

Does Social Media Positively or Negatively Affect Young adults?

Social Media is a bunch of platforms that are constantly developing. They are websites and applications that are designed to allow people to share content quickly, efficiently and in real-time. You can access social media 24/7 on any device possible. Mobile phones are the most common tool for information, however I-pads, computers and tablets are just a few of others devices possible. The ability to share photos, opinions, and events in real-time has transformed the way we live and the way we do business. I have decided to conduct some research on all the effects social media has on specifically young adults. I have chosen young adults mainly due to the statistics we have showing us that "People aged 16-29 spend the most time (3 hours daily) on social networking platforms". I found this statistic from Henderson (Digital Marketing.org) Therefore I knew I would get the most out of my research if I specifically targeted young adults. When I conduct my research I want to understand people's opinions on the negative impacts social media can have on people's mental, Physical and social well-being. We all hear about the positive impacts social media has but there are many unspoken disadvantages of having a social media platform. I also want to discuss how younger children are choosing to spend their free time on a computer game instead of being outdoors and the negative effects this will have on them in the future.



There are so many social media platforms. For example I have 6 Applications on my phone which I use daily. Social media can be toxic and a scary place to be but it can also help you reconnect with a long lost family member. Personally my current phone screen time is 6 hours a day. This means that during my day the 12 hours that I'm awake. Half of my day is spent holding my phone in my hand aimlessly scrolling away, reading about other people's lives. Most of them whom I don't even know. When you take time to reflect and actually think about this, it's actually quite shocking and makes you think how you could be spending your time so much better. The most popular social media platform currently is Facebook. Facebook has been running for

over 15 years now and it has 1.79 billion daily active users. Facebook is a platform where you can post pictures or paragraphs about your day and how you're feeling. You can interact with pretty much anyone whether you may know them or not. Facebook has lots of free videos on it which resurface every month, these are a great way to kill time and catch up on missed shows or drama tv. They get shared throughout the day by random people and then you may come across them. Depending on whether you like them or not, it will change the stories you see on your feed. More than half of facebook's users are young adults.

With over 500 million active daily users sharing 250 million stories each day, Instagram is the second most popular platform in terms of daily time spent. Social media users spend almost as much time on Instagram as they do on Facebook. Instagram is all about posting a photo and writing a very well-thought caption underneath it. Most pictures you will see will have been edited or airbrushed to make them look better quality and therefore gain more like in the photo. The positives of instagram are they are a great way of announcing news. For example a new born baby photograph is just the cutest image. Posting that onto your insta feed will certainly gain people's attention. 65% of Instagram's users are young adults.



Launched in 2017, TikTok is growing at an incredibly rapid pace. TikTok users spend an average of 46 minutes per day watching videos on the app. An average TikTok user opens up the app 8 times in a day. TikTok is a highly addictive social media candy that urges people to keep watching short videos. People can use a variety of in-app features (music, effects)

to create amazing 15-second videos and share them with the world. Within a few years, TikTok has become the 7th most downloaded app in the last decade. Tik Tok is also a paid social media platform. What I mean by this is, if you get a certain amount of followers who like your videos and share them, you begin to get paid for the videos you make. When you think about it,

without people making videos there would be nothing to watch therefore the platform wouldn't be successful. Therefore the whole point of the application is to create lots of good videos and get paid for them. Lots of tick tockers now have this application as their full time job.

These are just a few of the mainstream applications that you can have at your fingertips 24/7. But why do we want them? Why do we want to have likes on our photos and feel accepted by people we don't even know? This is why I'm going to discuss the positives that social media can have on ourselves.

Social media is a great way to connect with friends and family all around the world. It helps you feel connected even when you feel all alone. Social media helps fill up free time that you may have, it also keeps you entertained when you may be having a bad day. There is also all the information you will ever need right at the end of your fingertips. There are so many other positives such as:

- Following/posting animal videos are huge at helping lift us out of tough moments.
- Younger people can get the sense of empowerment when teaching older people how to use technology.
- Social media can help students learn essential job skills.
- Social media helps people understand what's happening around the world. Breaking news or huge headlines that are happening. You are able to find out what's happening within 2 seconds of grabbing your phone.
- Getting likes and compliments gives you a self confidence boost. You feel self-assured and enjoy being confident.

These are just a few of the positive impacts social media can have on a young adult. In my personal opinion there are many more negatives than positives. Social media is not always a nice place to be with people who are angry and frustrated left taking out their emotions on others.

Negative impacts and reasons from using social media platforms are:

- Low levels of self-esteem, this is due to the addiction of not getting a certain amount of likes as others. Feeling like you in competition with them in common.
- Feeling of anxiety and depression-It takes a lot of time and effort to keep up with the unspoken rules and culture of each social media

platform. As a result, this puts additional pressure on teens and young adults.

- Sleep Deprivation- Bad sleeping schedules are very common for young adults. This is due to not knowing when to put the phone down and go to sleep. Too many notifications and messages to go through. This is the reason some young adults aren't going to sleep until 5 am.
- Jealousy and Envy- This is very common among young adults as they haven't fully developed their emotional well-being yet. Jealousy is a bad trait that comes from wishing you had what others have. Across social media many people will be flaunting new cars and expensive items they have. They do this without thinking about others and some of the hardships they may be facing.
- Relationships suffer- Too many young adults spend time on their phones and they don't look up to see what right in front of them. Because of this friendships suffer due to lack of face to face communication.
- Filtering photos and editing- Many people edit pictures in order to gain more followers and likes. This leads to low levels of self-esteem and low body confidence.

One of the main negatives of social media is Bullying. There are so many types of bullying but a form most common is cyberBullying. Cyber bullying is rife on the internet and most young people will experience it or see it at some time. In a recent national bullying survey, 56% of young people said they have seen others be bullied online and 42% have felt unsafe online.



Cyber bullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and it can go viral very fast. There are many different types of cyber bullying such as Impersonation, harassment, Denigration and Flaming. Personally I have had 3 instances where I personally have had a form of flaming and harassment by "friends" in school. They were all over facebook and looking back now seem very silly and petty. However at the time it made me extremely sad and vulnerable. I avoided school and public places, all because I had an argument with a couple of girls. They said a nasty comment on a picture I uploaded. That was the only hate comment I received. All the others were lovely compliments, however that 1 mean comment made me feel the worst I could've ever imagined. That's what is wrong with social media, we look for the imperfections and the negatives because we know we're not perfect. However

when others point it out, it really does knock your self esteem. Cyber Bullying is increasingly common as technology continues to develop. Previously when phones were not around you were able to go home or to a safe place and get away from the harassment of others. However now it is on your phone and it is constantly there. It carries on the next day and all the way through the week. There is nowhere to hide from it. As we all know some effects of cyberbullying are more extreme in others. Cyber bullying can make a person feel that bad that they commit suicide. They end their lives because they are made to feel that worthless. A Lot more support needs to happen and work needs to be done to protect vulnerable adults from online abuse.

Conclusion:

To conclude my research it is clear to see there are many arguments and facts about whether social media is good for you or not. I think the negatives completely outweigh the positives. Getting recognition and compliments should not be something people rely on to become happy. This can come from friends and family, but you need to make connections with them and work on your relationships in order to keep the bonds strong and stable. Social media is just a distraction. It occupies our time, it's addictive and it does not help us to become better people and more successful. We need to use our time wisely, we need to engage with people and learn about others hardships by communicating face to face. Not reading posts online that may not even be true. We have no way of telling if half of the resources we use are right. Yes we can check dates and publishers but there is a lot of information out in the world. There is a high percent chance, that quite a lot of it will have inaccuracies and false statistics. It is important we don't rely too much on what we read and hear about. We need to adventure outside of our comfort zones and see the world first hand. Not through other people's eyes. Social media can be quite a good source of information but it needs to be used in a controlled manner. Using it everyday is not good for our brains or our outlook on life. We need to really take a look at ourselves and see just how much of our lives were wasting by staring at a screen. When it comes to mental health and young people there is a clear connection and this needs to be looked at, and sorted in some way. We cannot control what others say or feel about people, but we can always look at ourselves and stop the hate coming from our side. We have lots of evidence showing us that social media makes young adults more anxious, depressed and stressed. It is important we manage our time wisely and do things that make us happy. We don't need to be focussing on filtering pictures to get us more likes. We need to be happy in ourselves and the way we look in order to be happier in life.

Word count:

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