

Influence of Social Networking Usage on Mental Health of Tribal Adolescents

Mrs. Sasmita Behera¹, Dr. Ramendra Kumar Padhi²

^{1,2}Department of Education, Central University of Odisha, Koraput, Pin-753004

Abstract

From past two decades, Social Networking Sites beheld a sporadic enhancement in quantity, quality and utility. As the body of an individual is nourished by the intake of necessary mineral elements obtained through nutrition, likewise human mind is nurtured by the availability of nutrition for thoughts. Social networking sites have become an important part of modern life. They are generally defined as web-based platforms that allow individuals to create their own personal profile and build a network of connections with other users. From the dawn of internet and social networking sites, human resources of contemporary world have become more social virtually but less practically. The virtual life is isolating present generation from their other fellow beings there by affecting their health both physically as well as mentally and overall balance. Increased usage of social networking sites particularly among adolescents in the present scenario is a matter of concern for the parents, society and researchers as there are always two sides (positive and negative) of every innovation. The aim of the present research study was to explore the influence of social networking sites on mental health of the adolescents of three government secondary school of Koraput district, Odisha. For the present study, an ex-post facto research method was employed. The stratified random sampling technology was employed to select the sample where total of 150 adolescent boys and girls from class -X (50 from each school) were purposively selected. The data was collected by administering a standardized tool based on mental health scale upon the students and the collected data was analysed by using several statistical techniques like- Mean, SD and t-test. This, the findings showed that there was significant difference between the mental health conditions of social networking users and non-users. The findings also showed that there was also significant difference between social networking users' mental health in terms of gender and locality.

Keywords: Social networking sites, Mental Health, Tribal Adolescent, etc.

Introduction

Social networking sites have become an important part of modern life. Social media is one of the newest and most popular internet services, which has caused significant progress in the social systems of different countries in recent years. They are generally defined as web-based platforms that allow individuals to create their own personal profile and build a network of connections with other users. From the past two decade, social media beheld a sporadic enhancement in quantity, quality and utility. As the body of an individual is nourished by the intake of necessary mineral elements obtained through nutrition, likewise human mind is nurtured by the availability of nutrition for thoughts. The use of the internet has become popular among people in such a way that its use has become inevitable and has

made life difficult for those who use it excessively. Social media has attracted the attention of millions of users around the world owing to the possibility of fast communication, access to a large amount of information, and its widespread dissemination. Now a day, teenagers' use of social media is one of their most apparent characteristics. Being socially connected with other people is a typical phenomenon, whether at home; school, or a social gathering, and adolescents are constantly in touch with their classmates via social media accounts. Now a days, which is readily available through the advancement of technology, thereby opening a platform for discussion between social media and mental health of present era. From the dawn of internet and social networking sites human resources of contemporary world have become more social virtually but less practically. The virtual life is isolating present generation from other fellow beings thereby affecting his health (mental & physical) and overall balance. Increased usage of social networking sites among adolescents especially of the present era is a matter of concern for the parents, society and researchers as they are always two sides (positive & negative) of every innovation. However, social networking has many positive effects; concerns have been raised about its impact on mental health. Some studies have suggested that social media use can lead to negative mental health outcomes such as depression, anxiety and addiction. On the other hand, some other studies have found out that there is a strong positive effect of social media use on mental health of the students. Thus, this article aims to review the current literature on the effects of social media on mental health of the adolescents. The aim of the present research study was to examine the influence of social networking sites on mental health of the tribal adolescents of Koraput district , Odisha.

Review Related Literature

Bhat (2017) conducted a study on social networking sites and mental health: A review. Thus, the study revealed that the prolonged use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter may be related to signs and symptoms of depression. The study also indicated that certain SNS activities are associated with lower levels of self-esteem and confidence, especially in children and adolescents.

Keles, McCrae & Grealish (2019) investigated on the influence of social media on depression, anxiety and psychological distress in adolescents. The researcher found out that the main four domains of social media, i.e. time spent, activity, investment and addiction. All domains correlated with depression, anxiety and psychological distress.

Deepa & Priya (2020) studied on the impact of social media on mental health of students and revealed from their findings that there is a significant associations between time spent on social media and the number of SNS. There is a positive correlation between feeling anxious and serious active on SNS than in real life. Thus, the study further concluded that more usage of social media, number of SNS and too much of time spent on social networking sites is affecting the student's mental health such as depression and anxiety.

Shannon, Bush, Villeneuve, Hellemans & Guimond (2022) examined problematic social media use in adolescents and young adults and its association with symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress. Thus, the study provided further evidence of the association between problematic social media use and negative mental health among adolescents and young adults.

Nazari, Hosseinnia, Torkian & Garmaroudi (2023) studied on social media and mental health in students: a cross- sectional study during the covid-19 pandemic. The objective of the study was connected with the aim of determining the relationship between the uses of social media and the mental

health of the students. Consequently, the results indicated that social media had a direct relationship with mental health.

Rationale of the Study

It is obvious that social networking is something that helps us to connect with people from all over the world. Many related studies indicated both pros and cons of social networking usage. Some researchers found that the use of social networking significantly impacts mental health as it can provide opportunities to enhance the mental health of users by facilitating social connections and peer support. It can also help in increasing self-esteem, mutual friendships, rewarding social interactions and a sense of belonging. [Zsila, A. & Reyes, M.E.S. (2023), AI- Rahmi, Othman and Musa (2014),etc.] Whereas on the other hand, some of the reviews revealed the detrimental effects of social media use on mental health. Due to the excessive use of it, young generation are being addicted day by day. Due to the depressions, other mental health problems like: low self-esteem, memory problems, poor concentration, and social anxiety are also increasing among the young generation. [Bhat,S.A. (2017), Nazari, Hosseinnia, Torkian & Garmaroudi (2023, Deepa, M. & Priya, V.K. (2020), etc.]. From the above related studies, the researcher has found that most of the studies have highlighted the negative side of social networking whose influence on mental health of the students and a very few studies have been found in contrast. There was no any studies found by the researcher on social networking usage of tribal students and its influence on their mental health that the researcher seeks to explore. In spite of many negative sides of SNS, the investigator seeks to reveal the positive influence of SNS on tribal adolescents' mental health as they make good social relationship, mutual support and good collaboration with their friends, teachers, etc. as well as they perform well academically instead of using it every day but not every time.

Objectives of the study

- To compare between social networking usage among tribal adolescent boys and girls at secondary level.
- To compare between the level of mental health of scheduled tribe boys and girl students using social networking in tribal region.

Hypotheses of the study

- H1- There is significant difference between the use of SNS among tribal adolescent boys and girls at secondary level.
- H2- There is significant difference between the level of mental health of scheduled tribe boys and girls using social networking.

Materials and Methods

- **Variables:** In the present study, SNS is the independent variable, whereas on the other hand, mental health is the dependent variable, in which the influence of independent variable on dependent variable is examined.
- **Methods:** For the present study, the investigator has employed ex-post facto research method. This study links some already existing effects or observations to some variables as causative agents of the

effect of SNS use on mental health of tribal adolescents. Therefore, this research method was considered as appropriate for the study.

- **Participants:** The data was collected from class-X scheduled tribe students from two secondary school of Koraput district, i.e. Dumuriput High School and Subai High School. A total sample size of 100 students were selected by stratified random sampling technique and the sample was further divided proportionately into strata like: 50 boys and 50 girls (25 boys and 25 girls from each school).
- **Instrumentation and Data Collection Procedure:** As the present research was designed to study and compare the influence of social networking sites on mental health of scheduled tribe students of secondary level, the investigator personally visited to the institutions and collected data from the students by administering a self-prepared tool on social networking usage which has become also standardized. Another tool based on mental health of the students was also used by the investigator for the purpose of data collection. Mental Health Battery is a standardized tool developed by A.K.Singh and Alpana Sengupta. It contains 130 items and measures mental health of 13 to 22 years of age group. Thus, it contains six dimensions; emotional stability, over all adjustment, autonomy, security-insecurity, self-concept and intelligence.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

	Gender	N	Mean	Mean Difference	SD	Std. Error of Mean	t-value	df	Remarks
Mental Health Scores	Boys	50	136.90	-37.160	52.372	7.407	-3.811	98	p> 0.05
	Girls	50	174.06	-37.160	44.854	6.343			

Table 1. Comparison of Mean scores of boys’ and girls’ social networking usage by using Independent sample t-test.

From the above **Table 1**, it can be indicated that the Mean scores of social networking usage of adolescent boys and girls is 232.92 and 133.38 . In order to know the Mean difference between both the group, Independent sample t-test was used. Thus, the result showed that, with the df value of 98 at 0.05 level, the obtained value of t, i.e. 8.736 is more than the critical value of t, i.e. 1.661. so, here the null hypothesis can be rejected at 0.05 level. However, it can be said that, the tribal adolescent boys are more SNS users than adolescent girls. It also revealed that the boys are being more socially connected and updated in various information through the use of SNS which was rarely found in contrast.

				Difference		Error of Mean			
SNS Usage Scores	Boys	50	232.92	99.540	62.028	8.772	8.736	98	p> 0.05
	Girls	50	133.38	99.540	51.421	8.772			

Table 2. Comparison of Mean scores of boys’ and girls’ mental health level by using Independent sample t-test.

From the above **Table 2**, it can be revealed that there is significant difference between the Mean scores of mental health level of adolescent boys and girls, i.e. 136.90 and 174.06 . To test the hypothesis, an Independent sample t-test was employed. Thus, the result indicated that, with the df value of 98 at 0.05

level, the obtained t-value is 3.811 which is greater than the table value of t, i.e. 1.661. hence, the null hypothesis can not be retained here. However, it can be concluded that, the tribal adolescent girls possess good mental health than boys. Because the girls make them attentive in the class, perform good results in their academics and other co-curricular activities and maintain discipline as compared to the male students.

Results and Discussions

From the above findings, the investigator revealed that, around 66% of tribal students have active usage of social networking. Because, SNS usage provides opportunities to enhance their mental health by facilitating social connections and peer support. By using it, anxiety and stress of the students can be reduced also. Among those, who are using it very excessively, they feel very anxious, loneliness, fear of missing out and decreased subjective wellbeing and life satisfaction. Too much of time spent on SNS usage is affecting their mental health which causes some psychological problems like: depression, anxiety and stress. Thus, it showed that, the students having high SNS usage possess poor mental health as compared to those who use it actively and rarely but not excessively. On the other hand, around 34% of boys and girls who use it moderately or in a low level, they possess good mental health. Because they make balanced and disciplined life, they don't make themselves isolated from their physical environment, they involve in various social and cultural activities of school and their communities. However, as per the comparison between boys and girl students having SNS usage, the adolescent boys are actively using it to stay connected with their peers, friends and relatives in order to deepen their relationships and also to share many things as compared to girls. Thus, the investigator found that, the students those have high SNS usage possess poor mental health.

Educational Implications

It should be the responsibility of Govt. to make pros. and cons of SNS usage and how to use it properly. Pros and cons should be made part of school curriculum to spread awareness among the students particularly. Thus, the school and educational institutions should organise campaigns for promoting safe and healthy use of SNS. Because Internet use is the need of everyone. It's make the things possible that which was not possible in the past is now possible at the click of a button today.

Conclusion

From the above discussions and findings of the study, it can be concluded that social media has become an integral part of everyone's life. Because it has become more popular having more attractive and diverse spaces for online communication among users, especially the young generation. It also allows teens to establish friends, discuss ideas, discover new interests and try out new kinds of self-expression. Thus, the investigator revealed that, using it properly helps the adolescents particularly to get many information and knowledge regarding various things. Whereas, using it excessively makes a person depressed, inactive and uncivilized. So, it is the responsibility of every individual like, teachers, parents, society members as well as the govt. is to take necessary approaches for regulating and balancing the usage of various social networking sites.

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