



## **Adoption of Social Media by Youth as a Stress Reliever post-pandemic.**

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### **Abstract:-**

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many students to rely heavily on social media for academic, social, and emotional support. This study aims to explore the perceptions of students towards social media use in the post-COVID-19 era. Online surveys have been conducted with undergraduate and graduate students. The results showed that social media played a crucial role in facilitating communication and building social connections during the pandemic. However, students also reported negative consequences of social media use, such as distraction, addiction, and negative impacts on mental health. Many participants expressed a desire to reduce their social media use and find more meaningful ways to connect with others. The study also revealed differences in social media use patterns and perceptions based on factors such as age, gender, and academic discipline. Overall, the findings suggest that while social media has been helpful during the pandemic, there is a need for greater awareness of its potential negative consequences and a shift towards more intentional and mindful use. These findings can inform strategies for promoting healthy social media habits among students in the post-COVID-19 era.

**Keywords:** - Social media, Facebook, Twitter, snap-chat, Instagram, stress, mental health, anxiety

### **Introduction: -**

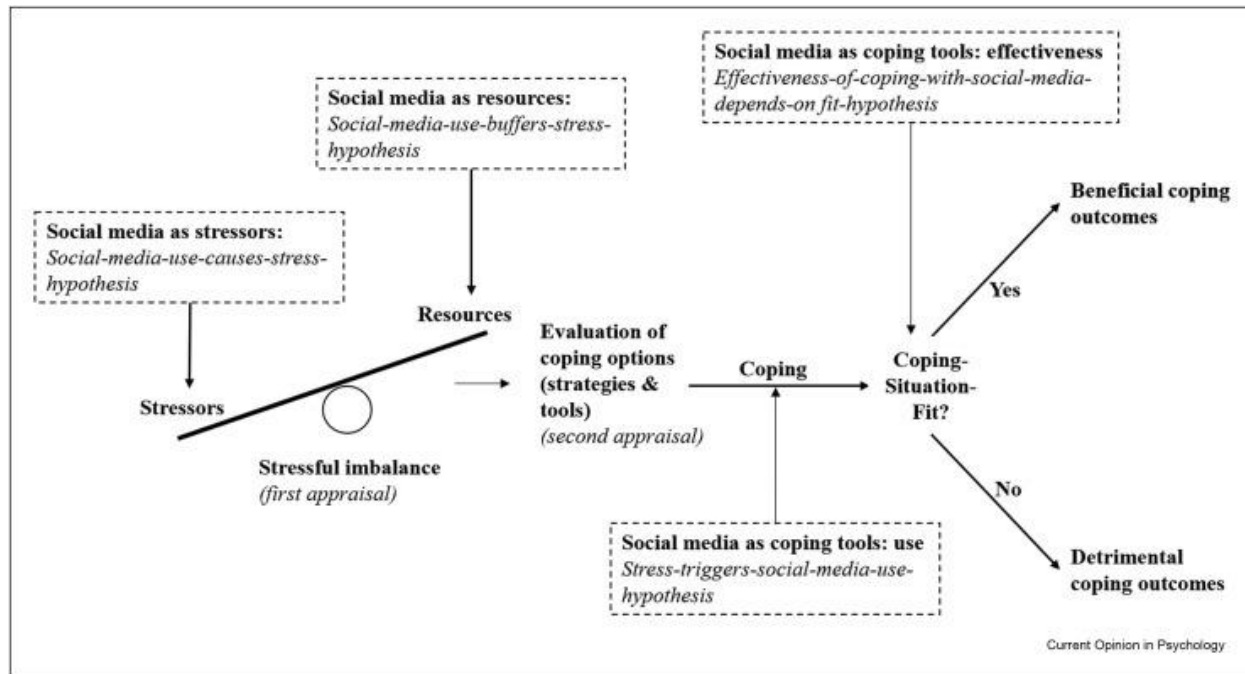
There has been a growing concern about the impact of social media use on the mental health of young adults, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. While social media can be a useful tool for staying connected with others and obtaining information, excessive use can lead to negative psychological outcomes. Research has suggested that social media use has increased during the pandemic as a way to cope with social isolation and stay connected with others. However, studies have also found that high levels of social media use are associated with increased levels of anxiety, depression, and stress in young adults. One potential explanation for this association is that social media use can lead to social comparison and feelings of inadequacy, particularly when individuals compare their own lives to the carefully curated and edited versions of others that are often presented on social media. Additionally, excessive social media use can lead to a decreased sense of well-being, reduced quality of sleep, and increased feelings of loneliness. To promote positive mental health, young adults need to practice healthy social media

habits, such as limiting their social media use, focusing on meaningful social interactions, and engaging in other healthy activities. It may also be helpful for mental health professionals to incorporate discussions of social media use into their treatment plans for young adults. Social media has an impact on practically every part of our life since it allows for quick many-to-many contact and self-expression. A recent study reveals that social media exposure has both positive and bad effects on youth mental health; nevertheless, there has been a greater emphasis on destructive relationships.

Rapid advancements in Smartphone and internet use have expanded people's chances for creating and consuming online content. In contrast to traditional one-to-one personal contact and one-to-many media communication, platforms and apps collectively referred to as social media facilitate many-to-many communication. **{Error! Reference source not found.}** Youth has been one of the most active internet demographics during the previous decade. **{Error! Reference source not found.}** In the United States, the number of adolescents who own a Smartphone is projected to be 89%, having doubled between 2012 and 2018; also, 70% of teenagers use social media many times each day, up from 30% in 2012. **{Error! Reference source not found.}** Longitudinal research in Australia discovered that over 86% of pupils held smartphones in grade 8, increasing to 93% by grade 11, with a significant increase in social media contact from adolescence to early adulthood. **{Error! Reference source not found.}** With the rise in teenage online engagement, research on the connection between social media use and health has gained pace, especially among those going through critical developmental stages like the change from adolescence to young adulthood. **{Error! Reference source not found.}** Young people have a variety of alternatives to connect with others, express their creativity, and assert their self-identity on well-known social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat. **{Error! Reference source not found.}** Although each platform operates and is popular in a different way, they are already well-established as venues for young people to express their identities and show themselves. **{Error! Reference source not found.}**

However, excessive internet use and social media involvement have been related to online bullying, social isolation, stress, and depression. **{Error! Reference source not found.}** Frequent social media use has also been associated with hazardous behaviours such as addiction, self-harm, and sociality, all of which can be deleterious to mental health. **{Error! Reference source not found.}** Although most of the narrative on social media implies that social media harms mental health, recent research findings have been equivocal. According to one review, some social media uses, such as suicide prevention, {8} and authentic self-presentation are linked to mental health in teens. Happiness, life satisfaction, positive connections, a positive outlook, and personal growth are examples of positive elements of mental health. The good effects of social media can be linked to improved access to social capital and useful knowledge, as well as the availability of different convenient means of social assistance in a virtual world. These are especially relevant among young people who, according to reports, prefer the anonymity provided by social media to in-person encounters. Using Social Media to Build Positive Relationships and Social Capital Participants discussed how they used different platforms to stay in touch with their family and

communicate with friends online by putting messages on one other's profiles as they reflected on the possibilities of social media as a means of connecting with others. These efforts frequently led to the formation of deep relationships characterized by mutual trust, recognition, and a sense of belonging.



Source:- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352250X22000070>

### Objective:-

1. Creating a feeling of community: Using social media, you can connect with people who have similar interests, hobbies, or experiences. This sense of community can assist in alleviating emotions of loneliness and isolation, which have been heightened by the pandemic.
2. Promoting positive social interaction: Social media platforms can be used to encourage positive social interaction through activities such as posting uplifting information, engaging in pleasant conversations, or participating in group activities.
3. Raising mental health awareness: Social media may be used to improve mental health awareness and encourage young people to seek help when they are feeling overwhelmed or worried.
4. Providing a platform for self-expression: Social media can give young people a creative outlet, which can be a terrific stress reliever. They can express themselves through painting, music, writing, or other kinds of self-expression and receive feedback and encouragement.
5. Encourage healthy behaviours: Social media can be used to promote healthy habits like exercise, meditation, and mindfulness. Platforms can provide information, advice, and inspiration to assist adolescents in dealing with stress and anxiety in healthy ways.

### **Importance of the Study:**

People's life and attention are becoming dominated by social media use. According to research and evidence, social media use, particularly heavy use, is associated with depression and a variety of other harmful side effects (Rohilla & Kumar, 2015). Some say that it alters the brain chemistry of active users and reshapes their relationships. Dr Siegal, a psychiatry professor, discovered that social media physiologically rewires the human brain. He argued that social media was displacing face-to-face relationships and communication (Gmose, 2014). Social media can help people grow and start connections, but it can also help people end relationships. Many people report feeling separated from friends and family owing to a lack of in-person engagement with them. Social media has an impact on active users' romantic relationships and relationship satisfaction. According to Strickland (2014), Facebook and SNS can be harmful to romantic relationships since they encourage partner surveillance, jealousy, and compulsive internet usage. Jealousy and partner surveillance can lead to partners fighting and relationship dissatisfaction, which can lead to users suffering physical and mental health issues (Farrugia, 2013).

### **Methodology:-**

The questionnaire was created, which includes a range of multiple-choice questions, and a Likert scale. The survey was administered using the Google Forms platform, which requires individuals to be logged in to an e-mail account to participate; repeated entries from a single account were not permitted. The questionnaire was distributed through the use of social media platforms, e-mail, and regular messaging systems. Clear instructions were supplied with the Google form to guarantee that the respondent was a student.

### **Literature Review:-**

Several studies and articles have been published on the use of social media by youth as a stress reliever. Here is a summary of the important findings from the literature review:

- Chen and Lee (2013) investigated the relationship between Facebook interactions and psychological suffering in two areas: communication overload and personal self-esteem. Communication overload was defined by the study's authors as "when too much information is flowing into an individual's brain - emails, texts, phone calls, instant messages, posts, and status updates - an individual can become overwhelmed.
- Lee, K. H., (2013). This study discovered that frequent Facebook interaction is connected with increased psychological suffering via a two-step pathway that lowers self-esteem and promotes communication overload. The findings of this study are critical in helping us understand the effects of social media, notably Facebook, on mental health. Because psychological distress was found to be positively correlated with the frequency of

Facebook interaction, it can be deduced that the more an individual interacts with Facebook, the more psychological distress that individual will experience (as a result of increased communication overload and lower self-esteem).

- Instagram use was examined in a recent study by Sherlock and Wagstaff (2019) to discover a link between Instagram use and several psychological factors. 129 women between the ages of 18 and 35 took part in this study. First, the participants completed a series of questions that revealed an association between Instagram use and self-esteem, depressive symptoms, general and physical appearance concerns, and body dissatisfaction. The study found that social comparison mediated these associations. That is, if a person uses Instagram and compares themselves to the individuals they are looking at or engaging with on Instagram, Instagram use is related to the characteristics indicated above (Sherlock, M., & Wagstaff, D. L., 2019).
- Using social media as a coping strategy: According to a study published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, youth frequently use social media as a coping method to deal with stress and worry. The study discovered that kids who used social media had reduced levels of despair and anxiety.
- Potential negative effects: While social media can be a beneficial tool for stress alleviation, there are some risks to be aware of. According to a study published in the *Journal of Adolescence*, kids who spend too much time on social media have greater levels of stress. According to the study, the detrimental impacts of social media use may be linked to social comparison, cyberbullying, and sleep disruptions.
- Overall, evidence reveals that when it comes to using social media as a stress reliever, moderation is crucial. According to a study published in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*, moderate social media use was connected with higher levels of well-being among youth, while excessive use was associated with poorer levels of well-being.
- Intentional use: According to another study published in the *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, intentional use of social media for stress release can be beneficial. According to the study, youth who used social media to purposefully interact with people and seek social support reported lower levels of stress and higher levels of well-being.
- Harchekar, J. S. (2018). Digitalization in the banking sector mentioned that Digitization is critical to data processing, storage, and transmission because it "allows all types of information in all formats to be carried with the same efficiency and also intermingled." Unlike analogue data, which normally suffers some loss of quality when copied or communicated, digital data can be transmitted with no loss of quality.

- Harchekar, J. S., & Bapat, S. (2022). Information technology and its effects on the banking industry. Telebanking is another innovation that allows customers to bank around the clock, seven days a week. Telebanking relies on the ability of bank computers to process voice messages. The caller is typically a consumer who phones the bank with a question about his account balance or other transactional information. Internet Banking - Through the bank's Internet website, a customer can execute financial transactions. It is a computer-based system that allows users to access accounts and general information about bank services and products from the comfort of their own homes or workplace. This is referred to as virtual banking.
- Kothari, U., & Seetharaman, A. (2020). Impact of digital transformation on the retail banking industry in the UAE. In *Re-imagining Diffusion and Adoption of Information Technology and Systems: A Continuing Conversation: IFIP WG 8.6 International Conference on Transfer and Diffusion of IT, TDIT 2020, Tiruchirappalli, India, December 18–19, 2020, Proceedings, Part I* (pp. 425-438). Springer International Publishing. Bluetooth Beacons deployed in banks to link physical and mobile channels, establish a new style of engagement and effective communication, and provide a positive and personal experience to consumers. Barclays was one of the first banks to implement all of these technologies.
- Deshpande, B. (2018). Digitalization in the banking sector. Digitalization can also help achieve this goal by increasing people's access to information.
- Ghatpande, K. (2017). Higher Education in the Society. *International Journal of Management, IT and Engineering*, 7(9), 244-252. In ancient times, there were institutes such as Ashram Shala and Gurukules where all studies were taught by Achars (Guru). Even Rama and Krishna had to travel to Gurukules for their studies. There is a specific rite for Upanayana to begin schooling at the age of 8 years old the child, following this ceremony the child must stay in Gurukul for at least 12 years to complete the courses. So our great leaders considered this and devised a system of education advantageous to the student's development as a proper person with culture, humanity, and an increase in the family's economic status. So, in 1950, the Education Department was established, and the central and state boards of education all followed the "10+2+3" educational pattern.

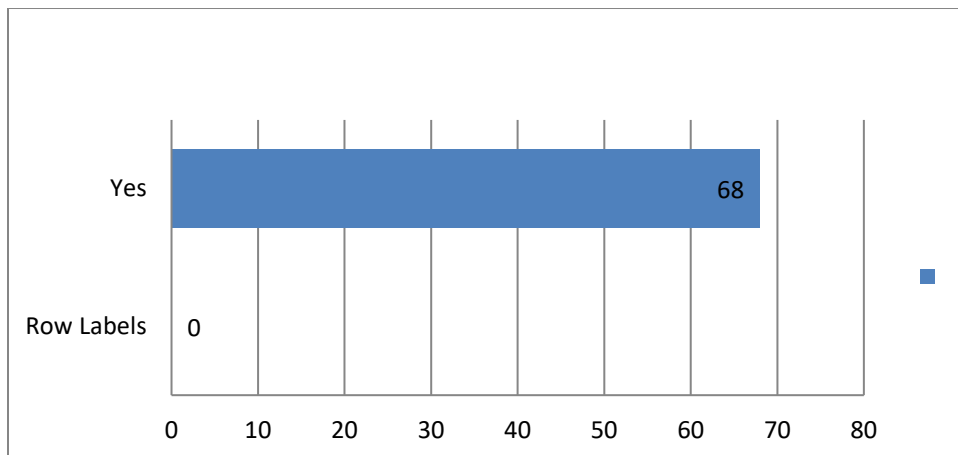
To summarize, while social media can be a valuable tool for teenage stress alleviation, it is vital to utilize it in moderation and with a goal. Social media can offer social support and a sense of community, but excessive use can be harmful to one's mental health.

### Data Analysis:-

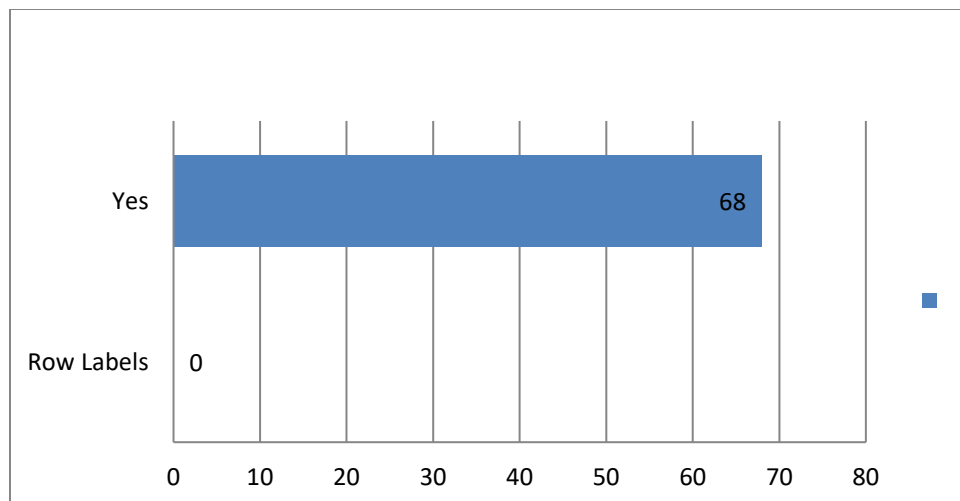
68 respondent's age details are as follows

#### Demographics Details

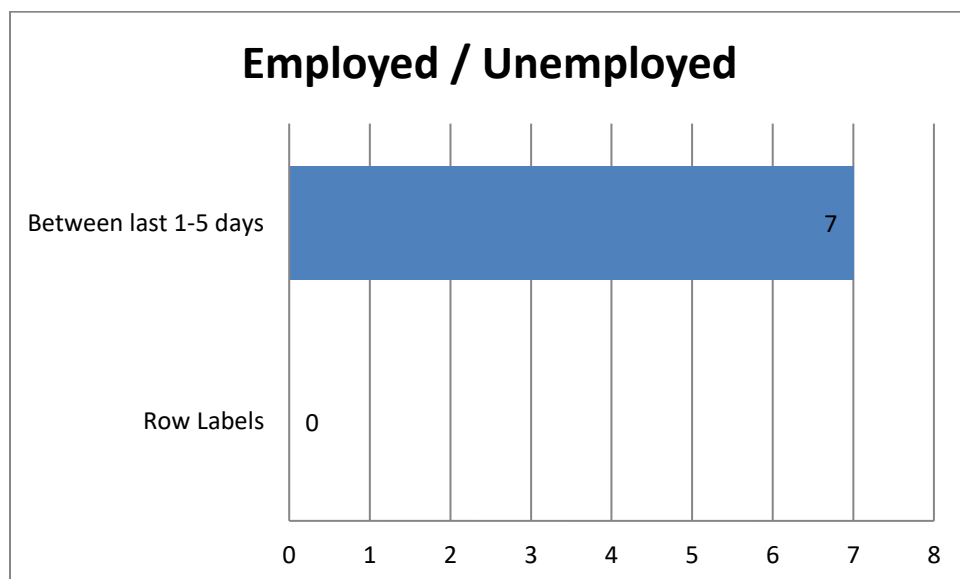
Variables Age (year)	Number of Subjects (N = 68)	Percentage (%)
18-22	44	64.71
23-27	18	26.47
32 and Above	06	8.82



Most of the respondents are within the age group of 18 to 27 i.e. 62 respondents who fall under the youth category.

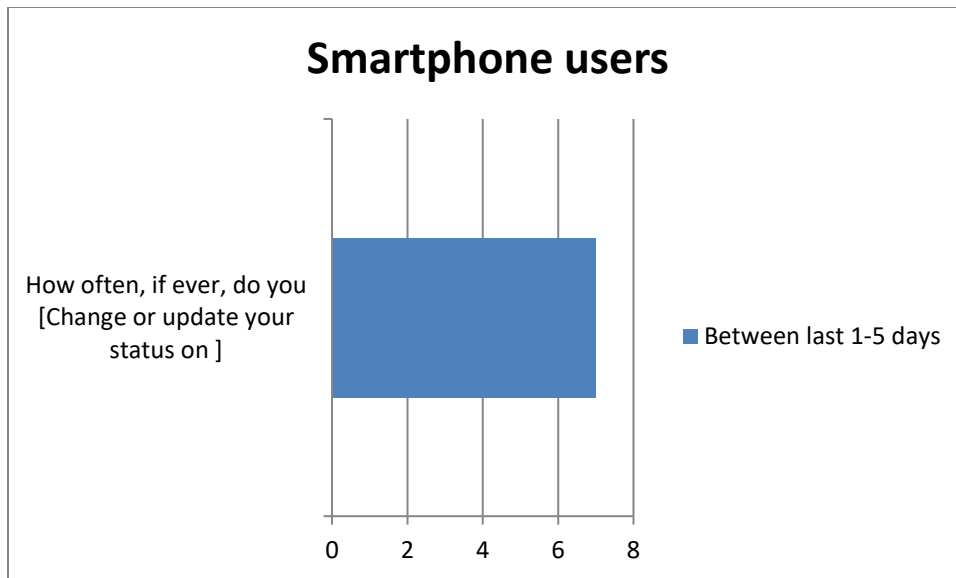


Most of the respondents are male.



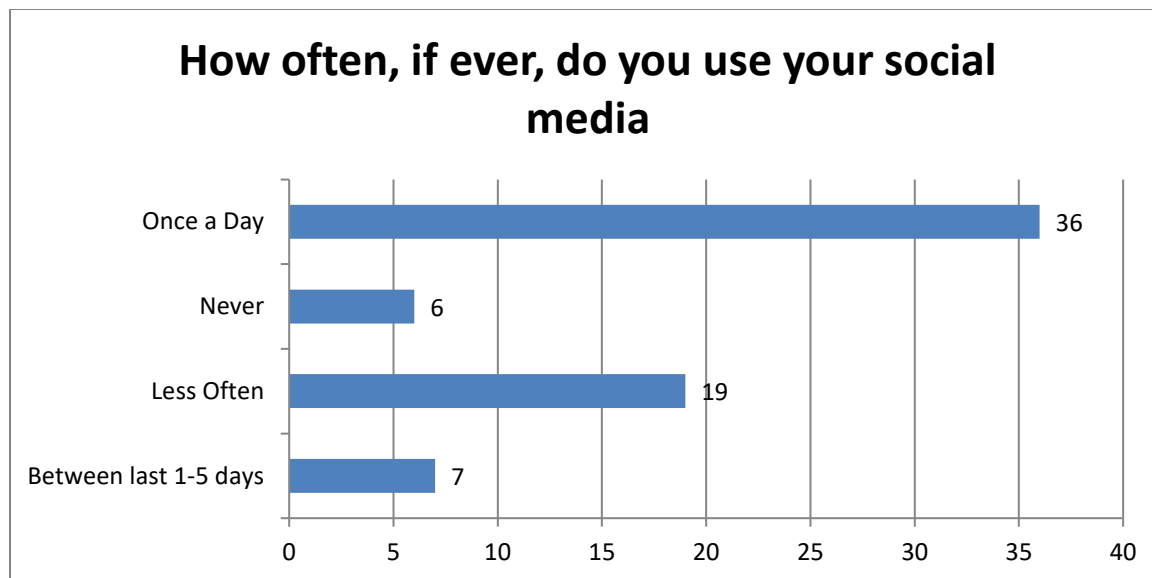
The respondents are all students so most of the respondents are unemployed.





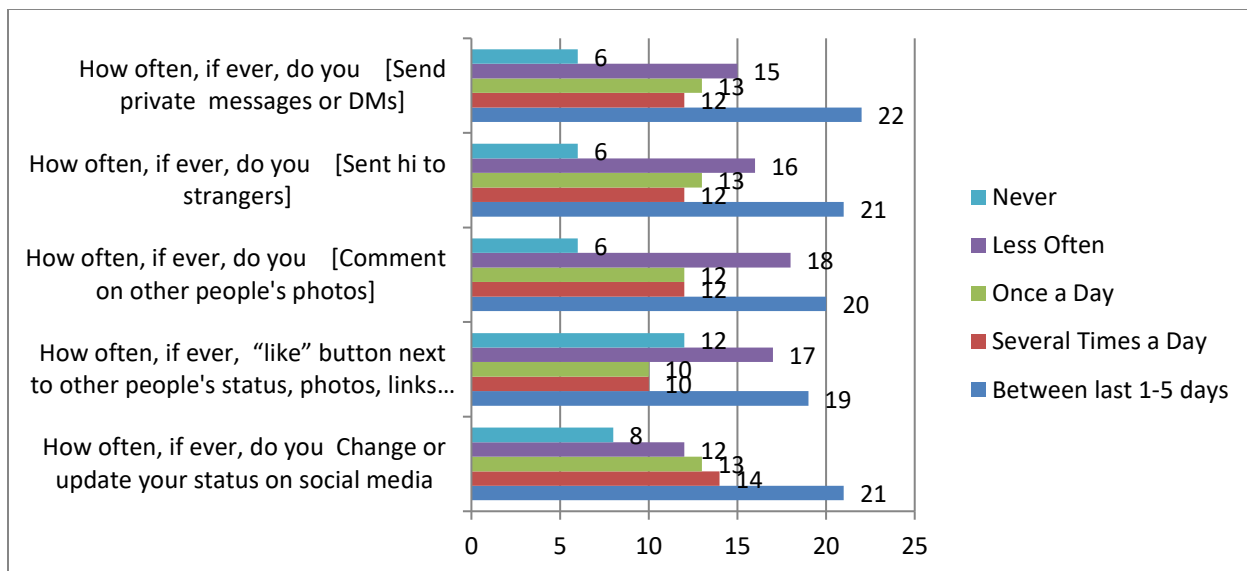
All the respondents are using Smartphone

How often do you use smartphones?



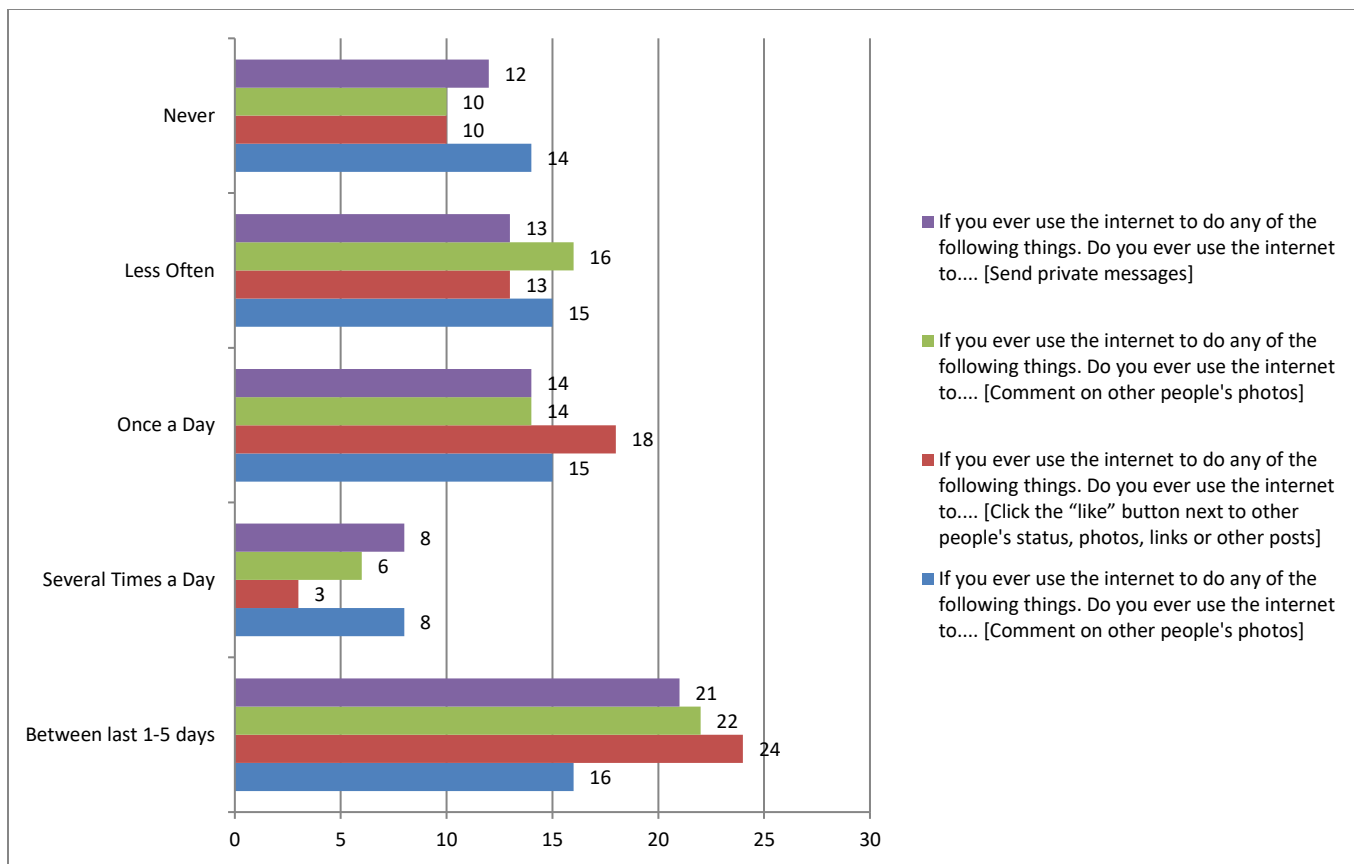
Most of the respondents use mobile more using mobile phones for using social media sites.

Between the last 1-5 days	How often, if ever, do you Change or update your status on social media	How often, if ever, "like" button next to other people's status, photos, links or other posts]	How often, if ever, do you [Comment on other people's photos]	How often, if ever, do you [Send hi to strangers]	How often, if ever, do you [Send private messages or DMs]
Between the last 1-5 days	21	19	20	21	22
Several Times a Day	14	10	12	12	12
Once a Day	13	10	12	13	13
Less Often	12	17	18	16	15
Never	8	12	6	6	6



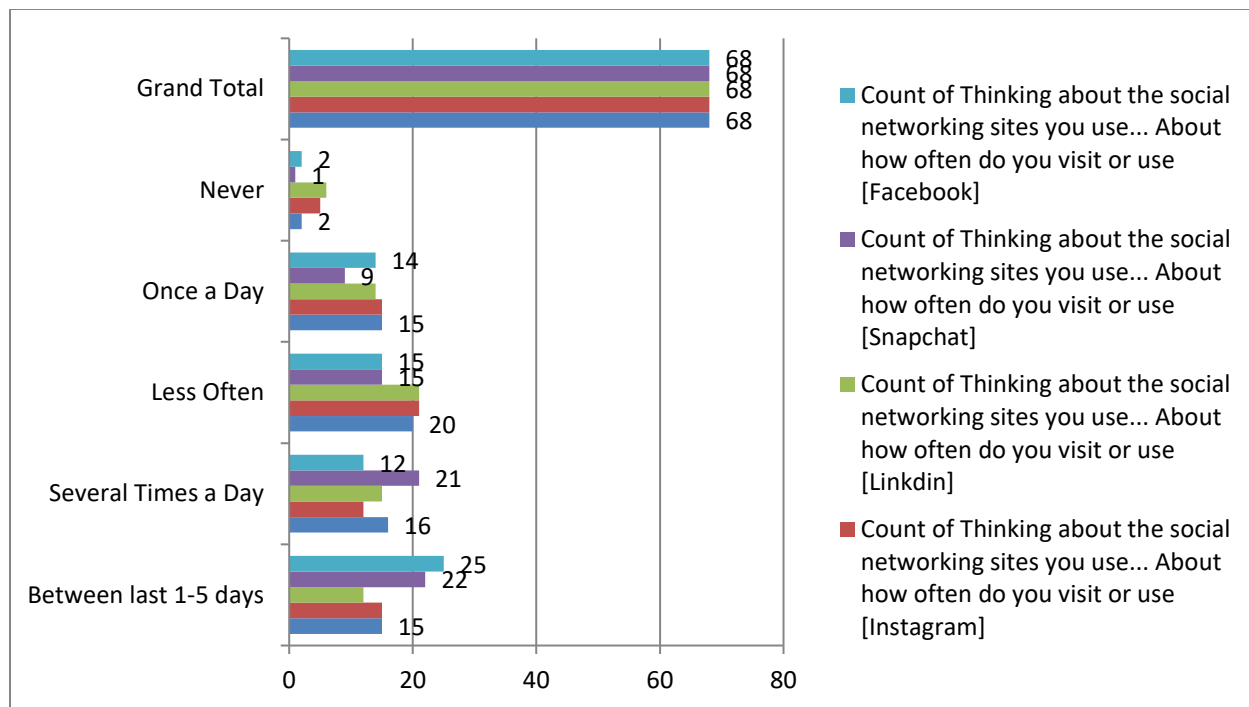
Usage of social media according to and it is found that respondents use social media several times a day.

Row Labels	If you ever use the internet to do any of the following things. Do you ever use the internet to?[Comment on other people's photos]	If you ever use the internet to do any of the following things. Do you ever use the internet to... [Click the "like" button next to other people's status, photos, links or other posts]	If you ever use the internet to do any of the following things. Do you ever use the internet to... [Comment on other people's photos]	If you ever use the internet to do any of the following things. Do you ever use the internet to... [Send private messages]
Between the last 1-5 days	16	24	22	21
Several Times a Day	8	3	6	8
Once a Day	15	18	14	14
Less Often	15	13	16	13
Never	14	10	10	12
	68	68	68	68



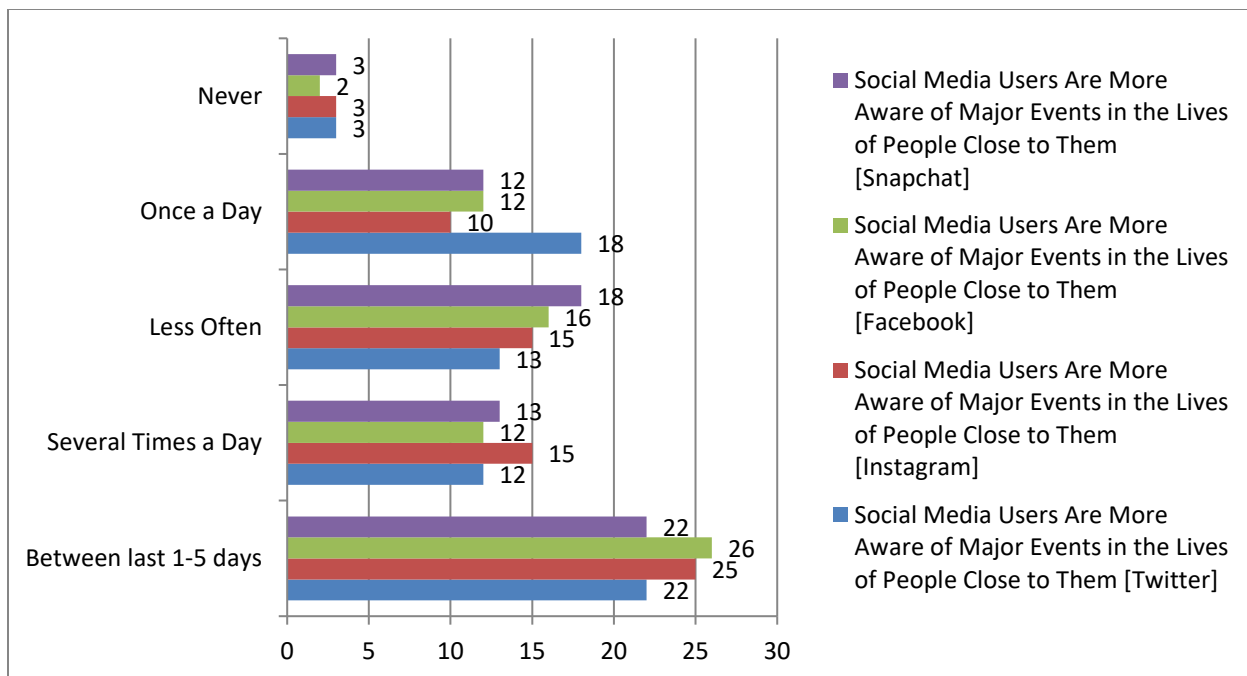
Respondents use social media for posting their photos clicking on like buttons or sending personal messages to their friends on social media.

Row Labels	Count of Thinking about the social networking sites you use... About how often do you visit or use [Twitter]	Count of Thinking about the social networking sites you use... About how often do you visit or use [Instagram]	Count of Thinking about the social networking sites you use... About how often do you visit or use [Linkdin]	Count of Thinking about the social networking sites you use... About how often do you visit or use [Snapchat]	Count of Thinking about the social networking sites you use... About how often do you visit or use [Facebook]
Between the last 1-5 days	15	15	12	22	25
Several Times a Day	16	12	15	21	12
Less Often	20	21	21	15	15
Once a Day	15	15	14	9	14
Never	2	5	6	1	2



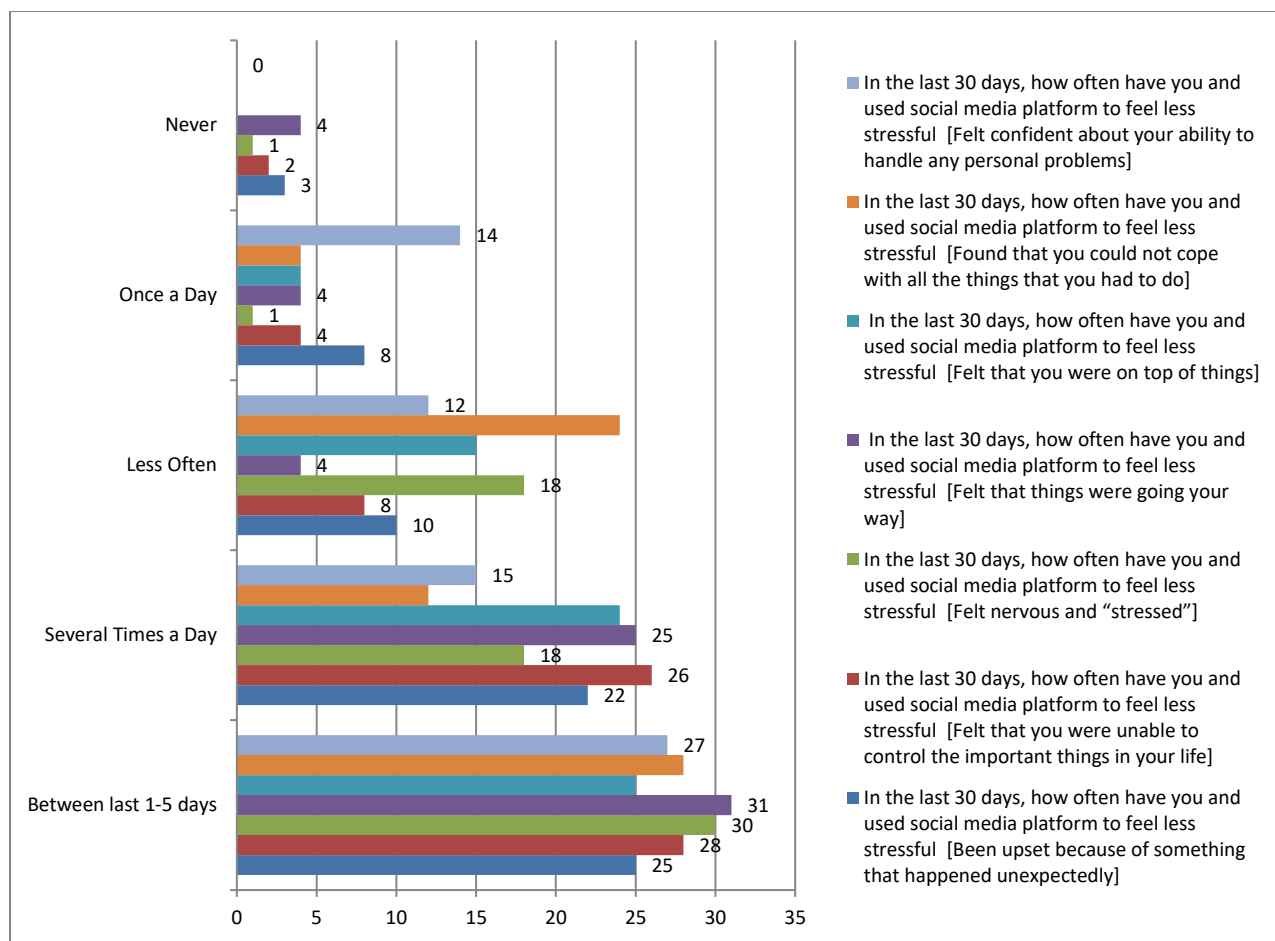
Most of the respondents feel that spending time on social media is a stress reliever as the response is showing that there is more connection between the people and by posting various things they feel it's a communication between their social media friends and them.

Row Labels	Social Media Users Are More Aware of Major Events in the Lives of People Close to Them [Twitter]	Social Media Users Are More Aware of Major Events in the Lives of People Close to Them [Instagram]	Social Media Users Are More Aware of Major Events in the Lives of People Close to Them [Facebook]	Social Media Users Are More Aware of Major Events in the Lives of People Close to Them [Snapchat]
Between the last 1-5 days	22	25	26	22
Several Times a Day	12	15	12	13
Less Often	13	15	16	18
Once a Day	18	10	12	12
Never	3	3	2	3



Most of the respondents feel that Social Media Users Are More Aware of Major Events in the Lives of People Close to them.

Row Labels	In the last 30 days, how often have you used social media platforms to feel less stressful [Been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly]	In the last 30 days, how often have you used social media platforms to feel less stressful [Felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life]	In the last 30 days, how often have you used social media platforms to feel less stressful [Felt nervous and "stressed"]	In the last 30 days, how often have you used social media platforms to feel less stressful [Felt that things were going your way]	In the last 30 days, how often have you used social media platforms to feel less stressful [Felt that you were on top of things]	In the last 30 days, how often have you used social media platforms to feel less stressful [Found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do]	In the last 30 days, how often have you used social media platforms to feel less stressful [Felt confident about your ability to handle any personal problems]
Between the last 1-5 days	25	28	30	31	25	28	27
Several Times a Day	22	26	18	25	24	12	15
Less Often	10	8	18	4	15	24	12
Once a Day	8	4	1	4	4	4	14
Never	3	2	1	4	0	0	0
Total	68	68	68	68	68	68	68



Respondents feel that they often have used various social media platforms to feel less stressed.

## **Conclusion:-**

We discovered that youth engaged in a wide range of social media activities, from connecting with family and friends to participating in global movements, and that these activities acted as channels for developing healthy mental health. Based on participant narratives, our analysis suggested that three aspects of social media consumption (connection with friends and their global community, engagement with social media content, and the value of social media as an outlet for expression) could influence positive mental health among youth. Pathways leading to the following 5 good mental health components were discovered as a result of these: (1) positive relationships and social capital, (2) self-concept, (3) coping, (4) happiness, and (5) other relevant mental health elements (such as positivity and personal growth). The study's findings underscore the importance of social media in the lives of today's adolescents, indicating that it can provide chances for positive influence, personal expression, and social support, all of which contribute to young mental health. Our findings can be used to improve youth involvement through social media and improve digital forms of mental health promotion.

Finally, because it allows for social support, self-expression, and connection with others, social media can be a useful stress-relieving tool for youth. To avoid negative repercussions such as cyberbullying, social comparison, and sleep interruptions, use social media sparingly and with purpose. According to studies, young social media use is associated with lower levels of sadness and anxiety, and using social media for stress relief can be effective. Social media can also promote positive mental health and well-being by facilitating self-expression, encouraging healthy behaviours, and increasing mental health awareness.



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