

The Impact of Social Media on Mental Health of Youths: A Study Conducted in Mysuru.

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Abstract

Social media has become an integral part of the daily lives of young people, offering opportunities for communication, education, entertainment, and social interaction. However, excessive use of social media has raised concerns regarding its impact on the mental health of youths. The present study aims to examine the influence of social media usage on the mental well-being of youths in Mysuru. The study focuses on understanding how social media affects self-esteem, sleep patterns, emotional well-being, and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). A descriptive research design with a quantitative approach was adopted for the study. Primary data were collected from 54 youth respondents in Mysuru through a structured questionnaire using the convenience sampling technique. The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis and the Chi-square test in SPSS. The findings reveal that most respondents spend 2–4 hours daily on social media. The study also indicates that prolonged social media usage influences self-esteem, emotional well-being, and social comparison among youths. The Chi-square analysis showed a statistically significant relationship between social media usage and mental health, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. The study concludes that while social media provides several educational and social benefits, its excessive use can negatively affect the mental health of young people. It recommends promoting responsible social media usage, creating awareness about digital well-being, and encouraging healthy online habits to improve the psychological well-being of youths.

Keywords: Social Media, Mental Health, Youths, FOMO, Self-Esteem, SPSS, Mysuru

INTRODUCTION:

In the present digital era, social media has become an important part of everyday life, especially among youths. Platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook, and other online networking applications have changed the way young people communicate, share information, express their opinions, and build relationships. Social media provides several benefits, including easy access to knowledge, entertainment, social connection, and opportunities for personal and professional growth. However, excessive and unhealthy use of social media may also create negative effects on the mental health of youths. Mental health is an essential aspect of overall well-being, influencing a person's emotions, thoughts, behavior, and ability to handle daily challenges. Among youths, factors such as academic pressure, social expectations, lifestyle changes, and online interactions can influence their mental health. Continuous use of social media may lead to issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, sleep disturbances, and feelings of loneliness due to social comparison and pressure to maintain an online image. In recent years, the use of social media among youths has increased significantly in urban areas, including Mysore. Young people in Mysore actively use social media for communication, education, entertainment, and social engagement. While these platforms help youths stay connected and informed, excessive dependence on them may affect their emotional well-being and daily activities. This study focuses on understanding the impact of social media on the mental health of youths in Mysore. It aims to examine how social media usage influences the psychological well-being of young individuals and identify both the positive and negative effects associated with social media engagement. The study also helps to understand the awareness among youths regarding responsible social media usage and its relationship with mental health. This study aims to examine both the positive and negative effects of social media on youth and to identify ways to encourage healthy and responsible usage. This study focuses on understanding the impact of social media on the mental health of youth. It seeks to examine both the positive and negative effects of social media usage, identify the major psychological challenges associated with excessive use, and explore measures that can help young people maintain a healthy balance between online and offline activities. The findings of this study may contribute to greater

awareness among students, parents, educators, and society regarding responsible social media usage and mental well-being.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Schønning et al. (2020) studied the relationship between social media use and mental health among adolescents. The study found that social media has both positive and negative effects depending on usage patterns. Excessive usage was linked with stress and reduced psychological well-being. **Karim et al. (2020)** examined the impact of social media on mental health. The study highlighted that excessive social media engagement may influence emotional health, while proper usage can support communication and social connection. **Swarnam (2021)** studied the effect of social media use on mental health during the lockdown period. The study found that increased screen time and social media usage were associated with stress, anxiety, and emotional challenges among users. **Valkenburg, Meier, and Beyens (2022)** reviewed existing studies on social media and adolescent mental health. The study explained that social media effects differ among individuals and depend on the type of online experiences. **Shannon et al. (2022)** conducted a systematic review on problematic social media use among adolescents and young adults. The study found that excessive social media use was associated with depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms. **Lopes et al. (2022)** examined the relationship between problematic social media use and mental health problems. The study reported that unhealthy social media habits may increase the risk of anxiety and depression among young people. **Khalaf et al. (2023)** studied the impact of social media on adolescents and young adults. The research highlighted that social media may affect sleep patterns, emotional health, and overall psychological well-being. **Alonzo et al. (2023)** analyzed the connection between social media usage, sleep quality, and mental health among young people. The study suggested that excessive online activity may disturb sleep and influence mental health. **Azagba et al. (2024)** examined social media use and mental health indicators among youths. The study focused on how social media habits are connected with psychological outcomes among youth. **Singh et al. (2024)** studied the relationship between social media use and psychological well-being among adolescents. The study concluded that social media can provide social support but may also create negative effects when used excessively. Balanced approach to social media use.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS:

The rapid growth of social media has significantly changed the way young people communicate, learn, and interact with others. While social media offers various benefits such as easy access to information, entertainment, and social connectivity, its excessive and uncontrolled use has raised concerns regarding the mental health of youths. Many young individuals spend a considerable amount of time on social networking platforms, which may lead to issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, loneliness, sleep disturbances, and reduced academic performance. At the same time, social media can also provide emotional support, opportunities for self-expression, and access to useful information. Due to these mixed effects, there is a need to understand how social media influences the mental well-being of youths. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the impact of social media on the mental health of young people and identify both the positive and negative consequences associated with its usage.

NEED FOR THE STUDY:

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of social media on the mental health of young people and identify both its positive and negative effects. This study will help create awareness about the importance of balanced social media use and encourage healthy online habits among youth. In today's world, social media has become an inseparable part of the lives of young people. Most youth use social media platforms regularly for communication, entertainment, education, and sharing information. As the time spent on social networking sites continues to increase, concerns about their impact on mental health have also grown. Young people often face issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, low self-confidence, loneliness, and sleep-related problems due to extreme social media usage. At the same time, social media also provides opportunities for learning, social connection, and emotional support. Therefore, it becomes necessary to understand whether social media is helping or harming the mental well-being of youth. The findings of this study may be help to students, parents, teachers, and society in understanding the influence of social media on mental health. It may also help in developing strategies and awareness programs that promote the responsible use of social media and improve the overall well-being of young people.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To Analyze the average daily time spent, preferred platforms (e.g., Instagram vs. WhatsApp), and primary activities (active posting vs. passive scrolling) among youth in Mysuru.
- To examine the prevailing levels of anxiety, depression, sleep quality, and self-esteem among the target sample using standardized psychological scales.
- To examine if the impact of social media on mental health varies significantly across genders, age groups (e.g., school-going adolescents vs. college students), and backgrounds.
- To evaluate the role of specific digital stressors, such as cyberbullying, FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), or body image dissatisfaction, in influencing mental health outcomes.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀: There is no significant impact of social media usage on the mental health of youths.

H₁: There is a significant impact of social media usage on the mental health of youths.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the systematic process used to collect, analyze, and interpret data to achieve the objectives of the study. It provides a clear framework for conducting the research in a reliable and organized manner. In this study, the methodology was designed to examine the impact of social media on the mental health of youths in Mysore.

Research Design

The study adopts a **Descriptive research design**. This design is appropriate because it helps to understand and describe the relationship between social media usage and the mental health of youths. It also enables the researcher to collect information about the opinions, experiences, and behavior of respondents regarding social media use.

Research Approach

The study follows a **Quantitative research approach**. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 54 youth respondents in Mysore. The collected responses were analyzed using percentage analysis and presented in the form of tables and graphs to draw meaningful conclusions.

Source of Data

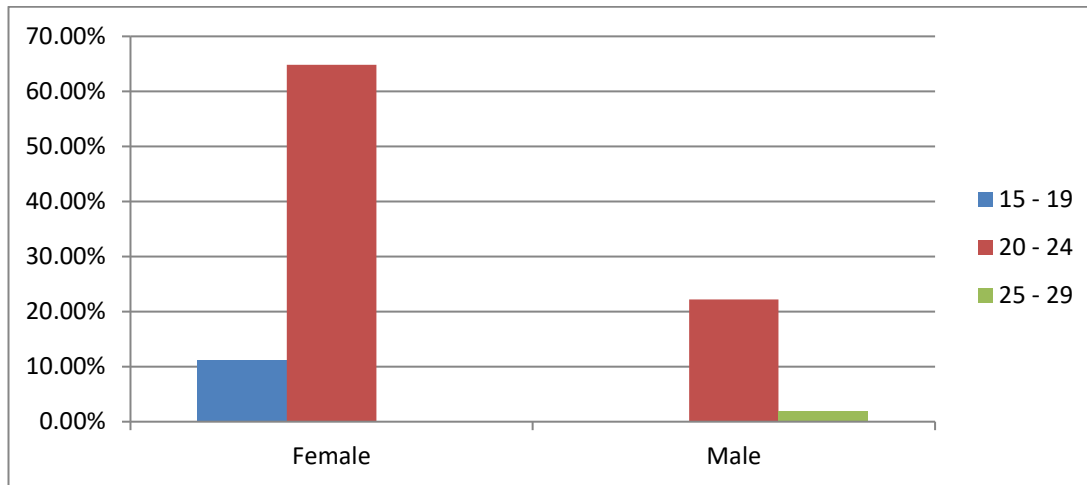
- **Primary Data:** Primary data was collected directly from 54 youth respondents in Mysore using a structured questionnaire prepared by the researcher.
- **Secondary Data:** Secondary data was collected from research journals, published articles, books, government reports, and reliable websites related to social media and mental health. These sources were used to prepare the introduction, review of literature, and theoretical background of the study.
- **Sample Size:** The sample size for the study consists of 54 youth respondents from Mysore.
- **Sampling Technique:** The study used the Convenience Sampling Technique.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- This study covers only youths residing in Mysore.
- The findings are based on the responses of 54 youth respondents.
- The study relies on self-reported responses collected through a structured questionnaire.
- The study focuses only on the impact of social media on mental health and does not consider other factors that may influence mental well-being.
- Due to limited time and resources, the study was conducted among a selected group of respondents.

DATA ANALYSIS:

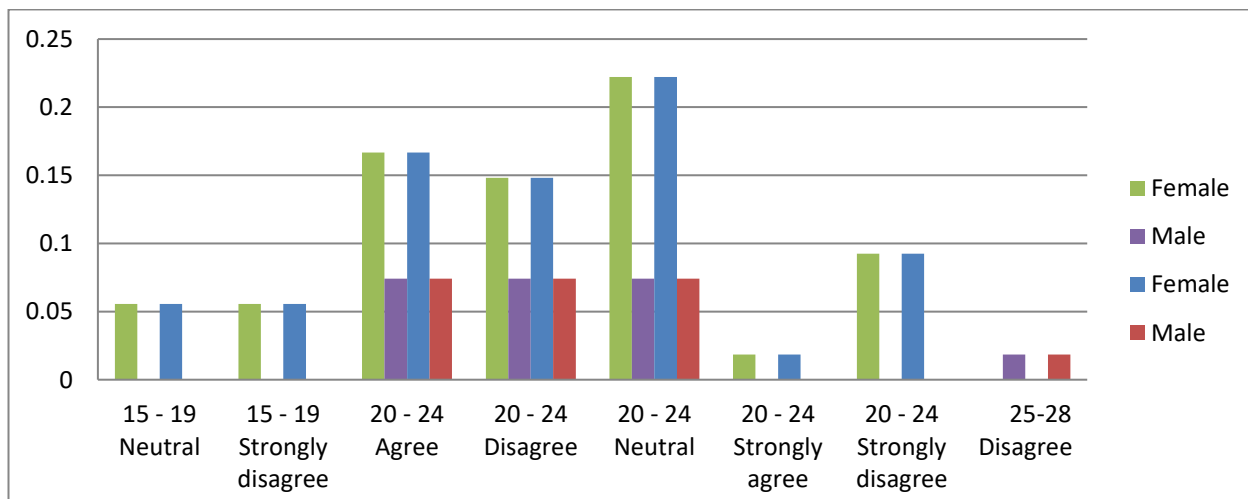
Age group				
2. Gender Identity	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	Grand Total
Female	11.11%	64.81%	0.00%	75.93%
Male	0.00%	22.22%	1.85%	24.07%
Grand Total	11.11%	87.04%	1.85%	100.00%



Analysis: The study included 54 youth respondents. The majority (86.79%) belonged to the 20–24 years age group, followed by 11.32% in the 15–19 years group and 1.89% in the 25–29 years group. Female respondents (75.47%) outnumbered male respondents (24.53%). Most respondents were undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Interpretation: The graph indicates that many youths use social media mainly for communication rather than regularly sharing their personal lives. A large number of respondents preferred a neutral response, showing moderate social media sharing behavior.

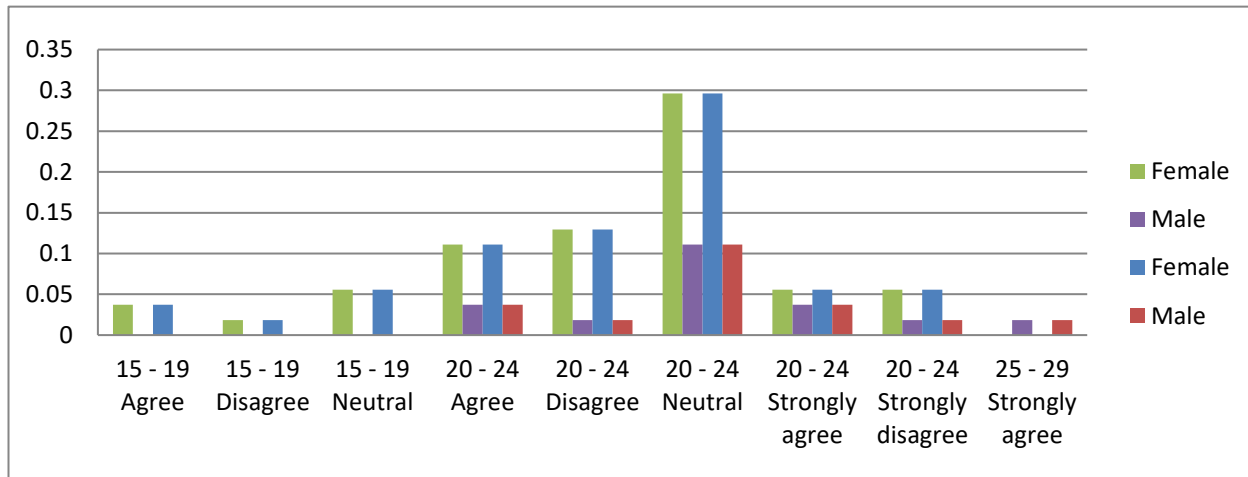
2. I frequently post photos or stories to share my daily life events with my online followers			
Row Labels	Female	Male	Grand Total
15 - 19	11.11%	0.00%	11.11%
Neutral	5.56%	0.00%	5.56%
Strongly disagree	5.56%	0.00%	5.56%
20 - 24	64.81%	22.22%	87.04%
Agree	16.67%	7.41%	24.07%
Disagree	14.81%	7.41%	22.22%
Neutral	22.22%	7.41%	29.63%
Strongly agree	1.85%	0.00%	1.85%
Strongly disagree	9.26%	0.00%	9.26%
25-29	0.00%	1.85%	1.85%
Disagree	0.00%	1.85%	1.85%
Grand Total	75.93%	24.07%	100.00%



Analysis: Among the respondents, 29.63% were neutral about frequently posting photos or stories, 24.07% agreed that they post frequently, while 22.22% disagreed. A smaller proportion strongly disagreed (9.26%) or strongly agreed (1.85%).

Interpretation: The graph indicates that many youths use social media mainly for communication rather than regularly sharing their personal lives. A large number of respondents preferred a neutral response, showing moderate social media sharing behavior.

3. I find myself checking social media notification immediately upon waking up and right before sleeping			
Row Labels	Female	Male	Grand Total
15 - 19	11.11%	0.00%	11.11%
Agree	3.70%	0.00%	3.70%
Disagree	1.85%	0.00%	1.85%
Neutral	5.56%	0.00%	5.56%
20 - 24	64.81%	22.22%	87.04%
Agree	11.11%	3.70%	14.81%
Disagree	12.96%	1.85%	14.81%
Neutral	29.63%	11.11%	40.74%
Strongly agree	5.56%	3.70%	9.26%
Strongly disagree	5.56%	1.85%	7.41%
25 - 29	0.00%	1.85%	1.85%
Strongly agree	0.00%	1.85%	1.85%
Grand Total	75.93%	24.07%	100.00%

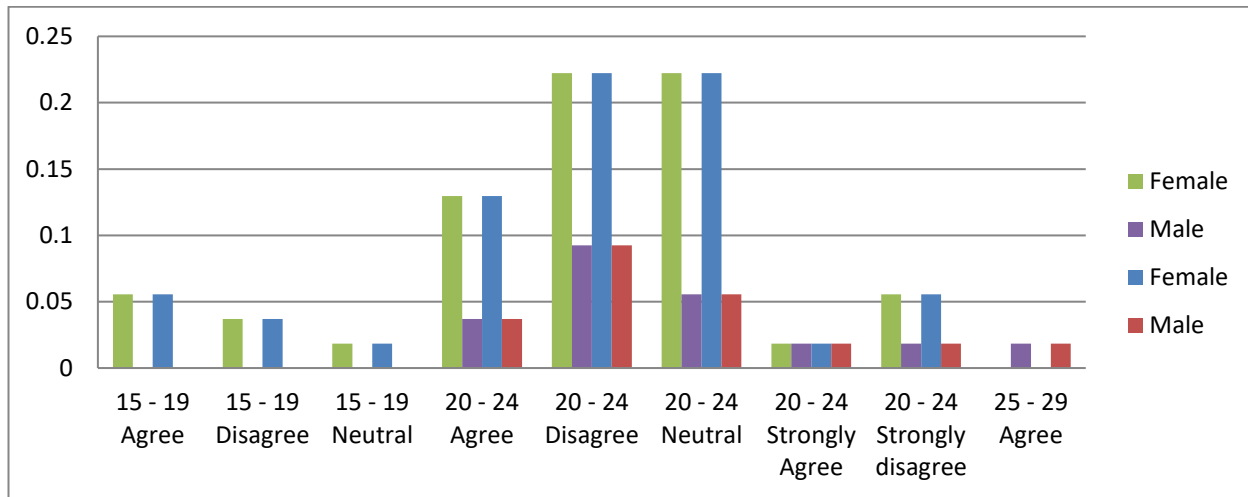


Analysis: The highest proportion (40.74%) gave a neutral response. Around 14.81% agreed with the statement, another 14.81% disagreed, 9.26% strongly agreed, and 7.41% strongly disagreed.

Interpretation: The graph indicates that while some youths have the habit of checking social media immediately after waking up and before sleeping, many respondents do not consistently follow this behavior. This suggests different levels of dependence on social media among youths.

4. Seeing the achievements, travel, and lifestyle posts of others in Mysore makes me feel insecure or left out (FOMO).

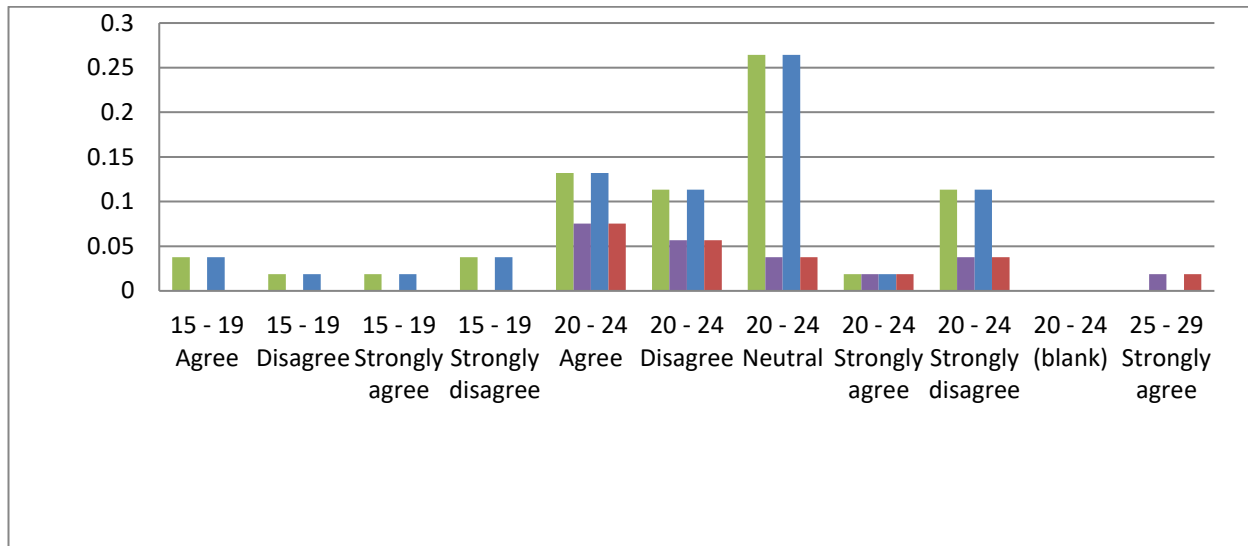
Row Labels	Female	Male	Grand Total
15 - 19	11.11%	0.00%	11.11%
Agree	5.56%	0.00%	5.56%
Disagree	3.70%	0.00%	3.70%
Neutral	1.85%	0.00%	1.85%
20 - 24	64.81%	22.22%	87.04%
Agree	12.96%	3.70%	16.67%
Disagree	22.22%	9.26%	31.48%
Neutral	22.22%	5.56%	27.78%
Strongly Agree	1.85%	1.85%	3.70%
Strongly disagree	5.56%	1.85%	7.41%
25 - 29	0.00%	1.85%	1.85%
Agree	0.00%	1.85%	1.85%
Grand Total	75.93%	24.07%	100.00%



Analysis: The table shows that 31.48% of respondents disagreed with the statement, 27.78% remained neutral, 16.67% agreed, 7.41% strongly disagreed, and 3.70% strongly agreed.

Interpretation: The graph indicates that most respondents do not frequently experience insecurity or fear of missing out (FOMO) because of social media posts. However, a considerable number of youths agreed that such posts sometimes affect their emotions, showing that social comparison can influence mental well-being.

5. I often lose sleep or experience disrupted sleep patterns due to late-night social media browsing.			
Row Labels	Female	Male	Grand Total
15 - 19	11.32%	0.00%	11.32%
Agree	3.77%	0.00%	3.77%
Disagree	1.89%	0.00%	1.89%
Strongly agree	1.89%	0.00%	1.89%
Strongly disagree	3.77%	0.00%	3.77%
20 - 24	64.15%	22.64%	86.79%
Agree	13.21%	7.55%	20.75%
Disagree	11.32%	5.66%	16.98%
Neutral	26.42%	3.77%	30.19%
Strongly agree	1.89%	1.89%	3.77%
Strongly disagree	11.32%	3.77%	15.09%
(blank)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
25 - 29	0.00%	1.89%	1.89%
Strongly agree	0.00%	1.89%	1.89%
Grand Total	75.47%	24.53%	100.00%



Analysis: The highest percentage (30.19%) of respondents gave a Neutral response. Around 20.75% agreed that late-night social media browsing affects their sleep, 16.98% disagreed, 15.09% strongly disagreed, and 3.77% strongly agreed.

Interpretation: The graph indicates that excessive social media use during late-night hours may contribute to sleep disturbances for some youths. However, the large neutral response suggests that the effect varies among individuals depending on their social media usage habits.

SPSS TEST

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The categories of 1. Age occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
2	The categories defined by 2. Gender Identity = Male and Female occur with probabilities 0.5 and 0.5.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
3	The categories of 3. Current Educational / Professional Status occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
4	The categories of 4. Primary Institutional / Residential Locality in Mysore occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
5	The categories of 5. Average Daily Time Spent on Social Media occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

HYPOTHESIS TEST

Descriptive

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
7. I spend more time through scrolling social media platforms.	53	1	5	3.15	1.026
12. Seeing the achievements, travel, and lifestyle posts of others in Mysore makes me feel insecure or left out (FOMO). []	53	1	5	2.79	1.007
Valid N (listwise)	53				

Chi-Square Test

7. I spend more time through scrolling social media platforms.			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1	2	10.6	-8.6
2	11	10.6	.4
3	24	10.6	13.4
4	9	10.6	-1.6
5	7	10.6	-3.6
Total	53		

12. Seeing the achievements, travel, and lifestyle posts of others in Mysore makes me feel insecure or left out (FOMO). []			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1	4	10.6	-6.6
2	19	10.6	8.4
3	16	10.6	5.4
4	12	10.6	1.4
5	2	10.6	-8.6
Total	53		

Test Statistics		
	7. I spend more time through scrolling social media platforms.	12. Seeing the achievements, travel, and lifestyle posts of others in Mysore makes me feel insecure or left out (FOMO). []
Chi-Square	25.396 ^a	20.679 ^a
df	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

Findings

- Social Media Usage 66.04% of the respondents spend 2–4 hours daily on social media, indicating regular engagement with online platforms.
- Social Comparison 60.38% of the respondents agreed that they compare their lifestyle and achievements with those of others on social media.
- Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) 52.83% of the respondents reported feeling insecure or left out after viewing the achievements, travel, and lifestyle posts of others.
- Mental Well-being 58.49% of the respondents agreed that excessive social media usage negatively affects their self-esteem, mood, and overall mental well-being.

Conclusion

The study concludes that social media has a significant influence on the mental health of youths. Although social media provides opportunities for communication, learning, and entertainment, excessive usage and continuous comparison with others can lead to stress, anxiety, low self-esteem, and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). The Chi-square test indicates a significant relationship between social media usage and mental health among the respondents. Therefore, maintaining a healthy balance in social media usage is essential for improving psychological well-being.

Suggestions

- Digital Awareness: Conduct workshops and awareness programs in educational institutions on responsible and healthy social media usage.
- Screen Time Management: Encourage students to limit daily screen time and engage in offline activities such as sports, reading, and hobbies.
- Mental Health Support: Colleges should provide counselling services and mental health awareness programs to help students manage stress and anxiety related to social media.

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