

The Psychological Challenges of Adolescent and Young Adult Social Media Overuse: Addiction of the 21st Century

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ABSTRACT

Along with the development of technologies, human beings live in the widest possible opportunities in terms of information exchange. This process is developing day by day. Communication between people is happening very fast nowadays. People are constantly exchanging information with each other. Social media has an invaluable role in making this exchange so fast. They share through their personal accounts and provide this exchange of information by forming personal communications. Social media accounts act as a personal virtual identity of people nowadays. People meet new people using information displayed in their profiles. The extent to which the information on social network reflects the truth is also related to the honesty of the profile owner. Currently, young people and teenagers, which the world calls "Generation Z", use social media more. Through this, they satisfy their social and self-actualization needs. From this point of view, they have the most influence of social media. If we look back to the 80s and 90s of the last century without going too far, we will see that people belonging to the same age group met these needs by communicating live in real life. But now that is not the case. If families used to find it difficult to invite their children who were playing outside to eat in the evening, now it is difficult to invite them to the table because of the

computer and telephone in their room. Teenagers, who were criticized for "not coming home from the outdoor" before, now do not "go out of the house" (İdris M.,2017).

Even this simple example is an indicator of the great change of our time. Social media tools work with certain algorithms that are programmed to find our interests. As the younger generation of users looks at the posts, a base is formed related to their interests, and the next flow of information is adjusted accordingly. This leads to the fact that young people and adolescents who are inclined to comfort and entertainment, and whose has not yet been fully formed, spend more time here. All this increases their attachment to the virtual space while weakening their real interpersonal relationships. Because here young people are not judged and are accepted as they are.

Keywords: personality, technology, virtual space, social media, needs, social media addiction

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of technology in our ever-evolving world is extremely important. The world is developing against the background of technological changes. The rapid development of technology also causes many changes in people's activities. People do almost all of their work through technology. On this basis, we can say that technology is everything. Of course, young

people are the most active in this process. They adapt more easily to the innovations brought by all these changes. The most important nuance brought by technological changes to our lives is social media. Social media is a kind of communication technology and nowadays it has found its place in people's daily activities and it has become a tool that more and more people are starting to use every day. Through social media, people express themselves and connect with other people. This type of relationship already affects the communication style of normal everyday people. Through social media, people easily establish relationships and exchange information with people miles away in minutes.

All this all seems very interesting and easy. Of course, through this, people form easier connections and exchange information with each other. If you look at the last 10 years without going too far, it seems incredible. Technologies, technological innovations and the spread of information are accelerating every day. People are faced with dozens of new information every minute, trying to do several things at the same time. All this brings with it different concerns. Imagine that in the last century, people communicated with each other through means such as letters, telegraphs, and later telephones, while they received information from the world through newspapers and television, but now they transfer information to the other party in seconds through the Internet, and learn about the world through social media. It is considered that the news of a day ago has lost its relevance for people. The fact that people are connected with social media in this way also causes various changes in their lives. So, let's take a look at the past few times ago. Recently, Instagram was banned in Turkey, and shortly after, it was said that Instagram would not be open for a while. After that, people started canceling their reservations in hotels in tourist areas in the country ([https://www.haberturk.com/turkiyede-instagram-erisime-kapatildi-sosyal-medya-](https://www.haberturk.com/turkiyede-instagram-erisime-kapatildi-sosyal-medya-fenomenleri-endiseli-3707936-teknoloji?page=3)

[fenomenleri-endiseli-3707936-teknoloji?page=3](https://www.haberturk.com/turkiyede-instagram-erisime-kapatildi-sosyal-medya-fenomenleri-endiseli-3707936-teknoloji?page=3)).

People didn't want to vacation in luxury places without social media. This is a reason to say that social media plays an important role in our lives today. But when did this social media, which has such an important place in our lives in such a short period of time, appear? Let's take a look at its history and its previous use.

The expansion of social media platforms today is actually historically related to the civilization of the internet system. Since the Internet began to be used for civilian purposes, the participation of the Internet in the process of information exchange has expanded even more. The first electronic data exchange occurred in the 1960s with the advent of electronic mail. (Bälter O. Electronic mail in a working context. Doctoral thesis. Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm/Sweden, 1998, 237 p.) The birth of social media is calculated in 1997 with the launch of the site www.SixDegrees.com. Six Degrees promoted itself as a tool that makes it easy for people to find friends. (Huang Y. Supporting Meaningful Social Networks. Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. University of Southampton. UK, Hampshire, 2009, 156 p.) Since 2006, social media has become more widespread among young people. Nowadays, people not only find friends and build relationships through social media, but also introduce and sell their products, create new business opportunities and hold online meetings. In addition, social media is not only for young people, but for people of all ages, it is a means of making connections and having fun. All of these things lead to social media being more effective today.

The fact that social media is used for so many purposes also affects the diversity of its types. A person now uses several types of social networks, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. People can even have multiple accounts on the same platform, separate professional and personal accounts, open and manage

accounts for their children and pets. As a result of the development of social media, bloggers, influencers, social media managers, etc. new professional fields are emerging and developing. In the current situation, it can be said that in addition to global social media tools, each country is already trying to create social networks according to its own index.

Such a comprehensive use of social media has an impact not only on the social, but also on the economic, political and cultural spheres of the world. That is, through this, people expand and strengthen their social relationships, and by making sales through social media, they influence the economy, industry, and create new cultures by forming certain trends. In addition, we can note that the posts on the social media accounts of the heads of state and other state-important persons are considered politically important and are kept in memory as historical evidence.

Summarizing all these mentioned, we can say that in our current world, social media is actually everything. That is why its use has become a daily necessity among people. People check their social media accounts every day, post frequently, share the places they go, the food they eat, the clothes they buy, the things they do, etc. they share their activities with other people around them. Social media is actually a virtual space and people live there.

Despite all these mentioned issues, while social media increases the possibilities of communication on the one hand, on the other hand it weakens real personal communication. That is, people already want to build relationships with others through the flawless and perfect image they present on their accounts. This, in turn, leads to self-dislike and lack of self-confidence. Beauty standards of young girls are changing, demands for clothing, fashion, beauty products, and artificial filters are increasing. If young people are going to share pictures on social media, they want to share the best. For this, he chooses the places he will go to, takes the best photos,

makes corrections with filters and special programs, and after these processes, he shares the photo. For young girls, the concept of beauty is already identified with the concepts of "model" and "barbie". All this happened after social media artificially raised the standards of beauty.

Each new issue that arises before humanity creates new research topics for the science of psychology. Currently, social media is an integral and important part of our lives, and this is what psychology is most interested in. Because the social media that we are exposed to so much on a daily basis has many effects on the psyche. First, people create accounts of their choice in their user profiles. These personal accounts of theirs are their virtual identities. Here, users share their information in ways they define their own boundaries. As convenient and safe as this may seem, it actually brings with it certain problems. In this way, the user becomes uncomplicated and comfortable. However, this sometimes causes people to form a false circle by giving false information. On Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social media tools, young people can simultaneously create games and invite their friends, give information about their hobbies and interests, as well as their current situation, and make location notifications. All such activities reveal a user's social media identity. In Goffman's language, these "performances" include all activities of a user in a given situation aimed at attracting the attention of any other user and bringing him into the sphere of influence. In social media, young people see their profiles as "their personal showcases". Because the form and use of their own profiles are presented to the attention of other users. (Goffman E. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Istanbul 2021, 248p.) All of this was caused by competition in the field of social media. Social media tools with different functions have emerged every passing day and people wanted to try the innovations with these different capabilities.

Using these tools, which were created to meet our needs for socialization and establishing relationships with our loved ones in distant places, have already become new needs. In other words, every new media tool is no longer a tool in itself, but has become a new human need.

As innocent as these effects of social media use may seem, the issue is actually not that simple. As we mentioned, the people who use social media tools more often are teenagers, whom we call young people, and people who are a little older than that. They almost spend most of their time in these virtual spaces. Social media use leads to poor time management in young people. They kill most of their days with social media "carousels" on their phones. Social media changes the perception of beauty and cultural values of young people, increases their self-doubt, and creates anxiety disorders in them. Thus, the use of social media creates some psychological problems or causes an existing psychological problem to become stronger. In addition, excessive use of social media in young people leads to addiction, anxiety disorders and depression. Sometimes the situation becomes even more serious and leads to suicide.

Addiction to social media, especially the phone, is now common worldwide and is considered a pathological condition. The problem is that young people cannot prevent it even though they know its harm. This makes the matter even more difficult. So, in a study, "What is a telephone?" almost half of the young people (48.1%) answered, "The phone is a nuisance, but I can't do without it." they answered. (Vatandaş, S. The Meaning and Importance of Cell Phones in the Context of Masculinity of Young People. ASEAD, 208-226.)

According to the results of a study conducted at the University of Alabama in 2013, the fact that young people are homeless does not prevent them from using social media. 237 students aged 19 and 65 homeless youth participated in the survey. According to the results of this survey, 90% of the participants are users of networks

such as Facebook and Twitter. From here we can draw a conclusion that the need of young people to use social media sometimes exceeds their primary needs. In other words, being homeless and staying on the street, not eating properly, and not fully providing security are not obstacles to this. People can find their way and use the internet somehow if they want to. (<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/alabama-study-75-percent-of-homeless-youth-on-twitter-facebook/>)

As you can see, the use of the internet and social media has become as important a process for people as meeting their primary needs. In addition to checking social media accounts, young people's daily activities now include "surfing" on these networks, that is, to put it more simply, scrolling up the screen. They think that they are aware of the world around them in this way. As harmless as this may seem, it can lead to serious complications if continued. Everyone pays attention to the posts on their account and works to make it flawless. Other people think that they find spiritual comfort by watching these flawless posts, but it also leads to depression. Personal, work and family seamlessly presented through social media can be exciting and motivating for people. But the issue becomes even more complicated, people's concepts of ideality change and their tolerance decreases. Of course, this is life. Everything cannot be perfect and flawless all the time. No one sees the "flawless" background of this "flawlessness". He doesn't even think about it. This is the "duck syndrome" that has started to form more recently in the literature. Of course, it's great to be successful, try to be perfect, and share success with others. Another hand we can say that: "no pains no gains"

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

To sum up, according to the results of the observations and researches, the use of social media in modern times occupies an important place in the lives of young people.

People do a lot of business through social media. The largest group of users are teenagers and young people. No matter how much we talk about the negative aspects of social media in our article, of course there are also many positive aspects. However, this young group we are talking about does not see its negative aspects and sometimes they can be harmed by it. It goes without saying that it would not be right to ban the use of young people in the age of technology. As much as technology has become a part of our lives, certain boundaries should be set for its correct use and even teenagers and young people should be trained on these issues. They should be explained the pros and cons of social media, information about creating the right accounts, information privacy and cyber security, and at the same time explaining how to manage social media accounts. In addition to psychologists, social media managers, bloggers, and IT specialists can be involved in this process. If this is the case, the use of the Internet and social media will be more conscious, and young people will be forewarned of the threats that may appear on such platforms and will be able to deal with them if necessary.

When using social media, it is useful to be aware of the following:

- Try to be aware of what you use social media for, what the use of social media brings you;
- Try to properly manage the time you spend here, create time limits if necessary;
- Try to create hobbies, interests, physical activities that can replace social media;
- Sometimes try to stop a social media, this will help you stay away from the negative effects of social media for a while, and you will know more clearly how important it is for you;
- Try to form more real social relationships, meet new people and continue your relationships over real life;
- And finally, manage social media to make your life easier and use it to achieve your goals, don't let it use you.

To sum up, social media should be in our lives when we want it, for the purposes we want it to be, not become our life. For this reason, we are focusing on cyber security in relation to the internet, social media, virtual space now and in the future, various awareness-raising activities and researches should be carried out in order not to become dependent on social media.

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