

Social Media Addiction

OUTLINE

I. Introduction

II. What are the causes of social media addiction?

1. **Easily accessible:** Due to increase in use of mobile phones and the internet, social media has become easily accessible.

2. **Peer Pressure:** Social media addiction is common in young people due to peer pressure.

3. Reward System Activation:

Social media is based on rewards such as likes, comments, and shares. These rewards give validation to the user which makes it addictive.

4. Loneliness and Coping Mechanism:

Fast life and individualism have increased loneliness. Social media is used as a coping mechanism from loneliness.

III. What are the impacts of social media addiction on an individual?

1. **Depression and anxiety** caused by overconsumption of other people's lives.
2. **Influencer culture** setting unreal standards for common deal, shaping people's sense of self and identity.

IV. What are the impacts of social media addiction on society?

1. **Political polarization and extremism** caused by sensationalized news on social media. Social media creates narratives through misinformation leading to political polarization.

2. **Changing cultural patterns** as social media is depicting societal values and cultural patterns in a different manner.

3. **Targeted advertising campaigns** are making people spend money on things they don't need and it is compromising personal data.

V. What are the ways to curb social media addiction?

1. **Increased face-to-face interaction** and socialization instead of social media meet ups.

2. **Digital detox and setting screen limits** on phones to track usage and to limit it. Digital detox can boost mental health.

3. **Exploring offline outdoor activities** that are productive and give more exposure.

VI. **Conclusion**

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She felt trapped in a box. A box filled with images, faces, clothes, and words. Beautiful faces with their beautiful lives telling her how her life was a mere disappointment. She felt lost among all these faces, she was a misfit. This world had no place for her, it was only a reminder that her life was meaningless and she was falling behind. Amongst all these filters, aesthetics and like wars, her existence had nothing to offer.

Social media is like a leech that sucks the life out of you and you can't get rid of it. You keep using it even when you know it is only making you miserable.

Why are our lives revolving around social media? Why is our sense of self based on the validation we get on social media? Why has social media become suffocating for some people affecting their mental health? This essay will delve into the causes of social media addiction and its effects on an individual, their life and mental health, and on society. Social media addiction is not only setting unreal high standards for people but is also stripping identities, our sense of self, and cultural patterns.

This essay will explore the causes of social media addiction and usage. Social media, in recent years has become increasingly easily accessible. According to **Digital 2022: Global Overview Report** in 2022, **80 million** more people started using a mobile phone and **424 million** new social media users were added in the year. People are now more likely to pay for digital usage and their internet. Internet and social media used to be a luxury, something to be used in free time, but now they have become a necessity. It is no longer a tool for the young people to connect, it is a platform for all ages now. People use it to communicate with people, politicians, businesses, and the government. Thus, internet and social media have become more accessible which have led to social media addiction.

Social media is based on reward system activation. The idea of a reward, likes, more comments and more shares is addictive to people. Rewards release dopamine in people, also known as the happy hormone. These rewards give validation to users. This system of

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reward makes social media addictive. Especially in young people who are shaping their sense of self and are trying to find a place for them in the world. Social media provides them with an avenue to display their activities and express themselves. Therefore, young people look for rewards and external validation on social media which makes it addictive.

Similarly, life has become very fast. People are deeply embedded in an individualistic life hustling to make ends meet. In this fast life, people have also become very lonely. Family patterns are changing and with it loneliness is becoming more common. To cope with this loneliness, social media provides an avenue. At the end of the day, people log into their social media platforms to see familiar faces, familiar voices, their friends they no longer meet and people they used to know. This gives them a connection to other people, it gives them a sense that they are not missing out on life even if they are working day and night. Even if

this connection is not real, social media provides a link to the outer world in a life that is engrossed in work and is lonely. Thus, loneliness is coped through social media which has surged its usage and made it addictive.

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