

## THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON SELF ESTEEM

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### ABSTRACT

With the advent of the Internet over a decade ago came the introduction of a new form of communication referred to as social media. On-line social networking sites, such as Facebook, Myspace, whatsapp and Twitter, have become increasingly popular and almost an integral part of everyday life. Self-esteem is a personality trait, which is stable and enduring. Self-esteem can involve a variety of beliefs about one self, such as the appraisal of one's own appearance, beliefs, emotions, and behaviours. In today's world, the social media has much influence on self esteem of the people. It creates positive as well as negative impact on the people. This paper deals with both the positive and the negative impacts of self esteem.

### INTRODUCTION

With the advent of the Internet over a decade ago came the introduction of a new form of communication referred to as social media. On-line social networking sites, such as Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter, have become increasingly popular and almost an integral part of everyday life. Many people have a Facebook account, and it is estimated that the average amount of time spent on this social networking site ranges from thirty minutes to over two hours on a daily basis. Social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp and Twitter have been known to affect a user his/her self-esteem very badly.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media is the future of communication, a countless array of internet based tools and platforms that increase and enhance the sharing of information. This new form of media makes the transfer of text, photos, audio, video, and information in general increasingly fluid among internet users. Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn have created online communities where people can share as much or as little personal information as they desire with other members. The result is an enormous amount of information that can easily be shared, searched, promoted, disputed and created.

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## **SELF ESTEEM**

Self esteem is a feeling that comes from an awareness of what is good and having done it. Self-Esteem is one's self-image or how one feels about oneself. It is made up of thoughts and feelings, one has about oneself. The feelings about oneself determine one's confidence, motivation and worthiness. These feelings begin to take shape in the first few years of one's life, and unless one makes a conscious effort to change them, follow the individual to his/her grave. Self-Esteem affects the way the person lives, how he/she thinks, how he acts and how he feels about him/her self and others. Self esteem gives an internal drive to lead a prosperous life.

### **Types of Self-Esteem**

1. High Self Esteem: a feeling of being lovable, and a feeling of being competent. It is better to have both lovability and competence in one's life to have a balance.
2. Low Self esteem: a feeling that one is unworthy, so one has a negative self-view.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA EFFECTS ON SELF ESTEEM**

With the increase in social media availability, people are more connected to one another than ever before. As a result, they can build relationship with one another or tear that relationship with one another down in a matter of moments. The positive and the negative impacts are given as follows:

### **Positive impact**

- i. Helps those with social anxiety to overcome;
- ii. Gives freedom to express oneself very freely;
- iii. Enables the people to have more friends globally;
- iv. People who use internet frequently try to create a positive self-image and explain to the younger generation that perfection does not matter;
- v. Enables persons to be themselves, who they are and what they have;
- vi. Creates self confidence in people by designing birthday cards, preparing class materials and materials for competitive examinations;
- vii. People become independent in acquiring more knowledge on various things;

- viii. Connects with family and friends, catch up with what's happening throughout the world, informs them on news and important events, inspires them to make a change, explores the network by seeing other people's interests, lifestyles and more; and
- ix. Based on what kind of people and accounts people follow on social media, it can say a lot about who they really are, or more importantly, who they want to be.

### **Negative impact**

- i. People are worried about how many "likes" they can get, how many followers they gain and how many retweets they have, even though none of it matters for their development;
- ii. Is a way to get attention from others. Those who do not get as many likes as others, are seen as less popular and less appealing to the rest of the world;
- iii. Creates an environment where disordered thoughts and behaviours really thrive;
- iv. Compels the person to become "perfect image," when they are not perfect then they are not good enough for anyone or themselves;
- v. The constant exposure to "perfection" from social media affects peoples' self-identity, self-esteem and even may cause depression;
- vi. Social media can affect people's self-esteem by changing their entire life style such as clothes, music, and personality and even change what kind of friends they have;
- vii. The conflicts that people deal with throughout the social media can create a massive amount of depression as people struggle to be socially "accepted";
- viii. The effects of depression lead people, having severe insecurities, which then concludes that social networking degrades people;
- ix. Social media can even lead to addiction, which can highly affect people's health. It can cause people to have anxiety, sleeping problems and not being able to function in the real world;
- x. Social media sabotages the way people should live their life and if people keep believing the way to live, to live by social media, then they are very limited;
- xi. Leads to cyberbullying, which leads to depression, thoughts of suicide, and sadness;
- xii. People negatively compare themselves to what is portrayed on Facebook by their friends;
- xiii. Connecting with vast online community can upend people's sense of self esteem;

- xiv. Is so compelling to answers both the need for friendship and the need for brain stimulation;
- xv. Gives a false sense of belonging and connection that is not built on real-life exchanges. This makes it increasingly easy to lose oneself to cyberspace connections and give them more weight than they deserve; and
- xvi. Interrupts the emotional lives of the people.

## WAYS TO HAVE POSITIVE SELF ESTEEM

People place a lot of value in the feedback they receive on social media. There are lots of things that can be done to help the people to realize their self worth.

- i. **Remind people that self-worth is not defined by likes or follows.** People need a little reminder that self-worth will never be measured by numbers on social media. Encourage young people to focus on the positive friendships and relationships that they have.
- ii. **Discuss how social media is not a competition.** Just because a person has more likes on their post, does not mean that their contribution is better or more interesting. Encourage them to focus on gratitude for their own lives, instead of making social comparisons with others.
- iii. **Help them to choose good online role models.** It is good to understand the connection between the images that young people assume online and their attitudes to the body image. They can be encouraged to follow positive and inspiring people on social media who promote a healthy body image;
- iv. **Talk about the real world vs. the online world.** An Instagram post is only one tiny (filtered) moment from a person's day. It does not depict the full story. It is important to remind people to be mindful of when using social media that posts rarely real life reflection.
- v. **Show them how to filter out particular content.** When a person or theme upsets people, it can be hidden from them. This can be a good way to protect them from comparing themselves with others.
- vi. **Help them understand the reality of other people's lives.** It is not to bash others; it is to understand that everybody struggles; everybody has ugly days; everybody has their own issues. There is no perfect relationship, life path, career, or body, because everybody has his/her own personal challenges. May be they are not the same, but

they do exist, so remind them that at the end of the day the only thing everybody has in common with each other is struggle.

- vii. **Enhance them to Stop wasting energy and time on comparison.** Help them not to spend time often to scroll through friend's photos, cried, and talked bad about him or her, and instead put that toward working on what is holding them back from moving forward, one could be a much happier person. If people start using their time constructively to work on their self, their goals, and their relationships, chances, etc., they will not even have the time to waste on the glorification of others' lives.
- viii. **Enable them to Stop altering the truth for others.** There is an element of truth and realness that allows them to be vulnerable and truly connect, whether it is with one self or others. It is not advisable to pretend to live in fantasy. Keeping that image up is exhausting. Relax, let go, and be OK with the vulnerable.
- ix. **Encourage them embrace their imperfections.** It is noteworthy to insist that if they are incredibly hard on themselves, they have to learn to be better friends to them. If they are ignoring the challenges in their life, they will tend to pop up in other unhealthy ways. So help them to embrace their own vulnerabilities and brokenness
- x. **Entuse them be happy with imperfections.** Relationship challenges are incredible mirrors to one's own personal struggles, and can allow the people to truly feel whole if they embrace it. The only way to truly value their strengths is to be open to and own their weaknesses, as one day that in itself may become their strength

## CONCLUSION

There are more negative impacts of social media on the self-esteem of the people than the positive impacts. These negative impacts are not the results of social media itself; rather they are the result of the interactions that people make while they are on these social media sites.

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