

Impact of Social Media Influencers on Behavior and Emotional Wellbeing of Adolescents

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Abstract

This research aims to assess the impact of social media influencers on the adolescent's lifestyle and social well-being. The study used a survey of 102 respondents drawn from urban Pakistan using multistage cluster sampling and studied the social media trends and attitudes of the children. The results showed that adolescents using social media had less physical activity, altered relationships, and created different personas on different platforms. There were also social media users who suffered from anxiety related to public sharing, but a huge number of them drew inspiration from the platform. The investigation pointed out the impact of social media on behavioral changes, planning, lifestyle management, sleeping, and studying.

Keywords: Social Media, Behavioral Changes, Adolescents, Lifestyle Impact

Introduction

Social media refers to communication websites that let people from different upbringings to build affiliations with one another by creating a vibrant social structure. Content created by users, promotes research and judgment. Researchers in a variety of domains, including information systems, have given social media considerable attention due to its significance to a wide range of stakeholders.

Social media platforms have more than 100 million registered users. Some social media sites on which users register are twitter, *Facebook*, *WeChat*, *Share Chat*, *Instagram*, *LinkedIn* and many more. Social media has both positive and negative effects. Observers review that the impact of social media is rising day by day. Social media plays a major role to communicate and develops a great link between family and friends. It also plays a role to reach an audience all over the world (Mishra, et al., 2021).

Social media influencers are the individuals who have more penetration in audience due to their creative content, attractive personality or other gimmicks. Since they have a large number of followers so they can make decisions of others because of his/her authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with audience. Influencers cultivate a personal and relatable connection with audience by developing a relationship with interests, values, and lifestyle and play a role in establishing credibility and trust. They influence through entertaining vlogs, provoking posts, or glimpses into their lives and often get a chance to be a part of some brands, advertisements and also gets a chance to connect with celebrities. Some influencers promote positive messages. They are the influencers that focus on their self-development. Social media influencers are also criticized for promoting unauthentic products. They earn money through sponsored promotions Every person has its own eye to experience with social media. Usually influencers also show single phase of their life on social media.

Influencers are identified by large data. We can say with the help of previous research studies that influencers are categorized by using big data. Studies proposed that some influencers have great reach and they post their content more often but some have less reach and they post consistently depending on the type of content they post. Mainly the influencers are identified by the by the effectiveness on followers and efficiency the influencer has and its compatibility tool of marketing (Harrigan et al., 2021).

Social media influencer engages a large number of audiences. Influencers have reputation of authority to grab the attention of large number of social media followers. Influencer attracts massive number of social media followers. The followers start persuading the lives of social media influencers. The followers start doing the same things which the influencers do. Just as in case we see that social media influencers do paid promotions with brands and also give reviews to some products. The followers blindly start using their products and trust social media influencers. Rather we can see that some followers may keep their pockets empty by trying to perceive the lifestyle the social media influencers have. Influencers are also considered as leaders, motivators, inspirers, trendsetters, fusionist, or celebrities. We can say that the brands also use influencers to promote their products. As influencers have a large number of people who follows them and trusts them. So the brand gets a great reach of people through social media influencers and has a great growth of their brand. Influencers have sincere and loyal audience who are interested in specific topic. Influencers create interested content for their audience. Influencers are well known about their audience so they create the content according to their interests. Influencers content sometimes also have a bad impact as followers follow every act without well knowing that's its good or bad for their health and life. As many

influencer's shows smoking, shisha and many that kind of stuff which is injurious to health and their lifestyle also being destroyed by some perspectives. Telecommunications providers in Singapore are the influencers who involve themselves in Singapore. Influencers also lose their trust and beliefs to followers while they promoting some brands. By other means, the influencers also earn by the brands and the promotions of products. The influencers do the brand shoots and products by which their breads and butter goes on (Abidin & Ots, 2016).

Social media influencers usually use the animated and attractive characters to pursue the attention of young children. Children build a great relationship with characters whom they believe and trust a lot. They have a Para social relation with the animated characters. (Kapitan & Silvera, 2016)

In order to strengthen our case regarding effect of social media on behaviors and life style, let's mention a few key researches works in this regard.

Casares & Binkley (2022) gauged the associations amongst early temperament and behavioral problems across a 12-year period in an unselected sample of over 800 children. Temperament scores were derived from the behavior judgments given by examiners who observed children aged three, five, seven, and nine years old. At every age, factor analysis revealed three variables: approach, lack of control, and sluggishness. Temperament traits at ages 3 and 5 were found to have theoretically coherent associations with behavior problems that were evaluated independently by parents at ages 13 and 15, teachers at ages 9 and 11, and teachers at ages 15 and 16. Sluggishness was weakly connected with both anxiety and inattention, especially in girls; Approach was associated with fewer internalizing difficulties in boys; and Lack of Control was more significantly associated with externalizing behavior problems later in life than internalizing problems. Sluggishness and a lack of control were also associated with adolescent competencies. These results suggest that character at an initial age may unambiguously predict the development of psychopathology later in life.

Losa-Jonczyk, (2020) concluded that according to the writers, celebrities are notably more impacted by their own perceptions of themselves. When superstars experience self-deflation, they are more likely to see their success inspiring posts that are meaningful to them yet unachievable. Only when self-views were influenced by self-relevance was excellence relevant. Relevant stars can inspire self-improvement, and if enough time passes and they still seem successful, they may begin to believe that success will eventually come. Responses that are pertinent to the open end in these kinds of circumstances offer a great degree of support for inspiration. Conversely, if it appears that success is unachievable, the participants begin to deflate themselves and believe they will miss the opportunity to attain a suitable level of success. They cease honing their skills and give up at that point, making minimal attempts to succeed.

Memon, et al., (2015) has defined that the influencers have a direct impact on teenagers. Adolescents are most influenced by certain people. Adolescents' purchasing behavior and intention are influenced by various factors. When we consider that parents and the most likable athletes and celebrities serve as role models for consumer behavior in the literature, we can see that the study primarily focuses on young adults who are consumers for socialization purposes. The findings demonstrate that marketing and advertising aim to comprehend the constantly expanding adolescent customer market.

Gaur & Gupta, (2021) says that the career hypothesis states that role models have a momentous impact on an individual's growth. Role models have a major influence on career success. In society, mentors and role models are also very important. Since role models have a significant impact on people's life, many people find inspiration in them. After hearing from the role models, the person makes decisions about his or her job and goals. The person's mentality is developed by the role model. People can have both positive and bad effects, according to self-concept theories. While some individuals may interpret role models negatively, others may take it positively. Certain people have definite career goals and aspirations, while others acquire knowledge worldwide. Some people achieve their goals, while others become confused when their inspiration and ideas fluctuate.

Children's life has undergone significant transformation as a result of media exposure. They begin to adjust the things they have seen in the vlogs as they view them (Ali, R. (2016)).

Social media influencers advertise products in their vlogs to attract children. Mostly food related products are influenced by the children. Importantly children are more likely concerned about the vlog content and the associated product promotion in it rather than television advertisements (Vogel et al., 2021).

Adolescence is associated with the teenage years. At that age the adolescents have different changes in behavior depending on the circumstances they feel and observe (Nguyen, Melewar & Chen 2015).

The developmental stage between childhood and maturity, known as adolescence, is characterized by significant changes in biology, cognition, intra-psyche processes, and interpersonal relationships. Three stages of adolescence are typically distinguished: early, middle, and late adolescence. Probably the most difficult developmental stage is early adolescence. The chronological ages of 10 to 13 years would fall under this category

Typically, marketers use social media influencers on well-known platforms to sway younger audiences. When it comes to food that appeals to them and immediately affects them, children are more impacted, concerned, and appealing. Social media influencers assist brands by providing product reviews to their audience, which serves as a marketing tool for product promotion (Bratu et al., 2019).

Major factors which affect the vogue of adolescents are Activities, Affection, Adoption, Styles and Interaction.

Research Objectives

The study has been conducted to achieve the following goals:

1. To gauge the intensity of usage of social media due to social media influencers
2. To look into the motives behind the influence of social media producers
3. To find out the impact of social media on the life style of adolescent
4. To peruse the changes in online activities of the adolescents

Research Questions

1. What are the major changes in behavior of the young users of social media?
2. To what extent social media influencers impact the young users?

Methodology

The quantitative research method was used for this research. Data was gathered from teenagers in the 12- to 24-year-old age range. Principal objective of this research was to determine how behavior of people associated with their use of social media and how they react to it is affected by it. The aim of the study is to document opinions of social media users, as well as their usage habits and degree of usage. It also investigates whether there are any variations in the impacts it has on individuals who live in various locations and lead varying lifestyles.

Population

This study focuses on social media users, with a particular emphasis on teenagers enrolled in various Faisalabad and Islamabad educational institutions. population chosen from various academics, colleges, and schools. a response gathered via a questionnaire form from a specific population size and assessed in accordance with our planned research framework. Standard questions of the same kind were posed to our audience, "social media users, especially students," in order to assess each person's reaction. The population was chosen based on how social media affects their sleep patterns and academic performance at various schools, colleges, and academics. A subset of students is chosen from various educational institutions, while others pursue private studies. The second category involved the selection of certain students from rural and some from metropolitan regions. They are more sociable and have had the most exposure to social media, which has affected the way they interact with it, react to it, and connect with friends and family. We looked for a variety of information in their responses in order to best meet our goals.

Sample Selection

The cities of Faisalabad and Islamabad were used to pick students from a variety of schools, colleges, and academics, who were then further separated into distinct areas. The areas were divided into further urban and rural categories. Multi-stage cluster and stratified sampling were used in combination for the selection of institutions This sample increases the likelihood of obtaining reliable information.

With this decision, we are better able to gather feedback from residents of various city neighborhoods, each of which has a unique social media usage pattern that may have an impact on the response. We ask for permission from those who are knowledgeable or well-known in using the media and handling various situations. Additionally, a sample group of people was assembled to show how they react in various scenarios and how social media affects their personalities using their experiences with the platform. To better develop the opinions of people who are directly involved in social media and how much they use it, real sampling is being done. By depending more heavily on respondent data, it also confirmed the validity of the data.

Results:

Findings of the study have been tabulated and interpreted below:

Table 1.1 Distribution of Age

Age of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
12-14 years	37	36.3	36.3
15-17 years	51	50.0	86.3
18-19 years	10	9.8	96.1
20 & above	4	3.9	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

The table 1.1 shows the age distribution of social media users among the 102 respondents is as follows: 37 (36.3%) were aged 12–14, 51 (50%) were aged 15–17, 10 (9.8%) were aged 18–19, and 4 (3.9%) were over 20 years old. Notably, those over 20 years old represent 3.9% of the total population.

Table 1.2: Academic Institution

Educational Institutions	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
Public	33	32.4	32.4
Private	68	66.7	99.0
Others (Religious Institutions)	1	1.0	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0

The table 1.2 Among the 102 respondents, 68 (66.7%) attend private schools, 33 (32.4%) attend public schools, and 1 (1%) attends a religious institution.

Table 1.3: Social Media Platform Used

Social Media Application	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Facebook	6	5.9	5.9
Instagram	40	39.2	45.1
Tiktok	31	30.4	75.5
Snapchat	20	19.6	95.1
Other	5	4.9	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

Table 1.3 shows that the respondents' preferred social media networks are as follows: 5.9% use Facebook, 39.2% use Instagram, 30.4% use TikTok, 19.6% use Snapchat, and 4.9% use other platforms.

Table 1.4: Affinity to Follow the Favorite content Creator

Intensity	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Usually Follow the influencers	45	44.0	44.0
Rarely Follow the influencers	31	30.3	74.3
Never Follow the influencers	19	18.6	92.9
Not Able to recall	07	6.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

Majority (Almost half) of the young users of social media agreed that that they follow their favorite content creators. More than one third of the respondents followed the influencers but rarely whereas 19% refused to accept this assumption.

Table 1.5: Panic in Feelings if Social Media is Not Used

Intensity	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	52	51.0	51.0
Rarely	11	10.8	61.8
Sometimes	29	28.4	90.2
Often	10	9.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

The data shows the impact of social media account checks on respondents' moods: 51% never experience stress or anxiety when unable to check their accounts daily, 10.8% feel this infrequently, 28.4% experience it occasionally, and 9.8% frequently feel tension or anxiety in such situations.

Table 1.6: Comparison with others

Intensity	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	64	62.7	62.7
Rarely	17	16.7	79.4
Sometimes	13	12.7	92.2
Often	8	7.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

The table 1.5 shows the frequency with which respondents contrast their online identities with those of others. Of those surveyed, 67% claimed they never compare themselves to others on social media, 16% said they do so rarely, 12% said they do so occasionally, and 18% said they do so frequently.

Table 1.7 Effect of Social Media on sleep before Bed

Effect on Sleep	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No effect	69	67.6	67.6
Helps me sleep	14	13.7	81.4
Makes it harder to fall asleep	6	5.9	87.3
causes the loss of sleep	13	12.7	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

The data shows the effects of social media use before bed on sleep: 59% of respondents reported it makes falling asleep harder, 12.7% said it causes them to lose sleep, and 67.6% stated it has no effect on their ability to sleep.

Table 1.8: Feelings of Socialization

Feelings of Socialization	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
More connected	51	50.0	50.0
More isolated	10	9.8	59.8
No difference	25	24.5	84.3
Not sure	16	15.7	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

The data indicates that 50% of respondents feel more connected through social media, 9.8% feel more isolated, 24.5% see no difference, and 15.7% are unsure of its impact.

Table 1.9: Feelings after Watching Posts of Others Achievements

Feelings about Achievements of others	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Motivates me	72	70.6	70.6
Makes me feel jealous	3	2.9	73.5
Makes me feel happy for them	23	22.5	96.1
Makes me feel inadequate	4	3.9	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

The table above demonstrates how frequently respondents were impacted by other people's posts on their accomplishments. 70.6% of respondents said that sighting posts of others' about their accomplishments motivates them, 2.9% said that glimpsing at others' posts about their accomplishments makes them jealous, 22.5% said that looking at others' posts about their accomplishments makes them happier, and 3.9% said that viewing at others' posts about their accomplishments makes them feel inadequate.

Table 1.10: Mood Swings Due to Social Media Consumption

Feelings about Achievements of others	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never	34	33.3	33.3
Rarely	21	20.6	53.9
Sometimes	35	34.3	88.2
Often	12	11.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

Mood swings due to social media usage is tabulated above, demonstrates how frequently people use social media to get over their bad moods. In response to questions about their use of social media during difficult times, 33.3% of respondents said they never do so, 20.6% said they do so infrequently, 34.3% said they do it occasionally, and 11.8% said they use it frequently.

General Findings of the Study

Upon conducting a demographic analysis, numerous respondents (i.e., percentage of the entire population) were determined to be older than 12 to 24. The majority of teenagers in this age range are enrolled in school. Thus, social media usage seems to be wastage of time. Teenagers today gain tons of knowledge from social media and are inspired by various genres and social media celebrities. These teenagers have engaged themselves too much and use social media for majority of their time. Social media has therefore had the biggest impact on them in terms of changing their routine. To skip straight to their study status, more than 100 respondents were students, indicating that they had to have free time to use social media.

Keeping in view of adolescent's social media use, 86.3% respondents using social media are studying in grade 7-12 and 13.7% are studying in grade 12-16. So its most likely that 20 above are using more social media as compare to under 20 and above 12. 52% adolescents watching social media on daily basis tells the story of how their routine is recreated by schedule of social media.

There are a few who spends even more than 6 hours on social media. Influencers put a noticeable impact on their audience and influence their life style. They are more likely to predict and suppose themselves about life events coming to them. 45.1% using social media more than one hour but less than three hours and 12.7% more than four hours leads to drastic impact on society. Heavy users of social media must be affecting their real life and surroundings too.

During Cross comparison between various factors, research also found out the impact of relation between age, education level and amount of time spend on social media. Most of the social media users having age above 20 are qualified enough to understand contents of social media contents. Simultaneously, these adolescents are clearly using social media by more than one a day.

Outcomes of research Question 1 explains that social media has a profound impact on adolescents, influencing their emotional well-being, behavioral patterns, and social interactions. Results indicate that nearly 50% of adolescents experience a sense of panic or distress when unable to access social media. These finding highlight the extent to which social media has become embedded in the daily lives of adolescents, potentially fostering a dependency that influences emotional regulation.

One of the major behavioral outcomes is the formation of a habit of comparison with others. The carefully crafted content on social media platforms often makes adolescents measure their achievements, appearance, or lifestyle against the perceived

successes of their peers. This behavior can lead to feelings of inadequacy, diminished self-esteem, and a distorted sense of self-worth.

Approximately one third of the adolescents reported that social media usage disrupts their sleep patterns. The excessive time spent online, particularly late at night, interferes with their ability to maintain a healthy sleep routine, which is critical for cognitive and emotional development during adolescence.

Mood swings are another common psychological effect, as adolescents often report fluctuations in their emotional state linked to their interactions on social media. Exposure to both positive and negative content can trigger rapid changes in mood, affecting overall mental health.

Despite these problems, social media also has positive implications for adolescents. Most respondents indicate that it increases their sense of socialization. The opportunities they have in social media to connect to peers, engage with communities of shared interest, and maintain relationships foster a sense of belonging and support.

One other great motivator of many adolescents is the relative success of their friends, usually publicized on social media. Witnessing their friends' accomplishments may motivate youth to set goals and be more ambitious about self-development, in reflection of the potential impact of social media on personal development.

In conclusion, while social media presents notable risks, such as emotional dependency, unhealthy comparisons, and disrupted sleep patterns, it also offers benefits, including enhanced socialization and motivational influences. Understanding these effects is crucial for guiding adolescents toward a balanced and mindful use of social media.

In response to the research question 2 it was found that majority of the users of social media have their favorite content creators, to whom they follow with greater frequency. Influencing power of new trends depends on acceptability of viewers. More he is going to accept it, more likely he is getting the influence. Further viewers only accept trends which they perceive are good for them. No one is going to accept the trend which is not according to his nature. Existing culture also plays a vital role in this decision.

Conclusion: Social media has a profound influence on adolescents, shaping their routines, behaviors, and social interactions. Extensive usage suggests that social media plays a dominant role in their lives, often restructuring their daily schedules and routines. Adolescents' social media habits were found to correlate with their age, education level, and time spent online.

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