
SOCIAL MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH

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Abstract:**Introduction:**

“The fewer devices you have to charge, the more charge you have for your mind”.
– *Abhijit Naskar, one of the world’s famous neuroscientists.*

Users can create web contents, share information and engage conversations on social media networks. Blogs, micro blogs, wikis, social networking sites, photo sharing websites, instant messaging, video sharing websites, podcasts, widgets, virtual worlds, and more are examples of the various types of social media. It is a digital technology that allows sharing of thoughts and information, from one individual to another individual through means of virtual networking and communities.

People engage in social media via likes, shares, comments, and discussion. Marketing companies use social media as a platform to enable sales and throw information’s then and there to people, driving them into their desired results. Some of the companies include Spotify, Nike, Starbucks, Airbnb, Wendy’s, Dove etcetera. They use different strategies accordingly to make people fall in as a prey.

The largest social media platforms include Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter and WeChat. From Facebook and Instagram to Twitter and YouTube, more than 5 billion people use social media, equal to roughly 62% of the world’s population. Social media was established to connect with people but soon started to revolve around, and serve people for various other purposes.

In 2004, MySpace was the first network to reach 1 million monthly active users. According to Global Web Index, 46% of internet users worldwide get their news through social media. That compares to 40% of users who view news on news websites. Gen Z and Millennial were most likely to view news on social media sites vs. other generations. Since everything is easily available people tend to use the availability of social media, thinking of saving their time but in actual sense, draining their mental health and peace.

If we could look deep into the use of social media, we can see a myriad number of possibilities that leads to mental problems and disorders. At this rate, even after knowing the aftermaths, people are hesitant to give up the use of social media. It can be because of various reasons such like addiction, getting peace within oneself, driving pleasure, passing time and

many more that they aren't really aware of. It is dangerous as well as scary to know, how the corporate world has ruined and is ruining our mental state alongside with our physical self.

Source



Escaype Live: *Escaype Live* is an Indian Hindi-language television series released in the year 2022. It is created, directed and produced by *Sidharth Kumar Tewary*. It contains 9 episodes, which got 4 out of 5 in the rating scale, driving people's attention and curiosity over its plot. The story is about a *live streaming app* that promises to gift the popular contestant with a prize of 3 crores. The app also promises fame, which drive the Indians to go far from their real state to win the price amount. They take unrealistic and even immoral steps to get the price amount.

This movie is a social thriller series that shows how people turn themselves for what they want, how social media makes people go crazy and ends up in danger and how they forget to see the difference between reality and virtuality. The contestant doesn't realize how their lives are going to turn after the contest. It is about the 6 contestants and how their lives end up worse at the end. The contestants include *Dark Angel as Darkie*, *Hina as Fetish Girl*, *Nilesh Sonawane as Aamcha Spyder*, *Rani Singh as Dance Rani*, *Rajkumar as Meena Kumari* and *Krishna Rangaswamy*.

Analysis

- I. **Dark Angel a.k.a. Darkie** – He pushed himself so hard that he forgot to consider human emotions and feelings. In order to win the contest, he made pranks that were nonsensical and baseless. The pranks did nothing but harmed people in one or the other ways. As time went by, he started to act stubborn and aggressive like a mere psych towards winning the price amount. The social media app made him go so far from doing anything just to gain popularity. He lived his life only to gain followers in social media and did everything to win the contest. In order to gain fame and near the winning, he went on a live asking his rich fans to give him a place to stay. One among the fan named Dhruv calls Darkie to stay

with him. Together they make pranks, host parties and have fun. And one such day on the party night, the Darkie tends to show Dhruv and his girlfriend's private affairs stating it to be fun and gain more followers. That ends up in an argument between Dhruv and Darkie, leading to Dhruv's death.

It's all because of social media that made a teenager let a stranger stay over in his house, without really knowing him. It cost him nothing but his own life at last. And the Darkie gets to know about the app a step ahead, and realizes that they won't let him win because of the app's written judgements. Being furious about this, he somehow manages to kidnap another contestant to blackmail and win over but fails at the end.

- II. Hina a.k.a. Fetish Girl** – Fetish works at a restaurant to earn enough money to help her family. She has her own responsibilities as a first child and wishes to move abroad. In order to earn money to run her errands, she makes a move in the app Escaype Live. Social media provokes her to behave in an immoral way, turning her into a sexually provocative woman. Though she claims that it is only for money, still this act of hers seems very bad.

After seeing the Fetish Girl's act one night, her female boss named Mala falls for her seductively. Mala's obsession with Fetish gets more vicious with time. Fetish gets abused by Mala, but her craze over winning the contest doesn't let her stop from doing this filthy act. In order to win, she somehow gets hold of men ahead and asks their help. At one point, after realizing about the app's pre-set decision, she tries to contact Krishna, who works in the Escaype Company. She seeks Krishna's help and somehow wins the contest selling her body, but the social media leads her only to misery. She gets into a fight with her boss Mala and the result of which Fetish gets brutally beaten and wounded. Even though she has won the amount, the consequences of her own actions did not let her enjoy it.

- III. Nilesh Sonawane a.k.a. Aamcha Spyder** – Aamcha is from a low class family, who lives in the slum area. His father runs a small factory where he washes people's laundry. Aamcha initially works in a supermarket but loses his job over his behaviour. He then comes across this app in social media and enrolls himself as a contestant thinking of upgrading his family's status. To earn money, he started engaging in risky actions.

He starts to do free-jumping, moving from one building to another. His family warns him of the danger but he doesn't listen to anyone and continues doing his act. To win the prize money and impress his followers, he prepares to walk on a crane and jump in the nearest building that was under construction. He practices for the final day and decides to go live on final day to prove his followers of his ability and gain their love and support.

The day comes near and he moves to walk on a crane. The civil workers notice him doing stunts above and rushes to stop him. Nonetheless, he doesn't listen to

any of their words neither his friends. As he started to run over, a block swings open and he misses his step. He falls down from the height and gets hospitalized with severe injuries. Social media has made him so sick that as soon as he gained consciousness, he only wants to view the app's status.

The doctor advises him to be on complete rest and asks him to stop doing his stuff. He gets disturbed from reading the people's comments on social media and even tries to suicide. It affects him so much that it totally puts him down and he stops showing in the contest.

- IV. Rani Singh as Dance Rani** – A small child living in a village gets to know about this app from her uncle Nandu. Her mom and Nandu make her join in the app and help her upload videos. Nandu drives her interest into winning the prize amount to a level that the child ends up in wanting the same. The social media spoils her childhood and innocence of this small child Rani. She sees the other contestants and wishes to become an adult in order to win the game.

Her uncle Nandu convinces his niece to take vitamin injection in order to win the contest. He somehow even makes his sister understand and have Rani get the M.I.V. Injection. Slowly the child starts to wear stylish clothes revealing her body, with the help of her uncle. Her mother protests about this, but somehow gets convinced. Rani gains popularity over time and she feels happy, but soon she starts to act in abnormal ways.

Her mother couldn't figure out what's wrong with her child but let's Rani to dance. One day, Rani faints over and gets admitted to the hospital and at that moment Rani's father gets to know about the contest and becomes very angry. Above all, Rani's parents finds out the truth that it is not the Vitamin Injection but Hormonal Growth Injection, which is been injected into Rani's body by his uncle Nandu.

The father tries to stop everything but the child doesn't listen and wants to somehow win in the contest. Meantime, she even gets in touch with Mr. Lova Lova and tries to meet him. She gets scammed as it is not the person she thought would be but Darkie. She gets caught and even was about to get murdered by him. The social media makes her go beyond walls but only put her in dangerous situation.

- V. Rajkumar a.k.a. Meena Kumari** – Rajkumar works as an employee and gets pushed into the alliance process. He somehow manages to cancel the proposal and lets the girl know about his truth. He uses this social media app to become what he wanted to become always. He dresses up as a woman and sings song and gains followers. He lives a life that is a double standard where he couldn't accept any of his self.

The social media app lets him live like how he wished to, but only in a temporary base of life. The social media didn't let him accept his real state of the change within his own self. He was constantly living in fear of people not accepting him

as a transgender. He ends up in losing his job because of the app and even his own father pulls him away from his house.

He continues to challenge in the app regardless of everything. He was about to win the contest, but decides to reveal his gender to the people offline and online. As soon as he does this, people pour their negative comments and stab him with their words, making him contemplate his own choice.

VI. Krishna Rangaswamy – Krishna being the protagonist of this series works at Escaype Live. He doesn't like this job and constantly questions about the function of the contest. He doesn't like it very much but as time goes by, he understands the politics behind this contest. He realizes that it is not based on the talent and popularity of the contestant but the approved decision of his higher officials. The officials wanted to make someone from the low caste to win over to make better headlines about their app.

He then gets in touch with the contestant Fetish Girl and starts to communicate with her. And then casually he reveals about his company's private discussions about the contest and asks her to stop expecting victory as it is already decided above. She continues chatting with him letting him know about her lifestyle and why she has chosen such type of act to win the contest.

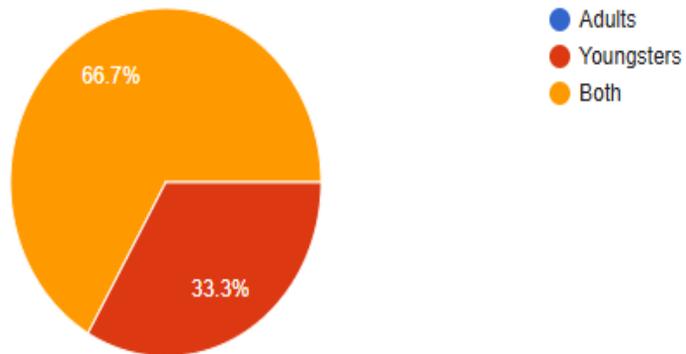
And she somehow makes him understand, that she needs money to live her life and gains his sympathy and attention. He tries to crack over the company's login from an illegal website and help her continue the contest. He develops interest over Fetish and with all the hope, goes to meet her in person. But he gets cheated as she confront herself that she used him for the winning and nothing else. The social media gave him nothing but false hopes and mere heartbreak at the end.

He was carrying on with his work but was given false hope and made him believe that he would somehow get in touch with fetish. But all his dreams shattered with her needled words. He stands cheated all alone in the rain with a bouquet of flowers, which now has no owner or value. Being depressed, sad and confused over, he moves from that place without talking anything.

Result and Discussion: Google Survey was conducted among the general audience of all the age groups to know what they think about social media and how it has affected them. The survey also gives answers about the impact that social media has created in the minds of them.

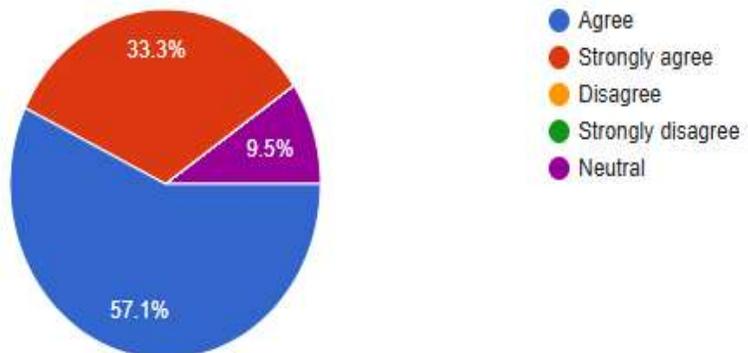
Who do you think, social media affects the most?

21 responses



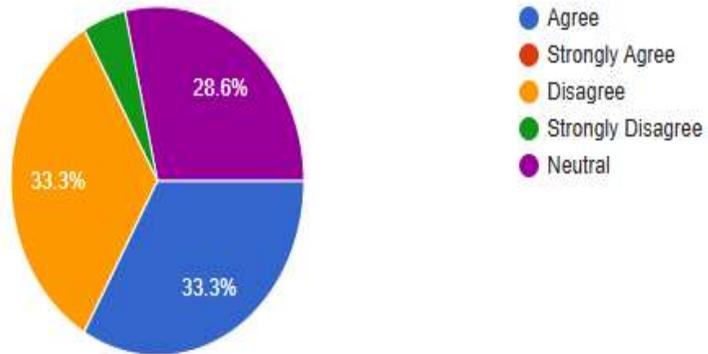
Social media affects "Mental Health"

21 responses



Do you think you've become the victim/slave of social media platform ?

21 responses



If yes, then how does it ruin your mental health?
It leads to irritation in eyes or poor eyesight
Stops me from doing daily chores
Having impact on the content, making me addictive
I'm trying hard to control myself
I've become addicted to it that I hardly concentrate on my prayers
It affects me to a level that I'm trying to come out of it
It's totally distracting my mind
I have addicted to it and it caused me sleep disruption
I try to use it less to not end up in addiction
Since I study psychology and am strongly rooted to my religious, existential and after life beliefs so I use it wisely not letting it ruin my life
Social media doesn't affect me because I use it less not becoming a prey
Whenever I'm hurt or something triggers me, I just use social media due to which I can't even express my feeling of sorrow
It changes my perspective of things
It sometimes forces me to opt for something that I don't want to do otherwise
It takes my time from me very easily
Once my private data got hacked
It gives pressure to maintain a perfect self-image
Social media ended up in reducing my face to face conversation
My academic score went down because of social media

Constant notifications distracted me easily from doing my work

What are the disadvantages of social media according to you? List any.
More screen time
Spoil of health, knowledge level and addiction
Addictive and time consuming
Declining attention span, health related issues and bad influence on youngsters
Mental health issues, rumours, frauds and scams, sleep problems
Affects mental health
Disturbs sleep for many
Affecting student's studies, health problems, reduce of critical thinking
It leads to addiction and mental health issues
It kills your time and we are secluded
Distractions, addiction
Procrastination
Getting addicted to it
Social media addiction and dependence
Disconnection with reality, fake emotions and cognition, over generalization, excessive access to sexual and aggressive content
Social media can harm mental health and lead to addiction
Spoiling most of the people's life and also affects the memory
Less productivity, distraction from both personal and professional life
Influencing bad thoughts and it plays a major role in manipulating one's original thoughts
Time consuming

From the above results, we could find how and in what ways people have been affected from the use of social media. They have all accepted that social media causes people of both the ages and have agreed to the fact that it affects **Mental Health**. When asked about how it affected people, they have given their own reasons. They spoke about addiction, distraction, sleep disruption, anxiety and other such things.

Conclusion: The use of social media only gives harm to people's mind making them fall sick towards it and take illogical steps getting influenced from it. It is not about the minimal or the excessive usage, but what that leads us to. At this present world that we're living in, the technologies are getting advanced and it is no doubt that social networks will get developed even more higher in the upcoming years. The higher it reaches, the more we get affected because of it.

The social media is doing nothing except hefting our time leading us nowhere, but fall into unwanted mental health issues such like anxiety, depression, stress, disruptive

behaviour, poor sleep, eating disorder, and behavioural changes and much more. So it's always better to be conscious about our mental health not giving it up for pleasure. Multiple studies have even confirmed a strong link between social media and increased risk of mental health.

People casually use social media without being aware of the fact that, it has been affecting them indirectly without knowing. All the losses that are caused from social media either break them or tore them apart. Most of the reason behind illegal crimes, suicide rates, rape, and murder has been because of the use of social media involved either directly or indirectly. The social media only leads to *destruction, devastation and demolition*.

“I think there should be regulations on social media to the degree that it negatively affects the public good.” – Elon Musk

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