

# *How does social media influence teenagers' interpersonal relationships?*

- ❖ Why did I choose it?
  - current issue
- ❖ Why is it worthy of attention?
  - causes lack of critical social skills
- ❖ Theoretical significance?
  - affects many aspects of our lives
- ❖ Concept:

➤ *Internet narcissism*: people depend on instant gratification, expect to gain a great number of likes and comments for their posts

# Hypotheses

---

1. The more time an individual spends on social media, the less face-to-face verbal communication will occur with others.
  
1. Spending a great deal of time on social media can lead to emotional disturbance

# Bibliography

— — —

- Ailin Quinlan (2019): How technology and social media is undermining family relationships. *The Irish Times*
  - Lack of interaction with parents from early age
  - Dangers of violent games and social media
- Suren Ramasubbu (2017): Influence of Social Media on Teenagers. *Huffpost*
  - Social media causing emotional instability (e.g.:depression)
  - Anonymity online making teenagers vulnerable to cyberbullying and sexting

How does social media influence teenagers ' interpersonal relationships?



Budapest Metropolitan University

## Abstract

In today's society teenagers are the most excessive users of social media sites and online games. Generation Z has been born into such circumstances, where the internet has a crucial part in shaping their identity and future as well. This addiction aggravates many daily struggles teens have to face due to their age, both at home and in their surrounding environment. It is, therefore, that debates and doubts appear concerning this ongoing matter.

This research aims to focus on the impacts social media has on teenagers and how these influence their interpersonal communication skills and social relationships.

The review has been created by summarizing the vital content of six articles, looking at the most noteworthy aspects.

*Keywords: teenagers, social media, family, effects, exposure, devices*



## Introduction

Thirty years ago, our parents and grandparents used the landline telephone to keep in touch with each other, wrote secret notes and letters too. Nowadays, teenagers would feel alienated if they had to get back to these “technologies” and had to give up on popular social media sites like Facebook or Instagram.

Twenty-first-century teenagers are the first generation that cannot think of life without the Internet. If we look at the current slang of teenage communication, it contains expressions like: “Thumbs Up”, “Activity Feeds” and “Profiles” as Ahn’s (2011) qualitative study declared that these are features of social networks.

Just as for ordinary people, researchers, therapists, scholars, and journalists have also contrasting opinions about whether the Internet is more useful or harmful. As Suren (2017) states in his article, the effect of social networks on well-being hinges on how social networks are used -- whether to connect or to compare.

To make it easier and clearer, I decided to examine the research question from two diverse settings, one of them being teenagers’ relations with their family, the latter being teenagers’ relations with friends and acquaintances.

## **Technology distancing parents and children**

Even if a common view suggests that teenagers need to detach from their parents in order to achieve independence, the parent-teen relationship is vital in multiple ways for adolescents. Based on the study of Kristin A. Moore and Ph.D., Lina Guzman, we can see that positive contact with parents leads to improved self-esteem, better academic performance and a decrease in violent behaviour.

Several researchers, like for example Ailin Quinlan (2018) have established, that attachment is easily formed through eye contact, talking to each other, and skin-to-skin touch, but due to overexposure to technology children often miss out on this.

One of the key problems here is the lack of face-to-face contact. Computer and family interactions usually take place at the same location, at home. Family communication for teens is a lower priority and less desirable than peer contact. Researchers, like Norman H. Nie (2008) indicated the so-called *displacement hypothesis*, which means that a large amount of time spent interacting digitally, evicts time spent in face-to-face contact with others, and can lead to social anxiety and poorer social ties.

## **Social media getting between social connections**

When children reach the age of 13, they become a teenager. This phase is packed with a lot of development and growth. It is in these 7 years, that teenagers form and consolidate their identity since we are not born with it, but it is also shaped by society. According to psychologist Erik Erikson (Cherry, 2019), adolescents must



obtain a clear and positive acknowledgement of his/her accomplishments and achievements in order to acquire a strong and healthy ego-identity. The lack of this can lead to a sense of not fitting into society and to feel insecure about oneself. Due to the constant need for feedback and approval, a new term the alleged *Internet narcissism* (people becoming more self-centred, depending on instant gratification) arose. The fact that social networks play a fundamental role in increasing social connections and in improving the technical skills of adolescents is not denied by anyone as either its risks.

The three most significant reported threats and dangers teenagers can face by being part of social media are depression, cyberbullying and sexting. Moreover, obesity also seems to appear as a daily concern teens face. The so-called *Facebook-depression* is considered to be an emotional disturbance, caused mainly by adolescents' habit of comparing themselves to others. Whether they contrast themselves with inferior or superior individuals, the majority of opinions seem to agree that both cases can lead to hopelessness.

### **Digital footprint**

By digital footprint, we mean one's stream of data that has been created while using the internet. It involves the websites visited, the emails that have been sent and all personal data submitted to services. There are two types of digital footprints. The first type is *passive* digital footprint which means that our data is left online involuntarily. It may incorporate our IP address, search history, and our estimated location. The second one, *active* digital footprint includes the voluntarily submitted

data, e.g.: emails. Our social media “posts”, “tweets” and pictures we share also fall into this category. The digital footprint is a serious issue, as accentuated by many, it can influence our daily life and relationships as well as our jobs too. Once we share something online, even if usually we can cancel our contents, there is no 100 per cent guarantee that it will get deleted from the internet.

### **Cyberbullying**

It is a new version of online bullying which has arisen with the Internet and social media. It takes place over computers, tablets cell phones, and any digital platform. This activity ranges from sending/receiving unpleasant and threatening texts to secret actions like trolling. Pew research (Ramasubbu, 2017) has also found that nearly 39 per cent of teenagers have been targets of cyberbullying in some way. The anonymity provided by the Internet is a significant cause of the success of cyberbullying. Two types of people are most likely to be cyberbullies, fringes of society and the popular ones. Cyberbullying shows up simple to the bully since they don't see their victims' responses personally, and hence the effect of the results is little. In reality, the results can be life-changing to the degree that the victims may go as distant as taking their lives or gotten to be mentally troubled sufficiently enough to require therapeutic intervention.

## Methodology

I opted for a systematic review, my goal with this research was to offer a summary with current and relevant evidence to my research question. However, qualitative methods have been more advantageous for me because they tend to give an overview of data from experienced and professional individuals. A small amount of quantitative data (surveys, researches) were also used to help me illustrate precisely different patterns and conclusions. The pieces of information gained derive mainly from secondary sources like scientific and academic online articles. This review concludes that social media and mental health issues have a correlation. Dependency on social networks has a compelling impact on emotional disturbance. Similar articles and studies have agreed and pointed out alike discoveries. The effects of social media on teenagers can be measured in multiple ways and researched, studied from several aspects ranging from psychology to the studies of youth.

## References

- (1.) Ahn, J. (2011). The Effect of Social Network Sites on Adolescents Social and Academic Development: Current Theories and Controversies. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*
- (2.) Ailin Quinlan (2018) How technology and social media are undermining family relationships. *The Irish Times*. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/health-family/parenting/how-technology-and-social-media-is-undermining-family-relationships-1.3568291>
- (3.) Kendra Cherry (2019) Identity vs. Role Confusion: Psychosocial Stage 5  
<https://www.verywellmind.com/identity-versus-confusion-2795735>
- (4.) Kristin A. Moore, Ph.D., Lina Guzman (2004) Parent-Teen Relationships and Interactions: Far More Positive Than Not  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265145581\\_Parent-Teen\\_Relationships\\_and\\_Interactions\\_Far\\_More\\_Positive\\_Than\\_Not](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265145581_Parent-Teen_Relationships_and_Interactions_Far_More_Positive_Than_Not)
- (5.) Nie, Norman, Hillygus, D. Sunshine, Erbring, Lutz (2008) Internet Use, Interpersonal Relations, and Sociability: A Time Diary Study

(6.)Suren Ramasubbu (2017) Influence of Social Media on Teenagers. *HuffPost*

Retrieved

from:[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/influence-of-social-media-on-teenagers\\_b\\_7427740?guccounter=1&guce\\_referrer=aHRocHM6Ly93ZWVhdmVraWRzLmNvbS9wYXJlbnRpbmVvc29jaWFsLW5ldHdvcmstdG8tdGVlbnM&guce\\_referrer\\_sig=AQA-AAFEpV1dc9h8TAzrDMeMI5mFhFBt33oEp9JSkSdBXHV-UjsJqZA1zbPpjZf\\_HzC2nq9Y\\_oK2El\\_lxPh3zXZHXLF3xw322Knoq3llWlzEwOlAnfo\\_swOMrcFAK2mweAo80rbhVrQGRz-OoAU8pLtq9QZxc9mr5ub6g5oN-f6b8GIEz](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/influence-of-social-media-on-teenagers_b_7427740?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHRocHM6Ly93ZWVhdmVraWRzLmNvbS9wYXJlbnRpbmVvc29jaWFsLW5ldHdvcmstdG8tdGVlbnM&guce_referrer_sig=AQA-AAFEpV1dc9h8TAzrDMeMI5mFhFBt33oEp9JSkSdBXHV-UjsJqZA1zbPpjZf_HzC2nq9Y_oK2El_lxPh3zXZHXLF3xw322Knoq3llWlzEwOlAnfo_swOMrcFAK2mweAo80rbhVrQGRz-OoAU8pLtq9QZxc9mr5ub6g5oN-f6b8GIEz)