the literature/systematic review, the search was conducted on various databases including PubMed, Google Scholar, PsycINFO, and Scopus using specific keywords such as "Social Networking Sites," "Psychological Impact," "Indian Adolescents," "Internet Addiction," and "Mental Health." The search criteria consisted of inclusion and exclusion parameters. Inclusion criteria required articles to be published in the last ten years, peer-reviewed, focused on Indian adolescents, available in English, and addressing the psychological impacts of social networking sites (SNS). Exclusion criteria excluded articles that were not peer-reviewed, published before 2013, not focused on Indian adolescents, non-English articles, and those not addressing the psychological impacts of SNS (Fig. 1). The screening process would visualize these steps according to the PRISMA procedure, ensuring a comprehensive and structured approach to article selection.

#### *Data Collection and Analysis*

Data were collected through an extensive review of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journals, books, and credible online sources. The literature review focused on studies conducted within the last decade to ensure the relevance and timeliness of the information.

Key areas explored in the literature include: The prevalence of SNS usage among Indian adolescents, The psychological effects of excessive SNS use, including anxiety, depression, and social isolation, Physical health issues related to prolonged use of mobile devices and Various forms of internet addiction and their specific impacts on Indian adolescents.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, identifying recurring themes and patterns related to the impact of SNS on adolescents' mental and physical health. This method allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of internet addiction and its consequences.

#### *Scope and Limitations*

The scope of this study is limited to theoretical research, focusing on synthesizing existing knowledge rather than generating new empirical data. This approach provides a broad overview of the current state of research on the topic but may not capture all nuances of individual experiences with SNS.

### **Result**

This research is based on a theoretical study that synthesizes findings from recent articles and newspapers on the impact of social networking sites (SNS) on Indian adolescents. Social networking sites play an important role in daily life in India, facilitating communication and information sharing. However, their usage can cause significant physical and mental health problems, especially among adolescents.

Many young boys and girls in India spend hours at home on their mobile phones, leading to various neurological issues. Recent studies have identified several types of internet addiction that can severely affect Indian adolescents:

**Cybersex Addiction:** Involving internet pornography, which can lead to unhealthy sexual behaviors and psychological distress (Meilani et al., 2023; MuñozRodríguez et al., 2023; SeigfriedSpellar, 2018; Zohor Ali et al., 2021). **Net Compulsions:** Such as gambling, trading stocks, online auctions, and online shopping, which can result in financial problems and obsessive behaviors (Nashikkar, 2023; Shuai et al., 2018; Singh & Singh, 2021). **CyberOnline Relationships:** Including online dating, which can affect real-life relationships and social interactions (Barlett & Scott, 2023; Chao & Yu, 2023; Craig et al., 2020; Sespiani et al., 2021; Situmorang, 2020).

**Computer and Gaming Addiction:** Leading to excessive gaming, which can interfere with daily activities and responsibilities (Kurt et al., 2018; Shamsi et al., 2023; İ. Taş & Güneş, 2019b, 2019a). In 1998, Dr. Kimberly Young developed the Internet Addiction Test (IAT), a 20-item questionnaire

administered by a proctor to identify the extent of internet addiction in individuals. This test has been widely used to understand the various dimensions of internet addiction and its impacts. The excessive use of the internet and social networking sites can lead to several physical health problems, such as Musculoskeletal Pain: Prolonged use of mobile devices can result in musculoskeletal pain (Ynolaki et al., 2023). Nerve Damage: Repetitive motions can cause nerve damage, leading to pain and numbness in the hands (Anwar et al., 2023; Gandhi et al., 2023).

Disrupted Sleep Patterns: Excessive screen time can disrupt sleep patterns (Patel et al., 2018; Riemann et al., 2022, 2023). Eye Strain and Vision Issues: Extended screen exposure can cause eye strain and vision issues. Obesity: Sedentary behavior associated with excessive internet use can lead to obesity (Franklin & Brancati, 2015; Nugraha & OharaHirano, 2014; Wongsawat, 2017). Emotionally, internet addiction can lead to: Depression: Excessive use of social media has been linked to higher levels of depression (Granon& Leroy, 2023; Richardson & Brahmabhatt, 2021). Dishonesty: Users may lie about their activities or time spent online (Robert, 2019; I. Taş & Güneş, 2019). Anxiety: Constant connectivity and fear of missing out (FOMO) can increase anxiety levels. Reduced Social Skills: Excessive online interaction can reduce face-to-face social skills (Özdin& Bayrak Özdin, 2020; Pihkala, 2020). Aggressive Behaviors: Exposure to online conflicts or violent content can increase aggressive behaviors (Yovel et al., 2011). Emotional Instability: Frequent internet use can lead to emotional instability (D'Aurizio et al., 2023; MendoLázaro et al., 2019).

These findings highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of internet addiction and its impacts on both physical and mental health among Indian adolescents. By drawing on past literature, this study underscores the importance of addressing these issues through education, awareness, and appropriate interventions. Negative psychological impact of social networking sites on the mind or health on Indian adolescents

Excessive use of social media has been linked to a range of mental health problems, particularly among Indian adolescents. One of the major issues is the development of poor social skills. Indian adolescents who spend a significant amount of time on social media may become detached from the real world, preferring virtual interactions over face-to-face communication. This detachment can lead to difficulties in developing and maintaining real-life relationships, as individuals may lack the necessary social skills to engage with others in person.

Another common problem is restlessness. Indian adolescents, in particular, feel a compulsive need to check their social media accounts frequently. This constant urge can disrupt their daily routines and contribute to feelings of anxiety when they are unable to access these platforms. Studies have shown that this restlessness is linked to the fear of missing out (FOMO), which can exacerbate anxiety and stress levels (Przybylski et al., 2013).

Distraction is also a significant issue associated with excessive social media use. Young people in India often find it difficult to concentrate on their studies or other important activities because they are distracted by social media notifications and the constant need to stay updated. This distraction not only affects academic performance but can also lead to broader cognitive issues. The anxiety and stress caused by this constant distraction can, in severe cases, lead to suicidal thoughts and behaviors (Lin et al., 2016).

The proliferation of false information on social media is another concern. Indian adolescents are often exposed to misinformation, which can shape their opinions and behaviors in harmful ways. This exposure can lead to antisocial behaviors, including violence, as individuals act on false beliefs and misunderstandings (Tandoc et al., 2017). Furthermore, the stress and anxiety resulting from exposure to false information can significantly impact mental health, potentially leading to severe consequences such as suicidal intentions (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010).

Health-related problems are also prevalent among heavy social media users in India. Prolonged use of mobile devices can lead to physical health issues such as eye strain, dark circles

under the eyes due to lack of sleep, and neck pain from poor posture. These physical symptoms can contribute to more severe neurological problems over time, such as carpal tunnel syndrome and chronic pain (Rosenfield, 2011; Hakala et al., 2006). The lack of adequate sleep, often due to late-night social media use, can further exacerbate these issues, leading to a cycle of poor health and mental stress (Lanaj, Johnson, & Barnes, 2014).

While social media can provide valuable connections and information, its excessive use poses significant risks to mental and physical health, particularly for Indian adolescents. Addressing these issues requires a balanced approach to social media usage and awareness of the potential harms associated with prolonged engagement on these platforms. Spending quality time with family and friends is crucial for maintaining strong social bonds and emotional health. Engaging in face-to-face interactions helps counteract the isolation that can result from excessive social media use. Studies have shown that direct social interactions can improve mood and overall wellbeing. For instance, Demir et al. (2012) found that quality friendships are associated with increased happiness and life satisfaction. Additionally, participating in community activities and interacting with neighbors can foster a sense of belonging and social support (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010).

While it may be impractical to eliminate social media entirely, setting boundaries and limiting usage can help control addiction. Strategies include turning off nonessential notifications and setting specific times for checking social media. Research by Twenge and Campbell (2018) suggests that reducing social media use can decrease feelings of loneliness and depression. Implementing digital detoxes, where one abstains from social media for certain periods, can also be beneficial for mental health (Vanman et al., 2018).

A balanced diet and regular physical activity are essential for the overall health of Indian adolescents. Proper nutrition supports cognitive function and emotional stability, while exercise helps reduce stress and anxiety. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that adolescents engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily (CDC, 2020). Physical activity has been shown to improve mood and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety (Biddle & Asare, 2011). Adequate sleep is critical for the physical and mental health of young people. Poor sleep patterns can result from excessive screen time, leading to various health issues, including cognitive impairment and emotional instability.

The National Sleep Foundation (2015) recommends that teenagers get 8-10 hours of sleep per night. Limiting screen time before bed and maintaining a consistent sleep schedule can help improve sleep quality (Cain & Gradisar, 2010). Parents play a vital role in managing their children's social media use and overall wellbeing. Open communication between parents and children can help address issues related to social media and mental health. Parents should regularly discuss the potential impacts of social media and establish clear guidelines for its use. A study by O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) emphasizes the importance of parental involvement in monitoring and guiding children's internet use. Moreover, parents should model healthy social media behaviors and encourage offline activities.

## Discussion

This research is based on a theoretical study, drawing from recent articles and newspapers that highlight the significant role social networking sites play in our daily lives. However, the extensive use of these platforms can lead to numerous physical and mental health problems, particularly among adolescents. Many young individuals spend excessive hours at home on their mobile phones, which can lead to a range of neurological issues. For instance, continuous screen exposure and poor posture can cause musculoskeletal pain, including neck and back pain (Hakala et al., 2006). Moreover, prolonged usage of social media is associated with various forms of internet addiction, each posing distinct challenges. These include cybersex addiction, involving compulsive engagement with internet pornography, which can lead to psychological distress (Young, 1998); net

compulsions, such as online gambling, stock trading, and shopping, resulting in financial and behavioral problems (Greenfield, 1999); cyber online relationships, where excessive online dating can impair real-life social interactions (Whang, Lee, & Chang, 2003); and computer and gaming addiction, which can interfere with daily responsibilities and academic performance (Kuss & Griffiths, 2012). Dr. Kimberly Young's development of the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) in 1998 has been instrumental in identifying the extent of internet addiction and its multifaceted impacts. Physically, excessive use of the internet can lead to body aches, carpal tunnel syndrome, insomnia, vision problems, and weight gain. Carpal tunnel syndrome and vision issues are particularly notable due to repetitive strain and continuous screen use, respectively (Muller et al., 2010; Rosenfield, 2011).

Additionally, the sedentary lifestyle associated with prolonged internet use can contribute to obesity and related health issues (Tremblay et al., 2011). Emotionally, internet addiction can cause significant distress, leading to depression, anxiety, social isolation, dishonesty, aggression, and mood swings. Studies have shown that heavy social media use can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and depression (Pantic, 2014), while the constant need to stay connected can heighten anxiety levels (Przybylski et al., 2013). Furthermore, the lack of real-world social interaction can result in social isolation and emotional instability (Nie, 2001; Leung, 2004). These findings underscore the complex and pervasive impacts of internet addiction, highlighting the need for effective interventions and awareness to mitigate these risks.

## Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive examination of the psychological impacts of social networking sites (SNS) on Indian adolescents. The findings indicate that while SNS can offer valuable opportunities for socialization and information sharing, their excessive use can lead to significant mental health issues. These issues include increased anxiety, depression, social isolation, poor social skills, and exposure to false information, which can further exacerbate mental health problems. This study comprehensively examines the psychological impacts of social networking sites (SNS) on Indian adolescents, revealing both opportunities and significant mental health risks. While SNS facilitate socialization and information sharing, excessive use is linked to increased anxiety, depression, social isolation, poor social skills, and exposure to misinformation. Additionally, prolonged SNS use can lead to physical health problems like eye strain, musculoskeletal pain, and poor sleep patterns, further contributing to mental stress. Internet addiction and behavioral changes negatively affect adolescents' daily lives, academic performance, and real-life social interactions. To mitigate these effects, balanced SNS use is crucial, alongside digital literacy education, increased parental and educator involvement, mental health support, promotion of positive content, and policy changes. Future research should focus on the long-term impacts of SNS usage and effective interventions to better support adolescents' mental health and well-being in the digital age.

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