Does Social Media affect an Individual Negatively?

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**Introduction**

 Social Media is defined as a set of applications and websites that are used by an individual to create, share different types of content and participate in the world of social networking (Lerman, et al. 2016). With the passage of time, social media has become an integral part of human life. There are both positive and negative aspects of using social media, where research reveals that the ratio of negative impacts is more as compared to the positive impacts. It is a general observation that if an individual fails to imagine his/her life without social media, it is the sign of addiction to social media (Lerman, et al. 2016). There are several negative impacts of social media that range from changes to mental health and deteriorating academic performance to individual negativity. Individual negativity refers to a distorted, misguided or superficial approach towards life that can compromise social wellbeing and emotional stability of an individual (Lerman, et al. 2016). Social media has promoted individual negativity in several different forms.

**Discussion**

 Social media was introduced as a platform that could bring people close to each other and let them live their lives in a global village. With the passage of time, social media is turning out to be a curse that was disguised as blessing taking into account it is casting a far-reaching and negative impact on almost all possible dimensions of human life (Wakefield, et al. 2016). Social media is casting a highly negative impact on the lifestyles, choices, perceptions, and ideas of people. It is found that the involvement of an individual in different forms of social media has become a routine for many children and teenagers. In accordance with a survey, about 22% of teenagers are logging in to their favorite social media websites ten times in a day, were 54% generation is using such tools for text messaging and 24% for sending instant messages (Wakefield, et al. 2016). As a result, children are developing social and emotional skills on the internet that infers less usage of vocal and visual cues in the context of the situation. Using social media has curtailed face to face communication along with reduced nonverbal expressions (Wakefield, et al. 2016). These aspects have resulted in reduced social skills. Today, individuals prefer zombie chats more than face to face interaction because they are becoming habitual to the use of the message language, emoticons and emoji’s for expression or conveying their feelings. It is said that relationship develops when two people are in contact in with each other, both, physical and mental but social media has only empowered mental availability. Relying more on social media has resulted in a reduced and ineffective relationship where, intentions are misunderstood, feelings are not expressed and public opinion affect personal life and ideologies. Moreover, there is greater stress on artificial or materialistic essence of relationship rather than the natural attribute of relationship (Wolniewicz, et al. 2018). People are more into jealousy, inferiority complex and rivalry that has hampered the beauty of relationships. According to research, it is proved that relationships are becoming weak with social media because fakeness and materialism prevail, moreover, teenagers are facing relationship complications in a fairly earlier age because they trust anyone from anywhere except for the ones who are close to them in real life (Wolniewicz, et al. 2018).

 Beauty Standards is one of the most understood and then misunderstood ideology under the negative impact of social media. There is a lot of change in the perception of beauty as compared to the past. Increased exposure to beauty trends, models and movies have created major unattainable standards of perfection (Wolniewicz, et al. 2018). It is proved that 82% of women believe that social media can change the prevailing standards of beauty (Wolniewicz, et al. 2018). Today, incorporation of makeup tutorial, grater stress on Disney and the idea to look attractive has tarnished the basic essence of beauty. Social media has not only tarnished the beauty standards of girls but also of boys. It would not be wrong to say that social media has terribly misplaced the goals of perfection and incorporated a compensation of what actually troubles an individual mind. Under this idea of perfection, girls are experiencing body image issues, they want to look like someone else but they are actually different, girls are always found thinking about what they can change about themselves (Wolniewicz, et al. 2018). A mindset of beauty is created that has made girls to be diagnosed with eating disorders and other mental disorders. The same ideology applies to boys where social media is found constructing and deconstructing their self-esteem. They believe in creating an impression on girls where the idea of perfection leads them to become more muscular and appear physically fit. In order to maintain a muscular body, boys are taking additional and some unhealthy supplements that would help them gain ideal results (Wolniewicz, et al. 2018).

 Social media has promoted unhealthy ideas for beauty. It is found that girls are seen undergoing surgeries for maintaining a skinny body, fair complexion and an attractive look. It not only causes a temporarily negative impact but it challenges the life of teenagers in the long run because changing standards are never-ending (Brown, et al. 2018). Those, who cannot afford surgeries are seen using expensive beauty products that are directly damaging the skin, sometimes leading to severe reactions. In boys, these unhealthy beauty standards appear in the form of decreased attention to future employment goals and more attention to appearance goals. Much like girls, boys are seen developing and maintaining their bodies in the most updated style so that they can overcome the beauty complications (Brown, et al. 2018).

 It would not be wrong to say that the overall lifestyle of people is negatively affected by social media. Generations are becoming an addict to social media, taking into account a negative impact on health in the form of social withdrawal, eye strain, and sleep disorders. There is a mesh of perceptions and ideologies where every user is trying to find its space that can help to mitigate inferiority complexes (Bhandari, et al. 2018). Lives are affected by artificial ideologies and materialistic standards that are driving teenagers to dead ends. There is less stress on real-life and more emphasis on artificial standards that are not reality-based at all. Almost all dimensions of life are deprived of original attention because individuals are affected negatively, they are chasing what is created by themselves and then falling back because of the inability to stay adhered to those standards (Bhandari, et al. 2018)

**Conclusion**

 Social media, a platform that was introduced with an aim intention to bring people closer have made them negative and fall apart. It is observed that individuals are falling for fake standards, they are becoming victims of inferiority complex and addicted to abstraction (Bhandari, et al. 2018). Almost all of the social media users are giving less tension to real-life relationship and more significance to virtual realities that have diminished their social skills. Fake beauty standards have made both girls and boys adopt unhealthy life patterns where they dress up for others maintain looks for others and ultimately they are doing more harm than good to themselves. In order to maintain a social media healthy lifestyle, the actual lifestyle is disturbed that has made individuals victim of social, moral, mental and physical health disorders (Bhandari, et al. 2018). There are increased insecurities and decreased approach to positivity in life. Individuals are more like media zombies who have no future other than sheer destruction and loss.

References

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