

Chapter one

Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

Anxiety is a normal emotion, it is the brain's way of reacting to stress and alerting you of potential danger ahead. Everyone feels anxious now and then. Anxiety is a feeling of worry or apprehension, often about something that could happen in the future. It's a normal human emotion, but it can become problematic when it is excessive and interferes with daily life. Too much anxiety can make you avoid work, school, family get-togethers, and other social situations that might trigger or worsen your symptoms. With treatment, many people with anxiety can manage their symptoms. Anxiety can manifest as both physical and mental symptoms, and while anxiety can be a natural part of life.

But anxiety disorders are different, Anxiety disorder is a fear that hinders with normal functioning may be classified as an anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders are a group of mental health conditions considered by excessive fear and anxiety, often accompanied by physical symptoms like muscle tension and sleep disturbances. They are more than just normal feelings of nervousness and can significantly impact daily life, potentially causing avoidance of situations and activities that trigger anxiety. Commonly known types include specific phobias, generalized anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, panic disorder, agoraphobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder¹.

Having discussed anxiety disorders; it is relevant to state that social media plays an integral role in anxiety disorders. Social media refers to digital platforms that enable individuals communicate interactively and selectively self-present, either synchronously or asynchronously, with both wide and targeted audiences, who offer value through user-generated content and the experience of social interaction². Social media can also be described as the means of communications where users create, share and exchange ideas and information in cybernetic societies and webs. It can also be referred to a variety of technologies that assists sharing of ideas and information amongst users. Also, the term social as it relates to media hints that social media platforms are centered around users and support collective engagement and shared participation. As such, social media can be seen as tools that facilitate or improve human networks by acting as interconnected webs that promote social engagement. Usually, users access these services through web-based applications on desktop computers or their mobile devices (such as smartphones and tablets). User's interactions with these platforms contributes to creating dynamic environments where individuals, communities, and organizations can share, co-create, engage in discussions, collaborate, and modify contents that are self-curated or generated by users online³.

Social media can be regarded as transformative because of its great impact on overall behavior and thought processes worldwide, which has influenced individuals both positively and negatively through its use and interactivity. Like any groundbreaking development, the rise of social media has triggered various concerns, particularly among the younger generation. Several studies have delved into its usage, influence, impact on society, and potential future trends. Today, social media platforms are an integral part of people's lives, serving both professional and entertainment purposes. Also, it has been reported that there are 4.021 billion internet users worldwide, with 3.96 billion engaging regularly with social media, where an individual has eight

social media accounts on average. Projections suggest that by 2025, Nigeria will have approximately 44.63 million social media users, a significant increase from around 24.59 million in 2019.⁴

The use of social media involves connecting with various social media platforms to produce, share, and exchange content with other individuals. This form of communication has become the basis of modern communication, which has greatly influenced how people connect, gather information, and engage with brands. As all social media platforms continue to grow, and internet access becomes more prevalent, more individuals irrespective of age are becoming more reliant on these platforms for purposes such as communication, socializing, and sharing information.

The amount of time youths spend on social media platforms has increased intensely over the last decade, influencing how information is consumed and shared. Younger people are particularly engaged with social media, often relying on it as their primary source for information and entertainment. Social media platforms utilize algorithms to tailor content based on users' preferences and interests, further contributing to audience fragmentation as people are exposed to varied information. Brands increasingly utilize social media for marketing strategies, recognizing the importance of engaging directly with consumers in these spaces. The usage of social media usage has led to the growth of viral content, which can quickly gain popularity and reach vast audiences across different platforms. Social media use can have several negative consequences, which includes mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, social isolation, and the spread of misinformation. Additionally, it has led to cyberbullying, reduced face-to-face interactions, and even damage to one's career if used inappropriately. Social media usage has become excessive and compulsive, especially amongst young individuals who are devoted users of these

platforms. These younger demographics are more vulnerable to mental health challenges, and this is because they often compare their lives to the unrealistic depictions they see online. A growing concern is the toll it has on mental wellbeing, where the frequent use of social media has been linked to heightened anxiety levels⁵.

The extensive culture of comparison, where individuals compare their lives against the curated version of others, often results in feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. Social media can be an enjoyable space, which offers opportunities for entertainment and connection. It also can provide support for mental health by alleviating the feelings of depression for people who turn to these platforms for fun, social interaction, and video calls with friends. However, it is important to distinguish that social media can also contribute to mental health challenges, such as anxiety, especially when users are unable to access their social networks online. Maintaining a balance with real-life connections is important, as social media helps bridge the gap of distance and eases communication. One scholar noted that social networking sites enable communication across an increasing network of people, merging previously distinct activities like email, blogging, messaging, website creation, photo sharing, and the uploading or downloading of music and videos⁶. Young people often go on social media platforms, especially Facebook, to stay informed about current happenings and maintain social connections. Many participants have stated a sense of urgency to check these platforms regularly and even feeling pressured to remain connected despite having a strong desire to disconnect, and this can become overwhelming to such people. Furthermore, research suggests that as people spend more time on social media, there is a developing risk of increasing addictive behaviors across various aspects of usage. With time, these social media users may find it difficult to be away from social media, showing signs of agitation or discomfort when they are separated from their platforms for extended periods⁷. The

extent of these negative mental health effects is still unknown in terms of how people will be affected in the future, simply because social media hasn't been used long enough to understand the ongoing consequences. The rise of nomophobia, or the fear of being without a smart phone highlights the major impact that social media usage has on anxiety levels. Relying heavily on smartphones and other electronic devices frequently causes heightened anxiety when people cannot access their devices. Moreover, prior studies have shown the connection between social media addiction and the display of anxiety symptoms, especially among young people. Comprehensive usage of social media has been associated with several negative mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, loneliness, disrupted sleep patterns, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts⁸.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Social media has become a major part of young people's daily lives, helping them stay connected, share experiences, and access information quickly. However, constant use of these platforms has been linked to rising cases of anxiety among youths. Many young people feel pressured to appear perfect online, compare themselves to others, and worry about likes, comments, and online approval. This can lead to stress, low self-esteem, and emotional discomfort over time. However, many youths do not realize how their social media habits may be affecting their mental health. They spend long hours scrolling, posting, and checking updates, often leading to sleep problems, mood swings, and worry. As social media use continues to grow, it is important to understand how it may be increasing anxiety disorders among young people. Hence, this study examines the influence of social media usage on anxiety disorder among youth in Ibadan North Local Government.

1.3 Objectives of the study

This study seeks to investigate the influence of social media usage on anxiety disorder among youths in Ibadan North Local government, the objectives are;

- i) To ascertain the level at which social media usage causes anxiety disorder in youths in Ibadan North Local Government.
- ii) To examine the possible action on social media platforms that triggers anxiety disorder among youths.
- iii) To identify the social media platforms that are prevalent among youths in Ibadan North Local Government.
- iv) To examine how the usage of social media platforms can cause anxiety disorder.

1.4 Research Questions

The Research questions that this study is focused on are;

- i) To what level does social media usage cause anxiety disorder in youths in Ibadan North Local Government?
- ii) What are the actions on social media platforms that causes anxiety disorder in youths in Ibadan North Local Government, Oyo state, Nigeria?
- iii) what are the social media platforms that are prevalent among youths in Ibadan North Local government?
- iv) How can the usage of social media lead to youth's anxiety disorder?

1.5 Hypothesis

There will be no significant influence of social media usage on anxiety disorder among youths in Ibadan North Local Government.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is going to be significant to students, youths, psychologists because it will help the youths to monitor their mental health and reduce social media usage and give them settled minds. It will also allow the youths to know how to properly use social media so that they can derive the benefits, such as promoting mental health awareness, reducing stigma, and creating a platform where users can connect with one another about their mental health experiences.

The study will also make the youth to avoid the effects of the use, overuse and misuse of social media. Engaging in negative social media behaviors, such as browsing through harmful and negative content, can result into fluctuations in mood, social isolation, and depression. The quick increase in social media usage over the past decade has made it important to evaluate its possible psychological impacts. Despite these concerns, mental health professionals have made little progress in tackling consequences of mental health on the use of social media use. Also, there has been little research to showcase the awareness and preparedness of mental health practitioners to challenge the negative effects of extreme social media use on users' well-being.

This study will also highlight the effect of social media on anxiety and mental health and provide meaningful suggestions on how the youths can overcome them. Anxiety is a usual emotional response, where the brain reacts to stress and signals possible threats. It is normal to be anxious occasionally, and anxiety can be managed. Nevertheless, anxiety disorders are very different from this. Extreme anxiety can result to avoidance of work, school, family gatherings and other social situations that can prompt the symptoms of anxiety. They can be challenging to control

and can continue for long periods if left untreated. They impact the daily life which can tremendously affect social relations, personal relationships and work or school performance.

The study is also significant in the sense that it will provide a proper distinction between the positive and negative effects of social media usage which will enable the youths concentrate on the positive aspects. Social media affects the mental wellbeing of a young individuals, such that a neuro reported that one in five Nigerian youths has mental health issues, with the most common being anxiety and depression.

On the positive side, social media improves connections between individuals, and it is also used to disseminate information. Social media, particularly the internet, provides social support for youths by reducing loneliness and isolation, whilst helping to build new friendships online. It has strengthened several societies and cultures in daily communication and helped to foster social relationships on the network. Social media users also use this channel to reach out to people with like minds which can lead to a safe environment if channeled appropriately to share ideas. Meanwhile, young individuals feel more comfortable and relaxed to mingle online than communicating face to face, as such, they can share their opinions on trending topics without fear of being judged. Consequently, excessive use of the internet can lead to addiction or depression. It has been observed that the heavy use of social media platforms by young people can increase anxiety, particularly when used in more intrusive ways. Furthermore, individuals who spend a significant amount of time on social media may find online communication suitable but limited in its efficiency, primarily due to the absence of non-verbal prompts that are present in face-to-face interactions⁹.

The study will enable the youths to be conscious of the dangers associated in excessive use of social media. There are increasing concerns because of the tendencies of youth being exploited

and the ability to start exhibiting what they see on social media. It is important to state that the fear, nervousness, or anxiety derived from not having a smart phone and the services it can provide is known as nomophobia (no-mobile-phone-phobia).

The study will enable the youths to be aware of the risks involved in excessive use of social media. Concerns are intensified because of the tendencies of youth for exploration and risk-taking meaning the ability to start exhibiting what they see on social media. The fear, nervousness, or anxiety caused by not having a mobile phone and the services it provides is known as nomophobia (no-mobile-phone-phobia). One of the major functions of smart phones includes providing quick access to social media, which contributes to why several individuals are deeply fixated on the mobile devices¹⁰. One of the biggest challenges of social media is that it promotes unrealistic ideals. It can be hard to see so many images and videos portraying success, beauty, and happiness, then compare this online illusion with the failures one is perceiving in one's life. Scrolling through the filtered images can have a significant impact on self-esteem. This study will provide suggestions as to how these challenges will be tackled.

1.7 Operational definition of terms

Below is the definition of terms used in this study;

- i. **Anxiety:** Anxiety is a natural emotional response to stress that serves as a way to caution individuals of potential danger ahead.
- ii. **Anxiety Disorder:** This refers to a mental health condition characterized by strong feelings of fear or worry that are intense enough to interfere with one's daily activities.

- iii. **Social media:** These refers to platforms where people can socialize, create, share, and exchange information and ideas within online communities and networks. It can also refer to the technologies that enables the sharing of content among users.
- iv. **Social media usage:** This involves using various social media platforms to produce, share, and interact with content. As an important feature of modern communication, social media greatly impacts how individuals connect, use information, and involve with brands. The rise of social media has challenged traditional media, which has led to a shift in the attention of users and the way they process information.

1.8 Scope of the study

Data was collected between May and June 2025, from youths who were serving as NYSC Corpers in the Ibadan North local Government area. The corp members often gathered once a week at the local government headquarters in Agodi, Ibadan, for their community development service (CDS).

Three of the community development service coordinators were contacted at Agodi, to arrange access to the corp members that were included in this study. Their indulgence was sought and obtained to assist in sharing the link of the survey to the various Community development service whatsapp groups.

Endnotes

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Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual review

2.1.1 What is social media?

Social media is the means of communication among individuals to create, share and exchange knowledge, information and ideas in cybernetic groups and webs¹¹, Social media is also referred to a selection of technologies that assist the act of communicating ideas and information among social media users. From social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to X (formerly known as Twitter) and YouTube, the meaning of social media has advanced beyond simply connecting people. Referring to any communication tool that is used to bring people together as social media would make platforms like telegraph or mobile phones fall under the category of social media, which has been argued by several scholars as being too broad. The term social media itself has been seen as unclear, with some early researchers in mid 2000s referring to social media as social networks or social networking services. Despite the ambiguity, there are four major characteristics that are unique to social media services platforms of that time

1. Web 2.0 Internet-based applications.
2. User-generated content
3. User-created self profile.
4. Social network formed by connections between profiles such as followers or groups

Social media is a digital platform that includes social networking websites and microblogging tools that allow individuals or users to develop relationships and virtual communities where they discuss, exchange information, express ideas, send private messages and share video and pictorial contents.

Marketing professionals and social media analysts mostly recognize 13 main categories of social media despite the frequently evolving model of both integrated and standalone social media platforms, which makes them difficult to define. These categories include:

- ❖ Blogs
- ❖ Business networks
- ❖ Collaborative projects
- ❖ Enterprise social networks
- ❖ Forums
- ❖ Microblogs
- ❖ Photo sharing
- ❖ Products/services review
- ❖ Social bookmarking
- ❖ Social gaming
- ❖ Social network sites
- ❖ Video sharing
- ❖ Virtual worlds

Some platforms like Twitter and YouTube are categorized as other social media subtypes, although they offer characteristics that allow individuals to build social networks. Thus, they are often grouped as social media networks. Social media signifies a modern way of communication

which bothers user engagement. Despite the difficulties in clearly describing social media, most platforms share various key characteristics. These features include:

1. Social media apps are virtual platforms that enable users to create and share content and contribute in social networking.
2. user created content—such as text posts or comments, digital photos or videos and data generated through all online interactions—is the lifeblood of social media.
3. Users create service-specific profiles for the website or app that are designed and maintained by the social media organization
4. Social media helps the progress of online social networks by connecting a users profile with those of other individuals or groups.

The term social in social media suggests a user-focused landscape of these platforms and their position in encouraging group and social interactions. As such, social media can be defined as digital tools that encourage and strengthen communication among individuals and in turn promote social interaction. Usually, users access social media through web-based applications on desktop or through mobile applications on smart phones and tablets that have the features to support social media. Actively participating on these online platforms allows users to build an interactive environment where they can communicate, share content, collaborate, and engage with tailored or user generated content posted online. Also, social media is used to document memories, make friends, learn and explore, used as a marketplace and to promote ideas through blogs, podcasts, and gaming sites.

The growing connection between individuals and technology is the main reason why there is a new study called technoself studies. Presently, some of the social media platforms with more

than 100 million users include Facebook, Twitter, WeChat, ShareChat, Instagram, and its associated application called Threads, QZone, Weibo, VK, Tumblr, and LinkedIn. Other popularly used platforms include YouTube, Letterboxd, QQ, Quora, Telegram, WhatsApp, Signal, LINE, Snapchat, Pinterest, Reddit, Discord, TikTok, Microsoft teams, and others.

Wikis can also be categorized under this group as it allows users to collaborate by creating and editing shared content.

Social media platforms vary from the usual traditional form of media in several ways. These include quality of content, relevance to users, ease of use, frequency, and the long-lasting nature of information that is being shared. Again, social media functions using a transmission system while traditional media on the other hand operates under a monologic transmission model. For instance, newspapers are distributed amongst many subscribers and radio stations transmit the same content to their listeners daily. However, since the fast growth of the use of the internet, digital media has assumed a new role which includes forming cultural identity. As a result of this, many scholars now analyze information published on social media, which has become an integral area of research. Observers have reported that social media usage has both advantages and drawbacks.

Social media can improve an individual's sense of belonging by promoting connections between the real world and social media communities. Additionally, it can foster strong communication tools for brands, businesses, political organizations, no profit organizations, and the governments. Also, social media has become very important in the emergence of social movements such as political unrest, where people organize, coordinate and spread information. It can also be used to disseminate true and misleading information which can be received without any form of verification.

2.1.2 Pros and Cons of Social Media

Social media platforms allow people to access information instantly, help individuals connect, and have a sense of belonging to online communities. Though social media makes the world interconnected, it also plays a key factor in spreading misinformation, increasing political and social discord, and negatively affecting mental health. Teenagers' use of social media has raised a major concern, especially because excessive screen time can disrupt sleep, act as a distraction, and expose them to cyberbullying, unrealistic views of other's lives and cause undue social pressure. On the other hand, businesses have adopted the use of social media as a cost-effective and impactful way to connect with customers and shape their brand identity. It has also rapidly become the fastest growing advertising network in today's digital world¹².

2.1.3 The Top 10 Social Media Platforms Worldwide

These were the most widely used social media providers as of January 2023, according to DataReportal:

1. Facebook (2.96 billion users)
2. YouTube (2.51 billion users)
3. WhatsApp (2 billion users)
4. Instagram (2 billion users)
5. WeChat (1.31 billion users)
6. TikTok (1.05 billion users)
7. Facebook Messenger (931 million users)
8. Douyin (715 million users)

9. Telegram (700 million users)

10. Snapchat (635 million users)

2.1.4 Development of social-media platforms

The creation of the World Wide Web by Tim Berners-Lee's in 1991, which led to the introduction of hypertext software together with the internet has marked a turning point in prevailing digital communication. This invention through tools like weblogs, mailing lists, and email services enabled online communities and supported social groups offline.

As technology developed, online platforms grew from just being used for communication and graduated to being used to promote interactive, social experiences, especially with the rise of Web 2.0.; Social platforms like GeoCities, Classmates.com, and SixDegrees.com can be said to have been the start of social media in the mid-1990s. Though chatting services were available in the form of instant messaging, SixDegrees stood out as the first social network where users could connect using their original names. It introduced important features such as personal profiles, friends list, and school associations. The name of the social platform was inspired by a theory called "six degrees of separation", which implies that everyone on Earth is linked by no more than six connections¹³.

In the early 2000s, social media platforms such as Friendster and Myspace gave rise to social media emergence, and this brought about the creation of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter (now X) among others. Social media, which was initially used as a space for personal interaction with friends and family, instantly grew to support a wide range of functions. In 2004, MySpace became the first network to exceed one million monthly active users. As the use of social media increased, businesses started using these platforms to connect with customers and audiences all over the world in real time. Hence, social media plays a major role in the marketing strategy of

many businesses, which is understandable considering the amount of time individuals spend surfing both the internet and social media. Many businesses have invested a lot of money collaborating with influencers and content creators to boost their marketing in order to reach their target audience. At the same time, the social media environment is constantly evolving. Newer apps like TikTok, Signal, and Clubhouse have quickly gained acceptance and now stand alongside more established platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter)¹⁴.

2.1.5 What social media is used for today

Social media platforms can be grouped into six categories which are social networking, social bookmarking, media sharing, social news, online forums, and microblogging. These various platforms offer a wide range of functions and interests. Some are associated with professional networking, and development of career, while others offer spaces to share passion and showcase creativity. Also, several individuals use these platforms to connect with like minds from different parts of the world, especially those who share the same interests, beliefs, and social values. Entertainers have used these platforms advantageously to connect with their audiences and build fan engagement through direct interaction. Also, the government and politicians use them to engage with citizens, gather support, and to broadcast urgent and important messages to the public. Social media plays a key role in marketing and brand strategy. This is evident in how companies utilize social media to interact with both current and potential customers, use tailored advertisement and promotional contents to boost sales, and stay ahead of market trends by gathering data on user behavior and preferences.

2.1.6 How Social Media Originated and Evolved

The Programmed Logic for Automatic Teaching Operations (PLATO) System was first launched in 1960 at the University of Illinois, and it was later commercially marketed through Control Data Corporation. PLATO was responsible for establishing social media features that gave rise to modern social media. In the year 1973, it had already introduced tools like Notes, a message-forum application; TERM-talk, its instant-messaging feature Talkomatic, which may be considered as the first online chat room. It also introduced News Report, which is a crowdsourced online news platform, and Access Lists, which enables users to restrict or limit access to who could view their files or posts.

On the other hand, ARPANET, which is the pioneer of modern internet came online in 1967, and by the late 1970s it had advanced into a platform for governmental and commercial use as well as for casual and intelligent communication. This was described in the computing etiquette manual in 1982 from MIT's Artificial Intelligence Lab. In 1974, ARPANET transformed into the Internet following the release of the RFC 675, the first specification of the Transmission Control Protocol (TCP), authored by Vint Cerf, Yogen Dalal, and Carl Sunshine.

In 1980, Usenet was launched to build on these developments, it was established in 1979 By Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis at the University of North Carolina and Duke University. In the same period, the Community Memory, which is an early version of the electronic bulletin board system (BBS), was introduced in 1973. The first true BBS came online on February 16, 1978, in Chicago, using the Computer Bulletin Board System. Soon, BBS networks grew across the U.S.,

running on popular computers such as the Apple II, TRS-80, Commodore 64, IBM PC, and other similar personal computers.

With the IBM PC's introduction in 1981 and the emergence of Macintosh systems, more sophisticated personal computing became prevalent through the 1980s. Modems and dedicated communication hardware allowed increasing numbers of users to connect instantaneously.

Throughout this time, popular online service providers such as, Prodigy, CompuServe and AOL gained prominence and transitioned later to the Internet in the 1990s.

Tens of thousands of BBSs operated in North America alone between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, which gave rise to structured message forums, and became a foundational element of social media ¹⁵. As the World Wide Web gained popularity in the mid-1990s, these platforms migrated online, becoming Internet forums. This transition offered a more affordable access and could significantly sustain more users compared to traditional modem-based systems.

CompuServe, Prodigy, and AOL were three of the largest BBS companies and were the first to migrate to the Internet in the 1990s. Between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s, BBS numbered in the tens of thousands in North America alone. Message forums (a specific structure of social media) arose with the BBS phenomenon throughout the 1980s and early 1990s¹⁵. When the World Wide Web was added to the Internet in the mid-1990s, message forums migrated to the web, becoming Internet forums, primarily due to cheaper per-person access as well as the ability to handle far more people simultaneously than telco modem banks.

The growth of social media was enhanced by improvements in digital imaging and semiconductor technology. In the 1980s and 1990s, breakthroughs in metal-oxide-semiconductor (MOS) fabrication technology allowed for smaller, and improved image sensors. Olympus developed the NMOS active-pixel sensor in 1985, and in 1993, NASA's Jet Propulsion

Laboratory introduced the CMOS (complementary MOS) sensor. These inventions helped the extensive use of digital cameras and, camera phones, which are major tools that would drive user-generated content and the upsurge of visual social media platforms ¹⁶.

2.1.7 Social media impacts and regulation

The Impacts of Social Media and the Importance of Its Regulation

- **Disparity:** Digital divide is one of the most acute challenges created by the widespread of social media. This means that there is an unequal access to digital technologies among different socio-economic groups. People who are poor, homeless, residing in rural or remote areas, or the elderly often lack steady or affordable access to the internet and digital devices. On the other hand, those from middle- and upper-class backgrounds, especially those who live in urban centers usually enjoy high levels of internet connectivity. Furthermore, beyond accessing, there have been differences in how technology is being used. Some individuals actively create online content, while others are restricted to passive consumption. This difference may be caused by disproportionate educational opportunities, as not all schools incorporate technology efficiently into learning environments or promote digital literacy and critical thinking. Though, age differences still influence social media engagement, studies suggest there is less of a racial divide in its use. Zero-rating initiatives that offer free data for selected platforms like Facebook Zero, aim to lower barriers to access. Nonetheless, critics have argued that these programs compromise net neutrality, which encourages an environment that benefits specific platforms while restricting broader digital choice, effectively creating what some describe as a "walled garden"¹⁷.

- **Political polarization and selective exposure:** Social media platforms have impacted the spread of political division, which has increased partisanship through selective exposure. This often occurs when people are more likely to connect with information that supports their prevailing beliefs and ignore content that contradicts them online. Consequently, political identity can gradually mold an individual's perspective on issues more than analysis or discussions do. Social media can further widen the information gap between digitally literate people, and those who lack access or are unfamiliar with modern technologies. As such, individuals who can active on social platforms and who are also experts in navigating social media platforms are more likely to benefit from information related to job opportunities, community events, and social connections. This advantage can contribute to an increased standard of living and overall quality of life, which can create a division between "information winners" and those who are digitally marginalized. Remarkably, even though traditional politics is dominated by males, social media has shown that women take up and lead political discussions online, debating policy topics more frequently than men, and gathering support online to support a cause. Research has indicated that there is a greater number of female political participants mostly through candidacy, which brings about more attention and awareness on policy issues, which can, intensify ideological divides¹⁸. In spite of these difficulties, social media platforms can also promote opinion and influence the belief of others. Users who are exposed to different views and discussions are more likely to change or relax their perspectives politically. This can be seen in those who rely on social media for most of their information and political news. The studies by Diehl and colleagues imply that

interaction with conflicting perspectives both in content and discussions can encourage more nuanced understanding and belief adjustment.

- **Stereotyping and age bias:** Social media also causes stereotypes which are based on age, that can affect both the young and the old. These stereotypes can have both negative and positive effects and can also restrict individuals from showing their real identity and expressing themselves as they should. Youths are often described online as being lazy, not serious minded and immature, while older users are portrayed as not technologically skilled or outdated in terms of digital trends. These types of assumptions can be misleading and consequential. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, young people were blamed for the spread of the virus and the persistently requesting for lockdowns. They were also blamed for breaking curfews, not following social distancing as well as flaunting isolation protocols. These assumptions made it more difficult for youth to advocate for themselves or display responsible behaviour, as society held fixed negative beliefs about them. Also, the older generations are often excluded from social media culture, with stereotypes about their not being able to participate effectively in digital spaces. This stereotypes discourages participation and isolates them from important online communities and trends, as some people believe that some trends and contents are for the younger generation. Bearing in mind the youthful groups that are present on social media are often in a new stage of their lives and preparing to make life-changing decisions, it is essential that the stereotypes are reduced so that they do not feel suppressed. Further, stereotyping often occurs for the elderly as they are presumed to be a group of individuals who are unaware of the proper functions and slang usage on social

media. These stereotypes often seek to ignore older generations from participating in trends or engaging them in other activities on digital platforms.

2.1.8 Digital Affordances

The term digital affordances can be described as the possibilities for action that digital technologies facilitate. This concept was introduced in the 1970s by a psychologist named James Gibson. The affordance theory was initially introduced to realize how individuals interact with their environments. However, in today's digital world, it has been modified to examine how users interact with emerging technologies. Examining the concept of affordances can help people understand both the features of technology and how it shapes the behaviours and expectation of the users. For example, studying Web 1.0 has shown that there is a two-way interaction, which shows that while users modify technologies in enhancing their needs, technologies can also shape their behavior. This is usually referred to as "user configuration" which occurs when users adjust their plans to match the requirements and capabilities of a new tool. Essentially, using a technology can shape and influence how people manage problem-solving. Additionally, when users study a technology, they learn and explore that tool further than what its creators envisioned it to be, either by finding loopholes to beat the tool or improving it to serve other needs. For instance, the telephone was originally invented as a broadcasting machine, just like the radio was used to broadcast. However, it has now been used effectively for personal, peer-to-peer communication, which was not intended but has provided a more meaningful use of the device. Affordances may not fully conform with a technology's intended design. Users often modify the tools such that it serves their growing needs, which can be sometimes detrimental to efficiency or ethical concerns. For instance, though communicating face-to-face in an office may be more effective, however many choose to send emails, texts or chat through the messaging

applications. These means allow for instant, retrievable conversation. This digital affordance supports multitasking and documentation. However, this distinctive feature can become a burden if the content or information shared is sensitive or inappropriate. Also, not having recordable messages on social media platforms, has become valuable. The absence of a lasting digital footprint is highly preferred for some type of discussions and chats, which highlights how different affordances can be desirable depending on the context.

There are three major insights associated with the concept of digital affordances:

1. Technologies influence and change user behavior.
2. Users actively redefine their needs to be centered around what the technology can do.
3. New technologies can replace older ones with more ethical or effective approaches.

Sociotechnical research uses an adoption curve to demonstrate how people accept new tools. Technology pioneers who are the youths, tech-savvy, and more resourced, lead the adoption cycle, followed by the majority, with a small fragment who remain resistive to change. Nevertheless, contextual factors play a major role. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, restrictions in network infrastructure changed the profile of early adopters. Mobile phones paved the way to the internet for a broader demographic, beyond the young generation and the rich.

The Web 2.0 evolution was particularly designed for social media applications, and contrary to Web 1.0, Web 2.0 platforms are collaborative, support user-generated content, and foster connectivity across systems and users. Social media illustrates this by allowing people to create profiles, join digital communities, and form online communities¹⁹.

2.1.9 Building an understanding towards social media usage

The importance of social media for today's youth often causes people to explore the added value of educational use of these media. However, many people experience social media in as disturbing. people appear to struggle with the tension between possible informative use and the tempting distraction of this technology. Often a lack of technical informative content knowledge to enrich teaching with social media increases this tension.

Defining social media is debated to be mysterious. However, the concept of social media can be summarized as encircling Internet applications that support the creation and exchange of user-generated content, that require a certain degree of self-disclosure and that allow for a certain level of social presence. in an effort to present a more precise and future-proof definition, social media is defined as the Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others.

However, this review was limited to descriptions of these factors, instead of offering explaining relations. One broader perspective meta-analysis of 40 years of research on ICT and learning showed a small, yet significant, increase in learning results caused by ICT use in society.

Both empirical studies and literature reviews that analyze informative use of Internet applications, such as social media, mainly focus on partial aspects.

For instance, the relation between Internet applications and reading skills, between Internet applications and information literacy, or informative approaches that suit Web 2.0 in secondary or higher education.

The focus on partial aspects, rather than an integrated view of social media in education, prohibits understanding of what is known as the hidden curriculum: societal, institutional or lecturers' values that are transmitted unconsciously to people.

Edwards explained how software, or rather computer code, is never objective, and reinforces existing preferences of, for instance, teachers.

The motivation for this review was a lack of clarity in educational practice about social media is the distraction that comes with these media a burden for education? Or is it a blessing and could social media usefully be applied as learning tools? Starting from the levels of curriculum, we formulated research questions about the intended, implemented and attained curriculum. Finally, we framed a research question about the complete model of factors and effects related to social media in society²⁰.

We intended to bring together research on any of the three curriculum levels, operationalized in aspects on school, teacher and student level. Thoughts for using social media can be summarised as: reaching a wider audience, motivating people and improving transparency in (internal and external) communication, assessment and evaluation. Another consideration was that people are already familiar with social media. However, this led to the objection that social media belong to people's leisure time. One condition at school level is facilitation of teachers, especially organizational and technical support.

Furthermore, people need support to develop their social media knowledge and skills. They experience a lack of this support as a barrier. Finally, uncertainty regarding privacy and security, lack of experience and a negative attitude towards social media or ICT in general are reported barriers. These results confirm conclusions from earlier review studies. The many barriers reported in the results of our review suggest that much is to be gained by a systematic and profound elaboration upon the intended curriculum regarding social media.

Social media are used mainly in regular learning situations, where chosen applications are used as an addition to or replacement of traditional curriculum materials. The purpose is to improve communication, share knowledge and learn collaboratively. Also, interpersonal teacher–student relations can be improved by social media.

However, positive results on these aspects strongly correlate with people’s actual behaviour on social media and their attitude towards these media and ICT in general.

2.1.10 Societal advice regarding social media usage

As social media continues to penetrate all aspects of our daily life, it is important to provide a generally acceptable guidance on its use, specifically in educational and family environments. The following advice constitutes the foundation for individuals, families, educators, and organizations seeking to employ social media as a constructive tool while focusing on its challenges and limitations.

1. Recommendations for Educational Institutions

- a) **To Improve Communication and Transparency:** Schools should use social media platforms to reach a wider audience and enhance both internal and external

communication. These means can advance transparency, encourage stakeholder engagement, and improve societal ties.

- b) **To Incorporate social media into Educational Policy:** Social media can be incorporated into school curriculums and educational policies. This will enable it to be used as an acceptable learning tool, as opposed to a source of distraction. Officially incorporating it in school policies emphasizes its relevance to modern education.
- c) **To address Barriers to Teacher Engagement:** To guarantee its effective integration, schools must offer support to teachers. These include offering technical assistance, assigning time for skill development, and encouraging cooperation within informal teacher groups. This can help minimize teachers struggling to use the digital tools and boost their confidence.
- d) **To Recognize Teacher Diversity:** Teachers have various levels of experience, confidence, and values regarding technology. Professional development strategies should include these variety, which allows for distinguished support and peer learning opportunities.
- e) **To Influence Internal Champions:** Schools should recognise and inspire pioneers within the staff who can become role models in adopting social media for instructional purposes and lead by example.
- f) **To Promote Continuous Professional Development:** Constant training and resource development are important to build and maintain the digital knowledge required to successfully use social media within the educational sector.

2. Guidance for Families

- a) **Demonstrate Digital Competency:** Parents and guardians should acquire social media skills to become role models to the younger generation. When adults are confident and competent users, children are more likely to engage sensibly.
- b) **Reflect on Your Own Digital Practices:** Parents and guardians should assess their approaches, viewpoints, and barriers concerning social media. Identifying these factors can help reunite the differing perspectives between home and school digital values.
- c) **Setting Decisive Learning Goals:** Parents should concentrate on goals related to communication when guiding their children's social media usage, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration. These goals support educational aims and skill development.
- d) **Encouraging Active Participation:** Social media offers a constructivist learning approach. This should encourage children to actively participate in meaningful content creation, by creating and sharing digital media relevant to their studies.
- e) **Facilitating Informal Collaborative Learning:** Social media platforms can be used to support group discussions outside the classroom setting, as informal learning opportunities improve engagement and understanding.
- f) **Support Through Presence and Participation:** Parents, guardians, and educators should maintain a positive presence on social media, because active involvement strengthens safe usage and supports digital relationships.
- g) **Offering Choices and Respecting them:** Social media participation should not be mandatory. It is important to provide choices for students who are undecided or prefer not to use these platforms.

- h) **Encouraging Feedback and Reflection:** Children should be given the opportunity to reflect on how social media supports their learning, as encouraging feedback helps critical thinking and metacognitive understanding.

3. Considerations for the Wider Public

- a) **Acknowledging Differing Perspectives:** Not everyone sees social media as a tool for learning and development. The society must consider the range in digital experience, skill level, and peoples positions toward technology.
- b) **Understanding Student Behavior:** Youths often use social media majorly for social interaction rather than academic purposes. This highlights the need for direction on how to shift these habits toward a more constructive result.
- c) **Managing Expectations:** Social media is not a universal solution to learning challenges. Though it can improve collaboration, motivation, and communication, it does not necessarily lead to improved academic performance.
- d) **Building Metacognitive Skills:** Metacognitive awareness is required for effective and persistent use of social media. These skills can support and enhance digital engagement.
- e) **Addressing Digital Literacy Gaps:** Several people lack the required knowledge to navigate social media safely and effectively. Hence, educating the public on privacy, security, and responsible use is important to close this gap.

2.1.11 Mental Health

Mental well-being is referred to as a state of stability in one's mental health status. A healthy status in mental health enables an individual to stay fit, contribute in adequate proportion to community services, maintain a healthy lifestyle, manage stress and work life balance. In previous research, it is understood that sometimes families, community or individuals themselves play down symptoms or signs relating to mental health conditions. Although, having the knowledge about mental health symptoms could enable immediate actions to be taken and make one resilient however, individuals exposed to adverse circumstances – including disability, poverty, inequality sexual abuse, violence. And those who lack knowledge about mental health are at higher risk of developing a mental health condition.

At low cost, effective treatment can be provided to mental health conditions, even at that, it is said that many areas of the world lack amenities and resources for their health systems to provide access to vital medical aids needed to treat mental health conditions and as such, people who suffer from these conditions do not receive quality care. It is perceived that discrimination, human rights violations, and stigma are not farfetched from people who suffer mental health conditions.

Mental health refers to an individual's cognitive, emotional, and behavioural functioning. Mental health professionals play a vital role in diagnosing and managing conditions such as depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, substance use disorders, and other psychological disturbances that influence thought patterns, emotions, and behaviours.

Mental well-being significantly affects one's daily functioning, interpersonal relationships, and physical health. Although, external factors including social, environmental, and relational influences can contribute to fluctuations in mental health status.

Mental health can affect a person's day-to-day life, relationships, and physical health. External factors in people's lives and relationships can also add to their mental well-being.

Promoting and maintaining mental health supports an individual's capacity to live a meaningful and balanced life. This includes effectively managing responsibilities, daily routines, and stress while cultivating psychological resilience. Disorders such as anxiety, depression, and chronic stress can disrupt this balance, leading to impaired functioning and diminished quality of life.

Moreover, the term "mental health" is frequently used within clinical contexts, it is increasingly recognized that many psychiatric conditions may have underlying biological or physiological components.

The optimal mental health is achieved not only through treatment but also through the promotion of psychological resilience and quality of life. The importance of safeguarding and improving mental well-being extends beyond an individual, it includes the broader community and societal context, highlighting the collective responsibility in addressing mental health challenges²¹.

2.1.12 Mental health disorder

Mental disorders often termed mental illnesses, psychiatric conditions, or psychological impairments are complex health issues marked by significant disturbances in thought processes, emotional stability, or behavioral functioning. These disruptions commonly interfere with an individual's capacity to manage everyday responsibilities and social interactions. From a clinical perspective, mental health disorders are recognized as substantial deviations from typical cognitive or emotional functioning, which may emerge as isolated incidents, become chronic, or

intensify over time. There is a wide spectrum of mental health conditions, each presenting with diverse manifestations, symptoms, and degrees of severity²².

Certain groups of young people face an elevated risk of developing mental health conditions due to adverse socio-environmental factors such as poverty, social exclusion, discrimination, and limited access to appropriate care and support services. These vulnerable populations include adolescents living in conflict-affected or unstable environments; those with long-term physical illnesses, intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, or other neurological conditions; as well as pregnant teenagers, adolescent parents, and individuals subjected to early or forced marriage. Additionally, orphans and youths belonging to marginalized ethnic, sexual, or social minority groups are particularly susceptible due to systemic inequities and lack of inclusive resources²³.

Mental disorders represent a specific component within the broader scope of mental health. Their origins are often complex and not fully understood, with current explanations drawing on interdisciplinary insights from neuroscience, psychology, genetics, and social sciences. Certain mental health conditions have been linked to specific brain regions or functional processes. Diagnosis is typically carried out by qualified mental health professionals—such as psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, psychiatric nurses, or clinical social workers—using a combination of psychometric assessments, clinical interviews, and behavioral observation. Cultural context, religious beliefs, and prevailing social norms are important considerations in the diagnostic process to ensure culturally sensitive and accurate evaluations. Treatment services are commonly delivered through psychiatric hospitals, community mental health programs, or outpatient clinics, and involve a range of therapeutic approaches administered by trained professionals. Treatment for mental health conditions typically includes psychotherapy and pharmacological interventions,

though additional strategies such as lifestyle modifications, social support programs, peer-led initiatives, and self-guided approaches are also widely utilized. In some cases, particularly where individuals pose a risk to themselves or others, involuntary hospitalization or treatment may be legally mandated. Evidence-based prevention programs have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing the incidence and severity of depressive symptoms, particularly when implemented early and within targeted populations.

Among the most prevalent mental health conditions globally are schizophrenia, dementia, depression, bipolar disorder, and other related psychotic disorders. Neurodevelopmental disorders such as attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and intellectual developmental disabilities typically present during early childhood and affect long-term functioning. Individuals affected by these conditions often face additional burdens due to societal stigma, prejudice, and exclusion, which can significantly worsen their overall well-being. As a result, various advocacy groups and mental health movements have worked to raise public awareness and challenge the social injustices associated with these disorders.

Defining and categorizing mental disorders remains a central concern for mental health professionals and researchers alike. For a psychological or emotional condition to be classified as a disorder, it generally must lead to marked impairment or disruption in daily functioning. Although the term “mental disorder” is widely used in clinical and academic contexts, “mental illness” is commonly used as well. Importantly, referring to a condition as “mental” does not suggest a separation from the brain or body, as mental health is deeply connected to neurological and physiological processes.

The definition of mental disorder remains flexible within academic and clinical settings, as there is no single operational definition that applies universally. Similar to many medical concepts, the understanding of mental disorders can vary depending on the framework used. These definitions may be based on pathological processes, observable symptoms, deviations from normative psychological functioning, or identifiable causes. Each of these perspectives offers value depending on the context in which the term is applied. As a result, different definitions may be more suitable for different purposes, such as diagnosis, research, or policy development, highlighting the complexity and fluidity of the concept.

The definition with stipulations, stating that, as in the case with many medical terms, mental disorder lacks a consistent operational definition that covers all situations noting that different levels of abstraction can be used for medical definitions, including pathology, symptomology, deviance from a normal range, or etiology, and that the same is true for mental disorders, so that sometimes one type of definition is appropriate and sometimes another, depending on the situation.

Mental disorders are now commonly described as syndromes involving clinically significant disruptions in an individual's emotions, behavior, or thinking, which point to a malfunction in underlying psychological, biological, or developmental mechanisms²⁴.

The terms "mental breakdown" or "nervous breakdown" may be used by the general population to mean a mental disorder. In contrast, terms such as "nervous breakdown" or "mental breakdown" are often used generically to refer to mental health disorder, although these expressions do not have formal definitions in recognized diagnostic systems like the DSM-5 or ICD-10. They are also largely unused in scholarly literature. Public understanding typically frames a "nervous breakdown" as a short-term psychological reaction to overwhelming stress,

often presenting anxiety or depressive symptoms. Today, mental health professionals tend to classify such episodes as mental health crisis²⁵.

In *How Everyone Became Depressed: The Rise and Fall of the Nervous Breakdown* (2013), the author critiques the modern tendency to categorize a wide range of emotional and physical symptoms under the umbrella of depression. Certain individuals who were diagnosed of depression, report going to work while feeling persistently anxious, unhappy, physically unwell and exhausted, which results in them making complains over their condition. The author suggests that these symptoms of mild depressive mood, fatigue, somatic discomfort, obsessive thoughts, and anxiety historically fell under the label of "nervous breakdown", a term now uncommonly used in modern medical practice but persists in everyday discussions surrounding health related subjects. What was once referred to as a "nervous breakdown" is now frequently labeled as depression, despite potentially representing a more complex, body-wide condition. The author argues that this shift in terminology may obscure a deeper, systemic disorder affecting both mind and body one that requires renewed attention and perhaps a redefinition beyond the confines of conventional psychiatric label²⁶.

2.1.13 Classification of mental disorders

Mental disorder is classified using two main classification systems. These are;

- **ICD-11 Chapter 06:** The World Health Organization's latest revision of the International Classification of Diseases, which came into force on January 1, 2022, includes classifications for mental, behavioral, and neurodevelopmental conditions.

- **Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5):** Published by the American Psychiatric Association (APA), has been a key reference for diagnosing and categorizing mental health disorders since its publication in 1952.

Each of these classification systems outlines specific categories of mental disorders and offers standardized tools for consistent diagnostic. In recent editions, efforts have been made to combine their coding structures, making them largely comparable, although some key distinctions remain. Beyond these widely used Western frameworks, other diagnostic models exist such as the Chinese Classification of Mental Disorders, which reflects cultural variations in mental health understanding. Likewise, manuals like the Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual are preferred by professionals who adopt alternative theoretical approaches. Generally, mental disorders are distinguished from neurological conditions, intellectual disabilities, and learning difficulties in diagnostic classifications.

In contrast to the DSM and ICD, certain models to mental health classification do not rely on defining discrete categories of disorders to distinguish the normal from the abnormal. These models (categorical and non-categorical, also known as continuum or dimensional models) are a subject of debate among scholars who try to establish the merit and limitations between these models²⁷. Within the academic discourse, views range from those who argue that mental disorder classifications are entirely shaped by subjective value judgments especially regarding what is considered "normal" to those who advocate for a purely scientific and objective basis, often grounded in statistical norms. More moderate perspectives suggest that while the concept of mental disorder may have some degree of objectivity, it often functions as a flexible prototype lacking strict definitional boundaries, or that it inherently blends empirical evidence with

sociocultural and ethical considerations. Although these diagnostic categories are labeled as "disorders" and presented within a medical framework, they often lack the kind of biological validation typical of other medical conditions. Some neurologists contend that true diagnostic reliability and validity will only be achieved when classifications are based on neurobiological markers rather than clinical interviews alone, while others call for greater integration between differing theoretical and practical approaches²⁸.

2.1.14 Disorders

Disorders are classified into different categories, namely;

- **Anxiety disorder:** When feelings of fear or anxiety become intense enough to interfere with daily activities, they may be identified as anxiety disorders. Well-known examples include generalized anxiety disorder, social anxiety, specific phobias, panic disorder, agoraphobia, post-traumatic stress disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.
- **Mood disorder/ clinical depression:** Disruptions in emotional regulation can lead to various mood disorders. One such condition is major depressive disorder, which involves prolonged and intense feelings of sadness or hopelessness. A less severe but chronic form of depression is called dysthymia. Bipolar disorder, on the other hand, includes alternating periods of unusually elevated mood referred to as mania or hypomania and episodes of normal or low mood. Experts continue to debate whether depressive and bipolar conditions are separate diagnostic categories or whether they represent different points along a broader mood continuum.
- **Psychotic disorder:** Disturbances in thought patterns, perception, and communication such as hallucinations, disorganized thinking, or delusional beliefs can indicate a

breakdown in cognitive regulation. Conditions within this group of psychotic disorders include schizophrenia and delusional disorders. Schizoaffective disorder is used to describe individuals who exhibit features of both mood disorders and schizophrenia. Meanwhile, schizotypy refers to a set of traits similar to those seen in schizophrenia but not severe enough to meet the criteria for a clinical diagnosis.

- **Personality disorder:** Personality encompasses the consistent characteristics that influence how individuals think and act across various contexts and over time. These traits may be considered disordered when they are unusually rigid and hinder a person's ability to adapt. While some systems treat personality disorders separately, most major diagnostic frameworks—such as the DSM-IV—classify them as mental disorders, often placing them in a distinct section. Personality disorders are typically grouped into categories: those with odd or eccentric traits (like paranoid, schizoid, and schizotypal), those with dramatic or emotional behaviors (such as antisocial, borderline, histrionic, and narcissistic), and those with anxious or fearful patterns (like avoidant, dependent, and obsessive-compulsive). These conditions usually begin in childhood or adolescence and continue into adulthood. The ICD also acknowledges lasting personality changes that occur after traumatic events or serious mental illness. If someone struggles to cope with a life event within three months of its occurrence and symptoms resolve within six months of the stressor ending, it may instead be diagnosed as an adjustment disorder. Increasingly, researchers view personality disorders as involving both temporary disruptive behaviors and long-term maladaptive traits. Alternative models also exist, which assess personality on dimensional scales rather than using fixed criteria to distinguish disorder from typical personality.

1. **Eating disorder:** Disorder that relates to eating are often severe mental health condition that involves an unhealthy relationship with food and body image. They can cause serious physical and psychological problems. Eating disorders involve disproportionate concern in matters of food and weight. Categories of disorder in this area include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, exercise bulimia or binge eating disorder.
- **Sleep disorder:** This is when an individual struggles with sleeping due to disruption in sleep pattern. A common sleep disorder is insomnia, which is described as difficulty falling and/or staying asleep. Other sleep disorders include narcolepsy, sleep apnea, REM sleep behavior disorder, chronic sleep deprivation, and restless leg syndrome. Narcolepsy is a condition of extreme tendencies to fall asleep whenever and wherever. People with narcolepsy feel refreshed after their random sleep but eventually get sleepy again. To diagnose narcolepsy, an individual usually needs to spend a night at a sleep center, where specialists can examine their sleep habits in detail. This process includes gathering a comprehensive sleep history and using tools like actigraphy and polysomnography to monitor sleep patterns. Another key test often used is the multiple sleep latency test, which evaluates how quickly someone falls asleep during the day. Sleep apnea, a disorder where breathing repeatedly stops and starts while sleeping, is also commonly assessed. There are three forms: obstructive, central, and complex sleep apnea. Diagnosis for sleep apnea can take place either at home or in a sleep clinic using polysomnography. In some

cases, an ENT (ear, nose, and throat) specialist may be consulted to help evaluate contributing factors related to sleep issues²⁹.

- **Sexuality disorder:** Sexual disorders include dyspareunia and various kinds of paraphilia (sexual arousal to objects, situations, or individuals that are considered abnormal or harmful to the person or others)³⁰.

2.1.15 Social Media usage

Social media engagement involves interacting with digital platforms to generate, distribute, and exchange various types of content. This form of communication has reshaped modern interaction, heavily influencing how individuals relate, absorb information, and engage with brands³¹. As digital platforms grow, they have disrupted traditional media models, contributing to fragmented audience engagement and new consumption habits. However, this evolution has also brought about patterns of compulsive and excessive usage, which may negatively impact both mental and physical well-being³².

Whether people use these platforms to keep in touch with friends and family, view multimedia content, or simply pass the time, their popularity has surged over the past decade. Despite its widespread use, social media can affect the brain in adverse ways. Many individuals find themselves using it repetitively and without control, to the point that it disrupts daily functioning. Although not every user will develop problematic behaviour, the increasing accessibility and use of social media mean more individuals could be vulnerable to dependency. The activity stimulates dopamine production in the brain; a chemical tied to the feeling of pleasure. This neurobiological response encourages repeated engagement, especially when users receive likes or positive feedback on their content. These pleasurable experiences are fleeting, prompting

users to return to the platform to regain the same emotional effect a pattern similar to other addictive behaviours.

While platforms may serve as a temporary escape for those experiencing isolation due to work or illness, the belief that they alleviate loneliness may be misleading. Furthermore, young users are more inclined to share personal information online than in person. These disclosures, unlike those made in small group interactions, often reach a wide digital audience. Social media profiles enable individuals to shape and sometimes enhance their self-image. Sharing personal experiences online can also play a vital role in building perceived social support³³.

2.1.16 Why we use social Media

This section explores the various uses of social media, particularly its entertainment value. The engaging content found on social media often draws in large audiences, and the enjoyment people experience while browsing can trigger the release of dopamine a chemical linked to the brain's reward system. This neurological response can increase users' interest and attachment to these platforms. Furthermore, social media has had a positive influence by promoting inclusion and fostering connections across diverse groups of people³⁴.

Amongst other reasons why social media is being used are brands and business marketing, socialization and social validation, and educational purposes. In addition, some studies have presented that comfort and coping mechanism to mental health issues such loneliness, depression, and anxiety are some reasons behind social media usage.

How to identify someone involved in excessive social media usage

The symptoms and signs of someone who is using social media excessively are as follows.

- **Excessive use:** Being active for 4-6hrs per day.
- **Compulsive behavior:** Feeling a deep urge to check social media, even when it obstructs with daily activities.
- **Neglect of responsibilities:** Ignoring work, school, or individual responsibilities due to social media use.
- **Social isolation:** Preferring social media interactions over inter-personal relationships.
- **Mood changes:** Feeling anxiety, depression, or irritability when unable to access social media.

Consequences and Effects of excessive use of social media

The following are some consequences and effects of using social media.

- Health challenges such as high blood pressure, anxiety and depression.
- Someone who is excessively using social media will experience sleep disturbances.
- Social media usage can also damage inter-personal relationships and lead to social isolation.
- Impact on student academic performance.

2.1.17 What Are Anxiety Disorders?

Anxiety is a natural emotional response to stress, functioning as the brain's alert system to potential threats. It's common for individuals to experience anxiety in everyday situations such as before exams, job-related challenges, or significant life choices. While occasional anxiety is manageable and often expected, anxiety disorders represent a more serious concern. These conditions involve persistent and intense feelings of fear or worry, often interfering with daily activities such as attending school, work, or social events. However, with appropriate intervention and treatment, many individuals can effectively manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life.

2.1.18 Types of Anxiety Disorders

The following are types of anxiety disorder:

- **Generalized anxiety disorder:** You may experience persistent and overwhelming worry or tension about routine daily activities, even when there is no clear reason for concern.
- **Panic disorder:** Panic disorder is characterized by sudden episodes of intense fear, commonly referred to as panic attacks. These episodes may involve physical symptoms such as excessive sweating, chest discomfort, and rapid heart rate. Individuals may also experience sensations of choking or believe they are suffering a cardiac event. Following an attack, a person may develop a persistent fear of recurrence and begin to avoid situations they associate with triggering these episodes

- **Social anxiety disorder:** Also referred to as social phobia, involves a persistent and overwhelming fear of social interactions and performance situations. Individuals with this condition often experience distress over being judged, embarrassed, or humiliated by others, which may lead them to avoid social settings altogether.
- **Specific phobias:** Are characterized by an irrational and exaggerated fear of certain objects or scenarios such as flying or high places that can interfere with routine activities due to efforts to avoid the feared stimuli.
- **Agoraphobia:** Is defined by intense fear or anxiety in situations where escape may be difficult or help may not be readily available if symptoms occur. Common environments that trigger this response include public transportation, enclosed areas, crowded spaces, or simply being far from home.
- **Separation anxiety disorder:** While commonly associated with children, can also affect adults. It involves excessive fear or distress related to being apart from someone to whom the individual is emotionally attached, often accompanied by persistent worries about the wellbeing of the attachment figure, particularly after stressful events.
- **Selective mutism:** Typically affects children and is marked by a consistent inability to speak in specific social contexts despite speaking freely in more familiar environments, such as at home.
- **Substance or medication-induced anxiety disorder:** Arises when anxiety symptoms are directly caused by drug use, medication, or withdrawal, and resemble those of other anxiety disorders in both severity and presentation³⁵.

2.1.19 Anxiety Disorder Symptoms

A defining feature of anxiety disorders is the presence of persistent and excessive fear or worry. These conditions often interfere with daily functioning, potentially affecting breathing patterns, sleep quality, focus, and the ability to remain calm or still. The manifestation of symptoms may vary depending on the specific type of anxiety disorder an individual experience.

Common symptoms are:

- Panic, fear, and uneasiness
- Feelings of panic, doom, or danger
- Sleep problems or feeling tired
- Not being able to stay calm and still
- Cold, sweaty, numb, or tingling hands or feet
- Shortness of breath
- Breathing faster and more quickly than normal (hyperventilation)
- Heart palpitations or increased heart rate
- Trembling
- Dry mouth
- Gastrointestinal (GI) issues
- Nausea
- Tense muscles
- Dizziness or feeling weak
- Thinking about a problem over and over again and unable to stop (rumination)

- Inability to concentrate
- Intensely or obsessively avoiding feared objects or places

2.1.20 Causes of Anxiety Disorder

There are several contributing factors to anxiety disorder, some of which are:

- **Hereditary Influences:** A familial pattern has been observed, suggesting that genetic predisposition plays a role in the development of anxiety disorders.
- **Neurological Mechanisms:** Alterations in brain pathways, particularly those involved in managing emotional responses and fear, may be associated with anxiety-related conditions.
- **Life Stressors and Traumatic Experiences:** Adverse experiences, especially those occurring in early life, can significantly increase vulnerability to anxiety. These may include experiences of neglect or abuse during childhood, traumatic loss, such as the death of a close individual, exposure to physical violence or emotionally distressing events.
- **Substance-Related Factors:** The misuse of drugs or alcohol, often used as coping mechanisms, can exacerbate anxiety symptoms. Withdrawal from these substances, or from prescribed medications, can also provoke or intensify anxious feelings.
- **Underlying Health Conditions:** Certain physical health problems may present with symptoms similar to anxiety or aggravate existing mental health concerns. These include cardiovascular issues, Respiratory disorders like asthma, endocrine problems such as

thyroid dysfunction, Digestive system disorders (e.g., irritable bowel syndrome), hormonal imbalances resulting from specific tumors

- **Pharmacological Triggers:** Side effects or withdrawal symptoms from specific medications, particularly those targeting the nervous system, can manifest as anxiety. It is essential to conduct a comprehensive medical evaluation to distinguish primary anxiety disorders from symptoms caused by physiological or drug-related factors.

2.1.21 Risk Factors for Anxiety Disorder

Risk factors are elements or conditions that increase an individual's likelihood of developing an anxiety disorder. These include:

- **Pre-existing Mental Health Conditions:** Individuals with a history of mental illness are more prone to developing anxiety-related conditions.
- **Early Childhood Abuse or Neglect:** Experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse during early developmental years is strongly associated with a higher risk of anxiety disorders later in life.
- **Exposure to Trauma:** Going through a traumatic event can significantly elevate the risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which may also lead to recurring panic episodes.
- **Adverse Life Experiences:** Significant losses or distressing events—such as the early death of a parent—can contribute to the onset of anxiety. Accumulated minor stressors may also have a compounding effect.

- **Chronic Illness or Severe Medical Conditions:** Long-term health concerns, or the burden of caregiving for someone with a serious illness, can lead to persistent worry and anxiety.
- **Substance Use and Dependency:** The misuse of drugs or alcohol increases susceptibility to anxiety disorders. In some cases, substances are used as a coping mechanism, masking underlying anxiety symptoms.
- **Childhood Social Inhibition:** Children who exhibit extreme shyness or avoid unfamiliar situations may be at a higher risk of developing social anxiety during adolescence or adulthood.
- **Poor Self-Image:** A low sense of self-worth or persistent negative self-perception may contribute to the development of social anxiety disorder.
- **Genetic and Familial Factors:** A family history of anxiety or other mental health disorders may suggest a genetic predisposition to anxiety.

2.1.22. Treatments for Anxiety Disorder

There are various treatment methods available to help individuals manage and reduce the symptoms of anxiety disorders. The most common approach involves a combination of medication and psychological therapy.

Pharmacological Treatments

Different types of medication are prescribed depending on the severity and nature of the anxiety. A healthcare professional, such as a psychiatrist, should be consulted to determine the most appropriate option based on individual needs. Common categories include:

- **Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) and Serotonin-Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors (SNRIs):** These are generally the first-line medications used to treat anxiety. Examples include escitalopram (Lexapro) and fluoxetine (Prozac) under SSRIs, and duloxetine (Cymbalta) and venlafaxine (Effexor) under SNRIs.
- **Bupropion:** An atypical antidepressant that may be used for treating long-term anxiety, though it functions differently from SSRIs and SNRIs.
- **Benzodiazepines:** These medications are prescribed for short-term relief of severe anxiety symptoms due to their fast-acting effects. However, they may carry a risk of dependence.
- **Beta-Blockers:** Originally developed to treat hypertension, beta-blockers can be effective for controlling the physical symptoms of anxiety, such as rapid heartbeat, trembling, or sweating—particularly in acute situations.
- **Anticonvulsants:** Typically used for epilepsy, some anticonvulsant medications may be prescribed off-label to alleviate symptoms of certain anxiety disorders.
- **Antipsychotic Medications:** In some cases, low doses of antipsychotics are used off-label to support the effectiveness of other anxiety treatments.
- **Buspirone (BuSpar):** This medication is specifically developed to treat anxiety and may be effective for chronic symptoms. However, it usually requires several weeks of consistent use to achieve noticeable improvements.

2.1.23 Therapies for Anxiety

Psychotherapy: Often referred to as psychological or talk therapy, is a therapeutic approach that helps individuals recognize how their emotional responses influence their behaviors. Through structured conversations with a qualified mental health professional, individuals are guided to explore their thoughts and feelings and are equipped with strategies to better understand and manage their anxiety symptoms.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT): One of the most effective forms of psychotherapy for anxiety disorders. This method focuses on identifying and reshaping negative or anxiety-inducing thought patterns and behaviours into healthier, more constructive ones. CBT often includes exposure therapy, a technique that helps individuals gradually confront and gain control over feared situations in a safe and systematic way. In some cases, CBT may also be delivered in family-based sessions, especially when anxiety impacts broader family dynamic.

Managing Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder

Implementing certain lifestyle practices and coping strategies can assist in managing and alleviating symptoms of anxiety disorders:

- **Educate Yourself:** Understanding the nature of your condition equips you to handle symptoms more effectively. Engaging with your healthcare provider and asking questions empowers you to take an active role in your treatment.

- **Adhere to Treatment Plans:** It is essential to follow your prescribed medication and therapy regimen. Discontinuing medication abruptly can lead to adverse effects and potential relapses of symptoms.
- **Limit Caffeine Intake:** Caffeinated substances such as coffee, tea, soft drinks, energy beverages, and chocolate can intensify anxiety symptoms due to their stimulant properties.
- **Avoid Alcohol and Recreational Drugs:** The use of substances can increase vulnerability to anxiety and may interfere with treatment outcomes.
- **Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle:** Regular aerobic exercise—such as running or cycling—can enhance mood and reduce stress through the release of endorphins. A balanced diet also plays a crucial role in mental health.
- **Prioritize Sleep:** Quality sleep is closely linked to mental well-being. Establishing a calming nighttime routine can help improve sleep hygiene. Consult a healthcare provider if sleep difficulties persist.
- **Practice Relaxation Techniques:** Stress-reduction practices such as mindfulness meditation, deep breathing exercises, or progressive muscle relaxation can support emotional regulation and complement other treatments.
- **Journal Regularly:** Writing down thoughts and emotions, especially before bed, can promote emotional release and reduce nighttime rumination.
- **Challenge Negative Thinking:** Learning to identify and replace anxious thoughts with constructive ones can be beneficial. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is especially effective in developing these skills.

- **Foster Social Connections:** Staying connected with supportive friends and family—whether in person or virtually—can buffer the effects of social anxiety and promote a sense of belonging.
- **Join Support Groups:** Sharing experiences with others facing similar challenges can provide emotional relief and insight into managing anxiety symptoms.
- **Consult Healthcare Providers:** Before taking any over-the-counter medications or herbal supplements, seek medical advice, as some ingredients can exacerbate anxiety symptoms.

Individuals experiencing anxiety may frequently encounter persistent worry, fear, or a sense of unease. These emotional responses are often accompanied by physical symptoms such as increased heart rate, dizziness, and general weakness. In many cases, people may begin to avoid situations that provoke or intensify these symptoms.

Dealing with anxiety disorder.

Medical professionals' advice that if individual suspect symptoms of an anxiety disorder, it is important to consult with a medical professional. In addition to seeking clinical support, gaining a deeper understanding of the underlying causes and the specific nature of the anxiety can be beneficial. Participating in support groups, minimizing the consumption of caffeine, and adopting effective stress management strategies can also contribute to improved well-being and symptom reduction³⁶.

2.1.24 Youths and Social Media usage

Social media encompasses various online platforms and networking applications that allow users to engage with one another through text, audio, and visual content. For many young individuals, these platforms have become essential tools for global communication, self-expression, entertainment, identity formation, and information sharing³⁷. However, a significant number of youth are unaware that the lifestyles portrayed by influencers and public figures online are often curated and unrealistic. This can lead to a perceived pressure to conform to those idealized standards, contributing to feelings of inadequacy or stress.

Social media platforms are essentially internet-based services that enable users to create public or semi-public profiles within structured systems. These platforms allow individuals to connect with others, maintain social networks, and explore connections made by themselves and others within the same digital space.

There has been a rapid expansion in the use of digital technology for maintaining interpersonal relationships, particularly among younger demographics. Even at the elementary level, students increasingly own mobile devices, facilitating constant internet access. Consequently, social networking has grown into a widespread phenomenon, significantly shaping the concept of modern social interaction.

With the ongoing evolution of media technologies, communication channels have become more diverse and dynamic. Innovations in information and communication technologies have reshaped media environments, closely aligning them with global and societal transformations. This is especially evident among youth, who are often the most adaptable and responsive demographic to these shifts.

The media consumption habits of young people play a critical role in their social development. Constant exposure to vast volumes of online content influences their attitudes, beliefs, and social

behaviours. This digital immersion not only affects their worldview but also their capacity to navigate interpersonal relationships in both online and offline settings³⁸.

Socially interactive technologies (SITs), including instant and text messaging, are increasingly reshaping the structure and nature of social relationships among today's youth. By offering fast-paced, inexpensive, online communication, SITs allow for new online youth social networks to form and evolve. New text-based technologies are picking up where phones left off. Email and text messaging allow for rapid, asynchronous communication within one's peer network: Instant messaging allows for synchronous communication among many friends at once. Because so much of the discussion about the use of technology for connecting interpersonally uses the term social networking, we need to begin by looking at the concept of a social network.

A social network is a social structure made of individuals (or organizations) called nodes, which are tied (connected) by one or more specific types of interdependency.

Personal and organizational social networks are common among those who have shared interests, attitudes, beliefs, kinships, and needs. Youth subculture groups in neighborhoods and on school campuses provide enduring examples of social networks. Today, open and restricted access social sites are increasing on the internet

Most establish networks of diverse members from a wide geographic field who learn about each other and about a variety of topics and have numerous interchanges. Sites allow members to design personal profiles, blogs, and forums that reflect direct expression of images and statements they want to convey.

Social networking sites allow communication among ever-widening circles of contacts, inviting convergence among the previously separate activities of email, messaging, website creation, diaries, photo albums and music or video uploading and downloading.

From the user's perspective, more than ever before, using media means creating as well as receiving, with user control spreading far beyond selecting ready-made, mass-produced content. As youth culture joins communication technology, the fast pace of change makes it tough to grasp the nature and scope of what is happening, never mind appreciating all the positive and negative effects. There are recommendations that the changes are transforming the concept of community. These and a host of other matters associated to youth and social networking through new technologies are topics for ongoing study and debate.

2.1.25 Positive and Negative effects social media usage has on youths

First of all, social media affects the mental health of a young person positively. Social media enables straight connections between people and are used to spread information. The media, especially the Internet, provides social support for teenagers, decreasing loneliness and isolation, and helping build new friendships online.

The Internet has connected different societies and their cultures in everyday communication and is now creating social relationships on the network. The book's authors provide various examples of how social media allows for uniting people with similar views. Young people tend to join communities because of the expectation of reciprocity, respect, and a feeling of effectiveness. Users also perceive the online group of interest as a place to interact with its other members. If it is appropriately structured, a community can also be a "safe" place to express ideas. Since young people feel more comfortable and relaxed online than in real life, they can have opinions on various topics without fear of being judged and compared, which contributes to a person's well-being and mental health.

Secondly, communication on social networks allows the youth to master and maintain relationships with friends and relatives. Online friendship increases the social capital and circle of acquaintances. Its increase leads to an awareness of one's own needs and significance.

The positive effect of the Internet's influence on young people's socialization is meaningful. People have new online platforms and chances for interaction and information exchange, facilitating, and accelerating socialization.

Negative effects social media usage has on youths

Despite some positive sides, several adverse outcomes caused by imbalanced social media usage are presented in the book. Young people with insufficient interpersonal experience who have difficulties in live communication perceive the network as more convenient. assert that not all students interact constantly on social media platforms for academic purposes, social media platforms are now known sexual content or to promote prostitution.

Consequently, overuse of the Internet can be addictive, leading to depression. Young people's addiction to social networking online leads to using the Internet in more intrusive ways, they are likely to prioritize online conversations. It may provoke communication anxiety, while the latter stimulates obsessive network use.

Today's issues deal with Internet usage and the increased amount of time young people and adults spend searching the Internet. Students can get very involved in social media activities, such that they become social media addicts. Due to this addictive behaviour, students use social media even while in the classroom, which creates a disturbance for other students and concentration issues for them. Inability to carefully follow lectures affects their grades. Many students spend much time on their laptops, tablets, desktop computers and smart phones to check Tweets and status updates of their friends and families.

The use of social media platforms can squander an individual's time that could be used for profitable tasks and exercises.

Moreover, people who spend much time on social media tend to consider online communication convenient but restrained in communicative effectiveness. It appears due to the lack of various non-verbal cues available in real interaction.

Anxiety resulting from live interaction motivates an obsessive request to communicate safely online, while successful communication attempts increase the amount of time spent on the Internet.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Social learning theory

This is a theory of social behavior that proposes that new behaviors can be acquired by observing and imitating others. It states that learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context and can occur purely through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction or direct reinforcement. In addition to the observation of behavior, learning also occurs through the observation of rewards and punishments, a process known as vicarious reinforcement. When a particular behavior is rewarded regularly, it will most likely persist; conversely, if a particular behavior is constantly punished, it will most likely desist. The theory expands on traditional behavioral theories, in which behavior is governed solely by reinforcements, by placing emphasis on the important roles of various internal processes in the learning individual. Albert Bandura is known for studying this theory.

A scholar delivered a series of lectures on verbal behavior, putting forward a more empirical approach to the subject than existed in psychology at the time. In them, he proposed the use of stimulus-response theories to describe language use and development, and that all verbal behavior was underpinned by operant conditioning. He did however mention that some forms of speech derived from words and sounds that had previously been heard (echoic response), and that reinforcement from parents allowed these 'echoic responses' to be pared down to that of understandable speech. While he denied that there was any "instinct or faculty of imitation", Skinner's behaviorist theories formed a basis for redevelopment into Social Learning Theory. At around the same time, Clark Leonard Hull, an American psychologist, was a strong proponent of behaviorist stimulus-response theories, and headed a group at Yale University's Institute of Human Relations.

Under him, Neal Miller and John Dollard aimed to come up with a reinterpretation of psychoanalytic theory in terms of stimulus-response. This led to their book which posited that personality consisted of learned habits. They used Hull's drive theory, where a drive is a need that stimulates a behavioral response, crucially conceiving a drive for imitation, which was positively reinforced by social interaction and widespread as a result. This was the first use of the term 'social learning', but Miller and Dollard did not consider their ideas to be separate from Hullian learning theory, only a possible refinement. Nor did they follow up on their original ideas with a sustained research program.

A professor at Ohio State University, Rotter moved away from the strictly behaviorist learning of the past, and considered instead the holistic interaction between the individual and the environment. Essentially he was attempting an integration of behaviorism (which generated precise predictions but was limited in its ability to explain complex human interactions)

and gestalt psychology (which did a better job of capturing complexity but was much less powerful at predicting actual behavioral choices). In his theory, the social environment and individual personality created probabilities of behavior, and the reinforcement of these behaviors led to learning. He emphasized the subjective nature of the responses and effectiveness of reinforcement types. While his theory used vocabulary common to that of behaviorism, the focus on internal functioning and traits differentiated his theories, and can be seen as a precursor to more cognitive approaches to learning.

Rotter's theory is also known as expectancy-value theory due to its central explanatory constructs. Expectancy is defined as the individual's subjectively held probability that a given action will lead to a given outcome. It can range from zero to one, with one representing 100% confidence in the outcome. For example, a person may entertain a given level of belief that they can make a foul shot in basketball or that an additional hour of study will improve their grade on an examination. Reinforcement value is defined as the individual's subjective preference for a given outcome, assuming that all possible outcomes were equally available. In other words, the two variables are independent of each other.

These two variables interact to generate behavior potential, or the likelihood that a given action will be performed.

The nature of the interaction is not specified, though Rotter suggests that it is likely to be multiplicative. The basic predictive equation is: Where:

- BP = Behavior Potential
- E = Expectancy
- RV = Reinforcement Value

Although the equation is essentially conceptual, it is possible to enter numerical values if one is conducting an experiment. Rotter's book contains the results of many such experiments demonstrating this and other principles.

Importantly, both expectancies and reinforcement values generalize. After many experiences ('learning trials', in behaviorist language) a person will develop a generalized expectancy for success in a domain. For example, a person who has played several sports develops a generalized expectancy concerning how they will do in an athletic setting.

This is also termed freedom of movement. Generalized expectancies become increasingly stable as we accumulate experience, eventually taking on a trait-like consistency. Similarly, we generalize across related reinforcers, developing what Rotter termed need values. These needs are another major determinant of behavior. Generalized expectancies and needs are the major personality variables in Rotter's theory. The influence of a generalized expectancy will be greatest when encountering novel, unfamiliar situations. As experience is gained, specific expectancies are developed regarding that situation. For example, a person's generalized expectancy for success in sports will have less influence on their actions in a sport with which they have long experience.

Another conceptual equation in Rotter's theory proposes that the value of a given reinforcer is a function of the expectancy that it will lead to another reinforcing outcome and the value set upon that outcome. This is important because many social re-enforcers are what behaviorists term secondary re-enforcers – they have no intrinsic value, but have become linked with other, primary, reinforcers.

For example, the value set on obtaining a high grade on an examination is dependent on how strongly that grade is linked (in the subjective belief system of the student) with other outcomes

– which might include parental praise, graduation with honors, offers of more prestigious jobs upon graduation, etc. – and the extent to which those other outcomes are themselves valued.

Rotter's social learning theory also generated many suggestions for clinical practice. Psychotherapy was largely conceptualized as expectancy modification and, to some extent, as values modification. This may be seen as an early form of cognitive-behavioral therapy.

Noam Chomsky criticism of Skinner's book *Verbal Behavior*, an extension of Skinner's initial lectures. In his review, He theorized that human beings are somehow specially designed to understand and acquire language, ascribing a definite but unknown cognitive mechanism to it.

Within this context, Albert Bandura studied learning processes that occurred in interpersonal contexts and were not, in his view, adequately explained either by theories of operant conditioning or by existing models of social learning. Bandura began to conduct studies of the rapid acquisition of novel behaviors via social observation, the most famous of which were the Bobo doll experiments.

Skinner's explanation of the acquisition of new responses relied on the process of successive approximation, which required multiple trials, reinforcement for components of behavior, and gradual change. Rotter's theory proposed that the likelihood of a behavior occurring was a function of the subjective expectancy and value of the reinforcement. This model did not account for a response that had not yet been learned – though this contention does not address the likelihood that generalization from related situations would produce behaviors in new ones.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977)

Social Learning Theory integrated behavioral and cognitive theories of learning in order to provide a comprehensive model that could account for the wide range of learning experiences that occur in the real world. As initially outlined by Bandura and Walters in 1963, the theory was

entirely behavioral in nature; the crucial element that made it innovative and increasingly influential was its emphasis upon the role of imitation. Over the years, however, Bandura shifted to a more cognitive perspective, and this led to a major revision of the theory in 1977.

At this time, the key tenets of Social Learning Theory were stated as follows:

2. Learning is not purely behavioral; rather, it is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context.
3. Learning can occur by observing a behavior and by observing the consequences of the behavior (vicarious reinforcement).
4. Learning involves observation, extraction of information from those observations, and making decisions about the performance of the behavior (observational learning or modeling). Thus, learning can occur without an observable change in behavior.
5. Reinforcement plays a role in learning but is not entirely responsible for learning.
6. The learner is not a passive recipient of information. Cognition, environment, and behavior all mutually influence each other (reciprocal determinism).

Lead City Unive

Observation and direct experience: Typical stimulus-response theories rely entirely upon direct experience (of the stimulus) to inform behavior. Bandura opens up the scope of learning mechanisms by introducing observation as a possibility. He adds to this the ability of modeling – a means by which humans represent actual outcomes symbolically.

These models, cognitively mediated, allow future consequences to have as much of an impact as actual consequences would in a typical stimulus-response theory.

An important factor in Social Learning Theory is the concept of reciprocal determinism.

This notion states that just as an individual's behavior is influenced by the environment, the environment is also influenced by the individual's behavior.

In other words, a person's behavior, environment, and personal qualities all reciprocally influence each other. For example, a child who plays violent video games will likely influence their peers to play as well, which then encourages the child to play more often.

Modeling and underlying cognitive processes

Social Learning Theory draws heavily on the concept of modeling as described above. Bandura outlined three types of modeling stimuli:

1. **Live models:** where a person is demonstrating the desired behavior
2. **Verbal instruction:** in which an individual describes the desired behavior in detail and instructs the participant in how to engage in the behavior
3. **Symbolic,** in which modeling occurs by means of the media, including movies, television, Internet, literature, and radio. Stimuli can be either real or fictional characters.

Exactly what information is gleaned from observation is influenced by the type of model, as well as a series of cognitive and behavioral processes, including:

- **Attention** – in order to learn, observers must attend to the modeled behavior. Experimental studies have found that awareness of what is being learned and the mechanisms of reinforcement greatly boosts learning outcomes. Attention is impacted by characteristics of the observer (e.g., perceptual abilities, cognitive abilities, arousal, past performance) and characteristics of the behavior or event (e.g., relevance, novelty, affective valence, and functional value). In this way, social factors contribute to attention – the prestige of different models affects the relevance and functional value of observation and therefore modulates attention.
- **Retention** – In order to reproduce an observed behavior, observers must be able to remember features of the behavior. Again, this process is influenced by observer characteristics (cognitive capabilities, cognitive rehearsal) and event characteristics (complexity). The cognitive processes underlying retention are described by Bandura as visual and verbal, where verbal descriptions of models are used in more complex scenarios.
- **Reproduction** – By reproduction, Bandura refers not to the propagation of the model but the implementation of it. This requires a degree of cognitive skill, and may in some cases require sensorimotor capabilities.

Reproduction can be difficult because in the case of behaviors that are reinforced through self-observation (he cites improvement in sports), it can be difficult to observe behavior well. This can require the input of others to provide self-correcting feedback. Newer studies on feedback support this idea by suggesting effective feedback, which would help with observation and correction improves the performance on participants on tasks.

- **Motivation** – The decision to reproduce (or refrain from reproducing) an observed behavior is dependent on the motivations and expectations of the observer, including anticipated consequences and internal standards. Bandura's description of motivation is also fundamentally based on environmental and thus social factors, since motivational factors are driven by the functional value of different behaviors in a given environment.
- **Evolution and cultural intelligence**- Social Learning Theory has more recently applied alongside and been used to justify the theory of cultural intelligence. The cultural intelligence hypothesis argues that humans possess a set of specific behaviors and skills that allow them to exchange information culturally. This centers on a model of human learning where social learning is key, and that humans have selected for traits that capitalize on opportunities for social learning. The theory builds on extant social theory by suggesting that social learning abilities, like Bandura's cognitive processes required for modeling, correlate with other forms of intelligence and learning. Experimental proof has shown that humans over imitate behavior compared to chimpanzees, lending credence to the idea that we have selected for methods of social learning. Some academics have suggested that our ability to learn socially and culturally have led to our success as a species.
- **In neuroscience**- Recent research in neuroscience has implicated mirror neurons as a neurophysiology basis for social learning, observational learning, motor cognition and social cognition. Mirror neurons have been heavily linked to social learning in humans. Mirror neurons were first discovered in primates in studies which involved teaching the monkey motor activity tasks. One such study focused on teaching primates to crack nuts with a hammer.

When the primate witnessed another individual cracking nuts with a hammer, the mirror neuron systems became activated as the primate learned to use the hammer to crack nuts. However, when the primate was not presented with a social learning opportunity, the mirror neuron systems did not activate and learning did not occur.

Similar studies with humans also show similar evidence to the human mirror neuron system activating when observing another person perform a physical task. The activation of the mirror neuron system is thought to be critical for the understanding of goal directed behaviors and understanding their intention. Although still controversial, this provides a direct neurological link to understanding social cognition.

- **In social work-** Some theories can be taken from many disciplines, such as criminology and education. Even though social learning theory comes from psychology, this theory can also be applied to the study of social work. Social learning theory is important in social work because of the observation of others. For example, if a child watches their sibling do their daily routine they are more likely going to want to copy the routine step by step. Feedback and reinforcement can help individuals learn and adopt new behaviors.

Social workers can use feedback and reinforcements to help their clients make positive changes. For example, a social worker might provide feedback and reinforcement for a client who has made progress toward a goal, such as maintaining sobriety. Social learning provides a useful framework for social workers to help their clients make positive changes by leveraging the power of social influence and modeling.

- **Depression-** Social learning theory has been explained and shown in many different examples. Depression in social learning can be discussed in a variety of ways. For example, a person with depression may withdraw from social situations and avoid interacting with others.

They may feel like they don't have anything to contribute to conversations or others won't understand them. Depression can make it difficult for people to find the motivation to engage in social activities. They may also feel like it takes too much energy to interact with others, and they would rather stay home alone. Social learning theory provides a framework for understanding the role of social factors in depression and for developing interventions that promote positive behaviors and attitudes.

- **In health promotion-** Social learning theory highlights the importance of observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes and beliefs of others in promoting health behaviors. Promoting positive and healthy habits is a big part of an educator's and even a social worker's job. Teachers are expected to teach their students how to behave in class. For example, if a teacher desires students to be quiet while they are talking, they have to teach them that when the teacher is talking they should be quiet. The teachers are also expected to teach them how to role play and tell stories and also do classroom activities. Another example is peer led health programs they can effectively promote health behaviors among adolescents and young adults by using social learning behaviors and attitudes and provide social support for positive changes. Community based interventions can use Social learning theory principles to promote healthy behaviors at the community levels.
- **In addiction-** Addiction is related to the social learning theory as it underlines the role of social influences and reinforces the development and maintenance of addictive behaviors. The social learning theory suggests that people learn and adopt behaviors through observation, experience, and reinforcement from social interactions with others. In the case of addiction, individuals may learn and adopt substance use behaviors from peers, family members, or media exposure, and through positive reinforcement such as pleasure or relief

from stress. Additionally, the social learning theory highlights the importance of social context in reinforcing addictive behaviors, as social situations and norms may influence the decision to engage in substance use. The social learning theory proposes that addiction is a learned behavior influenced by environmental and social factors.

- **Viral challenges-** One modern-day example of the social learning theory in action is the phenomenon of viral challenges on social media. These challenges involve individuals performing a specific action or task, usually for the purpose of entertainment, and then sharing the video with their online community. In social learning theory, people learn new behaviors by observing and imitating the actions of others. In the case of viral challenges, individuals watch others perform a specific task and then "imitate" the behavior by completing the challenge themselves. For example, the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, which went viral in the summer of 2014, involved people dumping a bucket of ice water over their heads to raise awareness for ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) and then challenging others to do the same.

The challenge quickly spread across social media platforms, with celebrities and politicians also participating, and raised over \$115 million for the ALS Association. Another example is the "In My Feelings" challenge, which took place on social media in the summer of 2018. The challenge involved people dancing to Drake's song "In My Feelings" alongside a moving car and sharing the video online. The challenge was initially started by Instagram user @theshiggyshow and quickly gained popularity across social media platforms. These examples demonstrate how the social learning theory can be applied to real-world phenomena, with individuals learning and imitating new behaviors through the observation of others on social media platforms.

- **Criminology-** Social learning theory has been used to explain the emergence and maintenance of deviant behavior, especially aggression. Criminologists Ronald Akers and Robert Burgess integrated the principles of social learning theory and operant conditioning with Edwin Sutherland's differential association theory to create a comprehensive theory of criminal behavior. Burgess and Akers emphasized that criminal behavior is learned in both social and nonsocial situations through combinations of direct reinforcement, vicarious reinforcement, explicit instruction, and observation. Both the probability of being exposed to certain behaviors and the nature of the reinforcement are dependent on group norms.
- **Developmental psychology-** In the book *Theories of Developmental Psychology*, Patricia H. Miller lists both moral development and gender-role development as important areas of research within social learning theory. Social learning theorists emphasize observable behavior regarding the acquisition of these two skills. For gender-role development, the same-sex parent provides only one of many models from which the individual learns gender-roles. Social learning theory also emphasizes the variable nature of moral development due to the changing social circumstances of each decision: The particular factors the child thinks are important vary from situation to situation, depending on variables such as which situational factors are operating, which causes are most salient, and what the child processes cognitively.

Moral judgments involve a complex process of considering and weighing various criteria in a given social situation.

For social learning theory, gender development has to do with the interactions of numerous social factors, involving all the interactions the individual encounters. For social learning theory, biological factors are important but take a back seat to the importance of learned,

observable behavior. Because of the highly gendered society in which an individual might develop, individuals begin to distinguish people by gender even as infants. Bandura's account of gender allows for more than rational factors in predicting gendered behavior: for Bandura, motivational factors and a broad network of social influences determine if, when, and where gender knowledge is expressed.

- **Management-** Social learning theory proposes that rewards are not the sole force behind creating motivation. Thoughts, beliefs, morals, and feedback all help to motivate us. Three other ways in which we learn are vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states. Modeling, or the scenario in which we see someone's behaviors and adopt them as our own, aide the learning process as well as mental states and the cognitive process.
- **Creating social change with media:** Entertainment-education in the form of a telenovela or soap opera can help viewers learn socially desired behaviors in a positive way from models portrayed in these programs. The telenovela format allows the creators to incorporate elements that can bring a desired response.

These elements may include music, actors, melodrama, props or costumes. Entertainment education is symbolic modeling and has a formula with three sets of characters with the cultural value that is to be examined is determined ahead of time:

1. Characters that support a value (positive role models)
2. Characters who reject the value (negative role models)
3. Characters who have doubts about the value (undecided)

Within this formula there are at least three doubters that represent the demographic group within the target population. One of these doubters will accept the value less than halfway through, the second will accept the value two-thirds of the way through and the third doubter

does not accept the value and is seriously punished. This doubter is usually killed. Positive social behaviors are reinforced with rewards and negative social behaviors are reinforced with punishment.

At the end of the episode a short epilogue done by a recognizable figure summarizes the educational content and within the program viewers are given resources in their community.

Applications for social change

Through observational learning a model can bring forth new ways of thinking and behaving. With a modeled emotional experience, the observer shows an affinity toward people, places and objects. They dislike what the models do not like and like what the models care about. Television helps contribute to how viewers see their social reality. Media representations gain influence because people's social constructions of reality depend heavily on what they see, hear and read rather than what they experience directly. Any effort to change beliefs must be directed toward the sociocultural norms and practices at the social system level.

Before a drama is developed, extensive research is done through focus groups that represent the different sectors within a culture. Participants are asked what problems in society concern them most and what obstacles they face, giving creators of the drama culturally relevant information to incorporate into the show.

The pioneer of entertainment-education is Miguel Sabido a creative writer/producer/director in the 1970s at the Mexican national television system, Televisa. Sabido spent eight years working on a method that would create social change and is known as the Sabido Method. Sabido's method has been used worldwide to address social issues such as national literacy, population growth and health concerns such as HIV.

- **Psychotherapy:** Social Learning Theory has significantly influenced psychotherapy, providing a multifaceted framework that extends beyond traditional behavioral conditioning. Social learning theory can be integrated with various therapeutic models and lends itself to a wide range of practical techniques and interventions. For example, therapists in many therapeutic approaches utilize modeling, where clients observe and learn from the therapist's behaviors and response patterns. Techniques such as behavioral rehearsal, role-playing, and social skills training empower clients to acquire new behaviors and enhance their coping mechanisms in various situations. Additionally, social learning theory underscores the profound influence of culture on human development, and posits that cultural norms, values, and social contexts significantly shape individual development.

Therapists must assess for the influence of culture in understanding their clients and adapt interventions to align with clients cultural backgrounds. In systemic therapy, such as couples or family therapy, social learning theory assists therapists in identifying intergenerational patterns of behavior. Systemic therapists may assist clients in gaining insights into the origins of presenting problems. Presenting problems are often conceptualized as behaviors and coping mechanisms that can be transmitted across generations through observational learning and operant conditioning. Frequently, issues are rooted in learned behaviors and coping strategies acquired through observation and modeling. Social learning theory enriches psychotherapy by providing a holistic perspective that encompasses historical context, cultural considerations, family dynamics and interpersonal relationships, and intergenerational patterns.

These allow therapists to have a more complex, nuanced understanding of the development and maintenance of presenting problems.

- **School psychology:** Many classroom and teaching strategies draw on principles of social learning to enhance students' knowledge acquisition and retention. For example, using the technique of guided participation, a teacher says a phrase and asks the class to repeat the phrase. Thus, students both imitate and reproduce the teacher's action, aiding retention. An extension of guided participation is reciprocal learning, in which both student and teacher share responsibility in leading discussions. Additionally, teachers can shape the classroom behavior of students by modelling appropriate behavior and visibly rewarding students for good behavior. By emphasizing the teacher's role as model and encouraging the students to adopt the position of observer, the teacher can make knowledge and practices explicit to students, enhancing their learning outcomes.
- **Algorithm for computer optimization:** In modern field of computational intelligence, the social learning theory is adopted to develop a new computer optimization algorithm, the social learning algorithm. Emulating the observational learning and reinforcement behaviors, a virtual society deployed in the algorithm seeks the strongest behavioral patterns with the best outcome.

This corresponds to searching for the best solution in solving optimization problems.

Compared with other bio-inspired global optimization algorithms that mimic natural evolution or animal behaviors, the social learning algorithm has its prominent advantages. First, since the self-improvement through learning is more direct and swift than the evolution process, the social learning algorithm can improve the efficiency of the algorithms mimicking natural evolution. Second, compared with the interaction and

learning behaviors in animal groups, the social learning process of human beings exhibits a higher level of intelligence. By emulating human learning behaviors, it is possible to arrive at more effective optimizers than existing swarm intelligence algorithms. Experimental results have demonstrated the effectiveness and efficiency of the social learning algorithm, which has in turn also verified through computer simulations the outcomes of the social learning behavior in human society. Another example is the social cognitive optimization, which is a population-based metaheuristic optimization algorithm. This algorithm is based on the social cognitive theory, simulating the process of individual learning of a set of agents with their own memory and their social learning with the knowledge in the social sharing library. It has been used for solving continuous optimization, integer programming, and combinatorial optimization problems.

2.2.2 Uses and gratifications theory

This is a communication theory that describes the reasons and means by which people seek out media to meet specific needs. The theory postulates that media is a highly available product, that audiences are the consumers of the product, and that audiences choose media to satisfy given needs as well as social and psychological uses, such as knowledge, relaxation, social relationships, and diversion.

Uses and gratifications theory was developed from a number of erstwhile communication theories and research conducted by fellow theorists. The theory has a heuristic value because it gives communication scholars a perspective through which a number of ideas and theories about media choice, consumption, and even impact can be viewed.

Beginning in the 1940s, researchers began to see patterns under the perspective of the uses and gratifications theory in radio listeners. Early research was concerned with topics such as children's use of comics and the absence of newspapers during a newspaper strike. An interest in more psychological interpretations emerged during this time period.

By 1944, researchers began to look into the earliest forms of uses and gratifications with their work classifying the reasons why people chose specific types of media. Herta Herzog interviewed various soap opera fans and was able to identify three types of gratifications based on why people listened to soap operas: emotional, wishful thinking and learning. Then, in 1948, Lasswell introduced a four-functional clarification of the media on a macro-sociological level: media served the functions of surveillance, correlation, entertainment and cultural transmission for both society and individuals.

UGT is an addition of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs that argues that people actively look to satisfy their needs based on a hierarchy. These needs are organized as a pyramid with the largest, most important needs at the base and the need for self-actualization at the top. Wilbur Schramm developed the fraction of selection, a formula for determining which form of mass media an individual would select.

The formula helped to decide the amount of gratification an individual would expect to gain from the medium over how much effort they had to make to achieve gratification. UGT's approach was focused on the social and psychological origins of needs, which produced expectations of the mass media or other sources, which lead to differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in need gratifications and some other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones. In 1969 Jay Blumler and Denis McQuail studied the 1964 election in the United Kingdom by examining people's motives for watching certain

political programs on television. By categorizing the audience's motives for viewing a certain program, they aimed to understand any potential mass-media effects by classifying viewers according to their needs.

The audience motivations they were able to identify helped lay the groundwork for their research in 1972 and eventually uses and gratifications theory. McQuail, Blumler and Joseph Brown suggested that the uses of different types of media could be grouped into 4 categories: diversion, personal relationships, personal identity, surveillance (i.e. forms of information seeking).

McQuail, Blumler and Brown were joined in their media exploration by Elihu Katz, Michael Gurevitch and Hadassah Haas, and their collaborative research began to indicate how people saw the mass media.

A 1974 study by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch stated five basic assumptions for a framework for understanding the correlation between media and audiences. These assumptions are:

1. The audience is perceived as active.
2. In the mass communication process, much initiative in linking gratification and media choice lies with the audience member.
3. The media compete with other sources of satisfaction.
4. Methodologically speaking, many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves.
5. Value judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms.

According to their goals for the media use, can be grouped into five uses. The audience wants to:

1. Be informed or educated
2. Identify with characters of the situation in the media environment
3. Simple entertainment
4. Enhance social interaction
5. Escape from the stresses of daily life

Applications of UGT since 1980s

Rehman applied UGT to study the relationship between movie audience expectations and the satisfaction they derived from going to the movies. The following year Alan Rubin identified two main types of television viewers: ritualized (or, habitual) users and instrumental (or, non-habitual) users. Rubin defined the ritualized users as individuals who had a high regard for television, used television often, and primarily used it for the purpose of a diversion. Meanwhile, the instrumental users were defined as having a lower regard for television, did not use it often, and when they would use television it was for the purpose of acquiring information. Mark Levy and Sven Windahl identified three types of audience activity, which they labeled as preactivity, duractivity, and postactivity. Levy and Windahl described preactivity as seeking out certain media to gratify intellectual needs, duractivity as focusing on deciphering and interpreting messages, and postactivity as seeking out a message for personal or interpersonal benefit.

A year later, in 1985, Levy and Windahl provided a description of what it means to be an active consumer of media: As commonly understood by gratifications researchers, the term audience activity assumes a voluntaristic and selective orientation by audiences toward the communication process. In short, it suggests that media use is motivated by needs and goals that are defined by

audience members themselves, and that active participation in the communication process may facilitate, limit, or otherwise influence the gratifications and effects associated with exposure. Current thinking also suggests that audience activity is best conceptualized as a variable construct, with audiences exhibiting varying kinds and degrees of activity.

Then, in 1987, Lewis Donohew, Philip Palmgreen, and J.D. Rayburn identified four different lifestyle types of television viewers, each with a variety of differences from the degrees to which the audience member watches TV, why they watch it, what their income and gender is, their marriage status, and so on. The four types are: disengaged homemaker, outgoing activist, restrained activist, and working class climber.

The most recent interest surrounding UGT is the link between the reason why media is used and the achieved gratification. UGT researchers are developing the theory to be more predictive and explanatory by connecting the needs, goals, benefits, consequences of media consumption and use along with individual factors. Work in UGT was trailblazed by the research of Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch which built on Herzog's research and caused a paradigm shift from how media influences people to how audiences use media, diminishing the dominance of the limited effects approach to mass media studies.

A comparatively new technology, have many uses and gratifications attached to them. Due to their nature of mobility, constant access, and options to both add and access content, this field is expanding with new research on the motivations behind using mobile phones. In general, people use mobile phones for the following uses and gratifications: sociability, entertainment, status, immediate access, instrumentality, mobility, and psychological reassurance.

Researchers have also identified that the uses and gratifications for contributing mobile content differ from those for retrieving mobile content.

The specific function of text messaging has also been studied to find its uses and gratifications and explore any potential gender differences. Seven uses and gratifications, in order of importance, have been proposed: accessibility, relaxation, escape, entertainment, information seeking, coordination for business, socialization, status seeking. The results also displayed gender differences, implying that social and societal expectations for females around independence and connection were a factor in their uses and gratification seeking.

A study on instant messaging found that women chatted longer and for sociability; men chatted for less time per session and for entertainment and relaxation.

The Internet provides a new and deep field for exploring UGT. It was found to have three main categories of gratifications: content gratification, process gratification, and social gratification. Content uses and gratification include the need for researching or finding specific information or material, which are gratified with content. Process uses and gratification involve the experience of purposeful navigating or random browsing of the Internet in its functional process. Social uses and gratification include a wide range of forming and deepening social ties.

Scholars like LaRose utilize UGT to understand Internet usage via a socio-cognitive framework. This reduces uncertainties that arise from homogenizing an Internet audience and explaining media usage in terms of only positive gratifications. LaRose also created measures for self-efficacy and self-criticism and related UGT to negative outcomes of online behavior, such as internet addiction.

Whereas basic research finds that socialization motivates use of friend-networking sites, uses and gratifications theory suggests that individual users will continue to be engaged with social networking sites if their gratifications and needs are fulfilled by such tools.

Some further exploration has demonstrated that although emotional, cognitive, social, and habitual uses are motivational to use social media, not all uses are consistently gratified. By 2013, research has looked at social networking services, personal and subject-based blogs, and internet forums. The relationship between gratifications and narcissism, and the effects of age on this relationship and corresponding gratifications have also been studied. Overall, users have the following motivations: social and affection, need to vent negative feelings, recognition, entertainment, cognitive needs.

Users who share news are motivated by the uses and gratifications of socializing and status seeking, especially if they have had prior experience with social media.

Users also engage in cyberbullying in order to fulfil a need to be vengeful and malicious, while avoiding face-to-face contact.

2.2.3. Social cognitive theory

The basics of social cognitive theory come from Edwin B. Holt and Harold Chapman Brown's work *Animal Drive and the Learning Process*, an essay toward radical empiricism. This book speculates that all animal action is based on accomplishing the psychological needs of "feeling, emotion, and desire." The most notable component of this theory is that a person cannot learn to how to imitate until they are imitated.

In 1941, Neal E. Miller and John Dollard argued four factors contribute to learning: drives, cues, responses, and rewards. One driver is social motivation, which includes imitativeness, the process of matching an act to an appropriate cue of where and when to perform the act.

A behavior is imitated depending on whether the model receives positive or negative response consequences. Miller and Dollard argued that if one were motivated to learn a particular

behavior, then that particular behavior would be learned through clear observations. By imitating these observed actions the individual observer would solidify that learned action and would be rewarded with positive reinforcement, a positive consequence to certain behaviour.

The widely researched topics of behaviourism up until then had certain discrepancies. He was inspired by the work done by Miller and Dollard to explore this further. Bandura's claimed that Social Learning Theory shows a direct correlation between a person's perceived self-efficacy and behavioral change. Self-efficacy comes from four sources: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states.

In 1986, Bandura published his second book, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory* which introduced the triadic causation model. He called the new theory social cognitive theory. Bandura changed the name to emphasize the major role cognition plays in encoding and performing behaviors. In this book, Bandura argued that human behavior is caused by personal, behavioral, and environmental influences.

In 2001, Bandura brought SCT to mass communication in his journal article that stated the theory could be used to analyze how "symbolic communication influences human thought, affect and action". The theory shows how new behavior diffuses through society through psychosocial factors governing the acquisition and adoption of the behavior. By using causes people see as worthy, they justify harmful actions. SCT has been applied across different fields of study including psychology, education, mass communications, and healthcare. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought challenges to many people in relations to global health and has prompted a re-examination of human behavior and social responses through social cognitive theory. The pandemic has changed numerous different facets of society, including the way people behave.

Research applying social cognition theories may assist in explaining variance in these behaviors and inform the development of efficacious behavior change interventions to promote adherence.

Born in 1925, Bandura spent his life influencing the world with expansions of SCT. His recent work, published May 2011, focuses on how SCT impacts areas of both health and population in relation to climate change. He proposes that these problems could be solved through television serial dramas that show models similar to viewers performing the desired behavior.

On health, Bandura writes that currently there is little incentive for doctors to write prescriptions for healthy behavior, but he believes the cost of fixing health problems start to outweigh the benefits of being healthy. Bandura argues that we are on the cusp of moving from a disease model (focusing on people with problems) to a health model (focusing on people being healthy) and SCT is the theory that should be used to advance a healthy society.

Specifically on Population, Bandura states that population growth is a global crisis because of its correlation with depletion and degradation of our planet's resources. Bandura argues that SCT should be used to increase birth control use, reduce gender inequality through education, and to model environmental conservation to improve the state of the planet.

Social cognitive theory is often applied as a theoretical framework of studies pertained to media representation regarding race, gender, age and beyond. Social cognitive theory recommended severe repeated images presented in mass media can be potentially processed and encoded by the viewers.

Media content analytic studies examine the bedrock of media messages that viewers are exposed to, which could provide an opportunity to uncover the social values attached to these media symbols. Although media contents studies cannot directly test the cognitive process, findings can

offer an avenue to predict potential media effects from modeling certain contents, which provides evidence and guidelines for designing subsequent empirical work.

Social cognitive theory is extensively employed in studies examining attitude or behavior changes triggered by the mass/social media. As Bandura suggested, people can learn how to perform behaviors through media modeling. SCT has been generally applied in media studies pertained to sports, health, education and beyond.

For example, the examined gender-typing of sports within the theoretical framework of social cognitive theory, suggesting that sports media consumption and gender-role socialization significantly related with gender perception of sports in college students.

Social cognitive theory, developed by Albert Bandura, is a learning theory based on the assumption that the environment one grows up in contributes to behavior, and the individual person (and therefore cognition) is just as important.

People learn by observing others, with the environment, behavior, and cognition acting as primary factors that influence development in a reciprocal triadic relationship. Each behavior watched can change a person's way of thinking (cognition). Similarly, the environment one is raised in may influence later behaviors. For example, a caregiver's mindset (also cognition) determines the environment in which their children are raised.

The core concepts of this theory are explained by Bandura through a schematization of triadic reciprocal action. According to this model, learning occurs through direct exposure and observational learning. People are not only products of their environment but they also have the power to produce their own environment. So there is an interplay between behavior, environment, and personal.

The schema shows how the reproduction of an observed behavior is influenced by getting the learner to believe in his or her personal abilities to correctly complete a behavior.

1. **Behavioral:** The response an individual receives after they perform a behavior (i.e. Provide chances for the learner to experience successful learning as a result of performing the behavior correctly).
2. **Environmental:** Aspects of the environment or setting that influence the individual's ability to successfully complete a behavior (i.e. Make environmental conditions conducive for improved self-efficacy by providing appropriate support and materials).
3. **Personal:** An individual's internal factors that influence their behavior, such as their beliefs, attitudes, and self-efficacy.

Theoretical foundations of social cognitive theory

- **Human agency:** Social cognitive theory is proposed in an agentic perspective, which suggests that, instead of being just shaped by environments or inner forces, individuals are self-developing, self-regulating, self-reflecting and proactive. Specifically, human agency operates within three modes:
 1. **Individual Agency:** A person's own impact on the environment;
 2. **Proxy Agency:** Another person's effort on securing the individual's interests;
 3. **Collective Agency:** A group of people work together to achieve the common benefits.

Human agency has four core properties:

- **Intentionality:** Individuals' active decision on engaging in certain activities;
- **Forethought:** Individuals' ability to anticipate the outcome of certain actions;

- **Self-reactiveness:** Individuals' ability to construct and regulate appropriate behaviors;
 - **Self-reflectiveness:** Individuals' ability to reflect and evaluate the soundness of their cognitions and behaviors.
-
- **Human capability:** Evolving over time, human beings are featured with advanced neural systems, which enable individuals to acquire knowledge and skills by both direct and symbolic terms. Four primary capabilities are addressed as important foundations of social cognitive theory:
 1. symbolizing capability.
 2. self-regulation capability.
 3. self-reflective capability.
 4. vicarious capability.
-
1. **Symbolizing Capability:** Images, language, and sounds are symbols that are used to convey meaning and create shared understanding among people. Symbolizing capability helps people to comprehend and interpret the messages conveyed. People are affected not only by direct experience but also indirect events. Instead of merely learning through laborious trial-and-error process, human beings are able to symbolically perceive events conveyed in messages, construct possible solutions, and evaluate the anticipated outcomes. Symbols are used as a means of communication with others. In essence, symbolizing capabilities facilitate learning and behavior modeling based on observations made in the environment, which can then be used to guide one's own behavior.

- 2. Self-regulation Capability:** This capability is mainly used to assess the messages as well as the information that has been transmitted and determines which should be accepted or rejected. One's intentions and behaviors can be regulated by the individuals themselves.

The process of self-regulation involves discrepancy reduction and discrepancy production through positive and negative feedback channels. This means that individuals motivate and guide their actions by putting in place goals that are challenging and by making conscious efforts to fulfill those goals. Which in turn enables the individuals gain resources, skills and self-efficacy.

- 3. Self-reflective Capability:** This capability gives room for people to have a think through their own feelings, their behaviors and even their thoughts in response to the messages received through communication. This capability helps individuals assess these feelings or behaviors against their internal standards and goals, and also to determine areas where improvements are needed. Improvements can be made and individuals can have new ideas or better thoughts by confirming the appropriateness of how they think or behave through logical, social, enactive or various manners and take actions accordingly.

- 4. Vicarious Capability:** This capability involves individuals learning from the experiences of others. It aids the acquisition of new knowledge, behaviors, thoughts and attitudes without experiencing the consequences of those actions firsthand. Vicarious capability contributes greatly to the cognitive development of humans where most of the information encountered from the mass media are derived³⁹.

Theoretical components of social cognitive theory

- **Behavioral Factors:** Behavioral factors, in the context of this theory, focus on the importance of real-life demonstrations and interactions that are involved in shaping the understanding of individuals and their social adaptation. Observing the actions of others, consequences that might arise, and the feedback they receive can help influence one's cognitive process, self-regulation, and their behavior. Social Cognitive Theory focuses on the interplay between the behavior of an individual and their social surrounding, showing the importance of behavioral facts in building personal and societal change.
- **Modeling & Observational Learning:** Social cognitive theory mainly involves knowledge acquisition or direct learning which is linked to the observation of models. The models in this case can either be those of an interpersonal replication or media sources. A modeling that is effective teaches the general rules as well as the strategies for dealing with varying situations. Observational learning points out how individuals can learn by observing and witnessing behaviors that are demonstrated by others, which is a process popularly called "modeling". When people observe a behavior being performed successfully, they are more likely to replicate and carry out that behavior effectively on their own. According to Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), behaviors, thoughts and environmental factors influence each other mutually, rather than one being the sole cause of the others. The theory also emphasizes that individuals have the capacity to grow and change over time. Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) also highlights that humans possess potential, which is rooted in the brain's distinct capabilities. These include the ability to

create or communicate using symbols, evaluate oneself, plan for the future, and be aware of personal thoughts and emotions.

Albert Bandura and his team conducted a few experiments using a Bobo doll to show that people learn from observing others. For the first experiment, little children were shown either an aggressive or non-aggressive model, who was either the same sex or opposite sex as themselves. The Aggressive models interacted with the Bobo doll aggressively, whereas non-aggressive models played with different toys.

The children who were shown the aggressive models acted more aggressively toward the Bobo doll afterward, with boys showing more aggression than girls. Bandura found out that children who were shown the violent video displayed more aggressive behavior toward the dolls, while those who did not see the video showed little to no aggression.

This experiment illustrates Social Cognitive Theory by showing how individuals imitate behaviors observed in the media. In the experiment, the children copied the violent behavior they saw in the video. Observational learning, as explained by the theory, involves four key processes: attentional processes, cognitive representational processes, behavioral production processes, and motivational processes.

Observations should include:



- 1. Attention Processes:** Observers focus on certain social behaviors based on factors like how noticeable, relevant, or useful the behavior is, as well as the behavior's complexity. Personal traits of the observer such as cognitive ability, existing beliefs and values also influence what they pay attention to.

2. **Cognitive Representational Processes:** When observing a behavior and its consequences, individuals mentally program the experience as a symbol they can recall for future imitation. Positive behaviors followed by positive reinforcement, and negative behaviors followed by negative consequences, help shape whether the behavior will be repeated or avoided later.
3. **Behavioral Production Processes:** This refers to translating the symbolic memory of an observed behavior into real action by reproducing it in suitable situations. While performing the behavior, individuals receive feedback from others, allowing them to refine and adjust their actions for future use.
4. **Motivational Process:** Individuals recreate behaviors based on the feedback and outcomes they experience when doing so. Modeling goes beyond imitation; it involves learning broader rules through observation. The higher level, known as abstract modeling, allows observers to understand patterns behind behaviors and apply them in new situations. For example, if a teacher gives a disapproving look to a student who speaks out of turn, other students may avoid the same behavior to prevent similar consequences. Teachers serve as role models not only for academic content but also for moral and social values. Additionally, they should help students build strong self-efficacy by acknowledging and reinforcing their achievements.

Outcome expectancies & Reinforcements: To learn a particular behavior, people must understand what the potential outcome is if they repeat that behavior. The observer does not expect the actual rewards or punishments incurred by the model, but anticipates similar outcomes when imitating the behavior called outcome expectancies, which is why modeling impacts cognition and behavior. Reinforcements consists of both internal and external reactions to a person's actions, which can increase or decrease the likelihood of those actions continuing. These responses may stem from the individual's own thoughts and feelings or from their surrounding environment, and they can be either rewarding or punitive in nature. In the context of Social Cognitive Theory, this concept is essential for understanding how behavior and the environment influence each other in a dynamic, reciprocal manner. The expectations individuals form about the outcomes of their actions are largely shaped by the environment in which they are raised. For instance, the anticipated consequences of driving under the influence (DUI) differ across cultures: in the United States, it may result in a monetary fine and potential imprisonment, whereas in some other countries, the punishment could be as severe as the death penalty. For instance, when it comes to students, the guidance provided by a teacher helps them understand the link between specific behaviors and their consequences. It is the teacher's responsibility to show students that when a behavior or skill is effectively learned, the resulting outcomes are meaningful and beneficial to them. According to Social Cognitive Theory, learning is more likely to take place when the learner closely identifies with the person they are observing and possesses a strong sense of self-efficacy. This term refers to an individual's confidence in their ability to reach goals and bring about desired results through their own efforts. Self-efficacy serves as a key factor influencing motivation,

emotional responses, and behavior. It impacts actions by engaging various motivational, mental, and emotional processes. Essentially, self-efficacy reflects a person's belief in their capability to plan and carry out actions necessary to handle future situations. Research by Bandura and others has shown that a person's level of self-efficacy significantly shapes how they face goals, responsibilities, and obstacles. People who possess a high level of self-efficacy are more inclined to believe in their ability to overcome difficult challenges and tend to recover more quickly from failures and setbacks. In contrast, those with low self-efficacy often lack confidence in their capabilities, which leads them to doubt their performance and avoid demanding tasks. As such, self-efficacy is a key factor in determining how individuals behave and perform. Observers with strong self-efficacy are more likely to engage in learning behaviors by watching others. There are multiple strategies for strengthening self-efficacy, such as achieving success through personal effort, observing others succeed (social modeling), improving one's physical and emotional well-being, and receiving encouraging feedback from others (verbal persuasion). Developing a robust and resilient sense of self-efficacy involves facing and overcoming difficulties, as well as learning from errors. Beliefs about self-efficacy significantly influence how individuals think, stay motivated, manage their emotions, and make decisions, thereby playing a crucial role in both personal and group achievement. Ways to enhance or cultivate self-efficacy include:

- **Mastery Experience:** This is a process that involves accomplishing simple tasks that build the skills and confidence needed to tackle more complex challenges.
- **Social modeling:** This involves providing a model that the individual can identify and shows the steps required to accomplish a behavior.

- **Improving physical and emotional states:** A person's physical and emotional condition can greatly influence their performance. Being well-rested, calm, and emotionally balanced increases the likelihood of successfully adopting new behaviors. Conversely, fatigue, anxiety, or stress can reduce patience and persistence, making goal attainment more difficult.
- **Verbal persuasion:** involves offering positive encouragement to help an individual believe they can successfully complete a task or adopt a specific behavior. When students feel confident in their abilities, they tend to become more engaged, put forth greater effort, pay closer attention, and demonstrate higher levels of motivation ultimately becoming more effective learners. It is the responsibility of the teacher to create opportunities for students to experience and recognize their own competence, thereby reinforcing their sense of self-efficacy. Teachers should ensure that the students have the knowledge and strategies they need to complete the tasks. Self-efficacy has also been used to predict behavior in various health related situations such as weight loss, quitting smoking, and recovery from heart attack. In relation to exercise science, self-efficacy has produced some of the most consistent results revealing an increase in participation in exercise. Identification allows the observer to feel a one-to-one similarity with the model, and can thus lead to a higher chance of the observer following through with the modeled action. People are more likely to follow behaviors modeled by someone with whom they can identify. The more commonalities or emotional attachments perceived between the observer and the model, the more likely the observer learns and reenacts the modeled behavior.

Applications

Social Cognitive Theory offers a valuable framework for understanding how media can shape individuals' thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors. Given its vast reach and pervasive presence, media has the power to continuously influence human cognition on a large scale. Researchers frequently use Social Cognitive Theory to analyze how media portrays various social categories, including race, gender, and age. The theory suggests that when certain images or narratives are consistently repeated in media, viewers are likely to internalize and encode these representations over time. Content analysis studies of media messages delve into the underlying themes and values embedded within these portrayals, offering insight into the societal norms and ideologies that such representations may reinforce.

While studies on media content cannot directly measure the internal cognitive processes of individuals, their findings can serve as a foundation for predicting how exposure to certain media content may influence behavior through modeling. These insights help inform and guide the design of future empirical research. Social Cognitive Theory is widely utilized in research exploring how media can drive changes in attitudes and behaviors. As Bandura noted, individuals can learn and adopt behaviors by observing them in media representations. This theory has been extensively applied across various media-related fields, including sports, health communication, education, and more. Within this framework, research has shown that sports media consumption, along with processes of gender-role socialization, can significantly influence how American college students perceive gender in the context of sports.

In the field of health communication, Social Cognitive Theory has been widely applied to studies addressing topics such as smoking cessation, HIV prevention, and the promotion of safe sexual practices. For example, a study conducted in 2005 explored the relationship between adolescents' exposure to sexual content on television and their sexual behaviors using Social Cognitive Theory as the guiding framework. The findings revealed a significant correlation between media exposure and sexual behavior among white and African American adolescents. However, this relationship was not observed among Hispanic youth, suggesting that peer norms may play a mediating role in shaping behaviors within this group⁴⁰.

Social Cognitive Theory has been widely used to examine gender norms, particularly through the lens of mass media. Drawing on the triadic reciprocal causation model, which emphasizes the dynamic interaction between personal factors, behavior, and environmental influences, researchers have explored how societal expectations reinforce binary gender roles. These studies often identify mass media as a powerful tool for promoting and sustaining traditional gender norms, highlighting its influential role in shaping public perceptions and behaviors related to gender.

In 1997, researchers applied Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) to examine how exposure to media images promoting thinness and idealized body types influenced women in the Fiji Islands. Traditionally, Fijian culture valued fuller body types; however, the introduction of Western television programs such as *Beverly Hills, 90210* and *Melrose Place* in 1995 marked a cultural shift. This exposure began to alter local beauty standards, illustrating how media can shape personal beliefs and societal norms through observational learning.

The ability to curate and personalize content on social media platforms has also become a significant area of focus among researchers. Across various studies, the concept of outcome expectancies, what individuals believe they will gain from a behavior emerges as a key factor, reinforcing the relevance of SCT in understanding media influence. From the early development of SCT, Albert Bandura concentrated on the effects of media violence, noting how television characters often modeled aggressive behavior as a means of resolving conflict. His research laid the foundation for understanding how repeated exposure to violent content can shape behavior. SCT identifies four primary effects of viewing media violence: the teaching of aggressive behaviors, violence has the power to reshape viewers reality, desensitization and habituation on human cruelty and weakened restraints on aggression.

The Bobo Doll experiment was instrumental in shaping social cognitive theory (SCT), significantly influencing its evolution. Regarding media influence, Bandura observed that violent content on television is frequently depicted in an appealing or glamorous manner, increasing the chances that viewers, particularly children, will mimic such behavior. From the SCT viewpoint, individuals tend to model behaviors they observe in media, especially when those behaviors appear rewarding or unpunished. Consequently, researchers have employed longitudinal studies grounded in SCT to examine how prolonged exposure to media violence can impact behavior over time. The study found that consistent exposure to violent television content during early childhood could be linked to increased aggression and antisocial tendencies in later stages of life.

Social cognitive theory highlights a clear distinction between moral competence and moral performance. Moral competence refers to an individual's capacity to understand and recognize moral actions, while moral performance pertains to the actual execution of those actions in real-life situations, based on one's personal moral standards.

Moral competencies include:

- The capability of an individual
- The knowledge of an individual
- The skills of an individual
- The awareness of moral rules and regulations by an individual
- The cognitive ability to construct behaviors by an individual

In terms of personal development, moral competence involves the maturation of cognitive and perceptual abilities that allow individuals to distinguish between right and wrong. In contrast, moral performance is shaped by external factors such as potential rewards or incentives that may influence behavior. For instance, while a person's moral competence may make them aware that stealing is socially unacceptable, the prospect of gaining a large reward might lead them to act against that understanding, revealing a gap between knowing what is right and actually doing it.

This distinction represents the essence of social cognitive theory. Generally, the foundational principles of this theory remain consistent across different cultural contexts.

Because moral standards tend to be relatively consistent across cultures, given that acts such as murder, theft, and unjustified violence are prohibited in nearly every society, there is limited variation in how people define right and wrong. What makes social cognitive theory universally applicable is that it does not prescribe specific moral values; rather, it emphasizes our capacity to

recognize the concepts of morality and immorality. Human behavior, according to this theory, is influenced by our personal judgment of whether an action aligns with our moral beliefs and whether the potential reward for violating those beliefs outweighs our internal resistance.

In the context of television series, social cognitive theory suggests that viewers are more likely to imitate behaviors that are rewarded when displayed by likable characters, while they are discouraged from mimicking actions that are punished, demonstrating how media can shape behavior through modeled consequences.

Nevertheless, in many television shows, main characters often avoid facing the long-term consequences of their reckless or harmful actions. This lack of realistic repercussions can weaken the intended message of punishment, ultimately encouraging viewers to imitate those risky behaviors.

2.3. Empirical study

2.3.1 The relationship between Social media usage and Anxiety Disorder

These two concepts are closely connected. Compared to other mental health conditions like depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety disorders are often overlooked. However, awareness of anxiety has been growing, especially as its prevalence has increased in recent years. This upward trend appears to coincide with the surge in social media usage. One manifestation of modern anxiety is nomophobia (no-mobile-phone-phobia) the fear or distress experienced when someone is without their mobile phone or unable to access its functions⁴¹. A major contributor to this dependency is the phone's role in providing access to social media, which is a key factor keeping many users constantly engaged with their devices.

One of the services phones provide is social media accessibility, which is also one of the reasons most social media users are glued to their phones. One of the biggest challenges of social media is that it promotes unrealistic ideals. It can be hard to see so many images and videos portraying success, beauty, and happiness, then compare this online illusion with the failures you are perceiving in your own life. Scrolling through the filtered images can have a major impact on self-esteem.

Eventually, the pressures of social media can lead women in recovery to experience even more self-doubt and inadequacy, which can get in the way of the personal growth they are striving to achieve through an addiction recovery program. Prolonged exposure to idealized content online can lead to a high rise in the risk of depression, anxiety, and isolation, which can also have a destabilizing effect on recovery efforts.

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The shocking truth is that One of the biggest challenges of social media is that it promotes unrealistic ideals. It can be hard to see so many images and videos portraying success, beauty, and happiness, then compare this online illusion with the failures you are perceiving in your own life. Scrolling through the filtered images can have a significant impact on self-esteem.

The shocking truth is that mental health concerns have increased since the release of smartphones, especially among children and young adults. The extent of these negative mental health effects is still unknown in terms of how people will be affected in the future, simply

because social media has not been existing long enough to understand the ongoing consequences. since the release of smartphones, especially among children and young adults. The extent of these negative mental health effects is still unknown in terms of how people will be affected in the future, simply because social media has not been existing long enough to understand the ongoing consequences. The rise in nomophobia as a result of social media addiction is a prime example of how social media greatly influences anxiety. Individuals who frequently use smartphones or digital devices often experience heightened anxiety when they are unable to access them. Prior studies have also established a connection between excessive social media use and increased anxiety symptoms, particularly among young people. Extensive engagement with social media has been associated with a range of adverse mental health outcomes in youth, such as elevated levels of anxiety and depression, sleep problems, feelings of isolation, self-injurious behavior, and even suicidal ideation⁴².

Additionally, recent research investigating the effects of negative encounters with online shopping applications found that these unpleasant experiences and resulting frustrations can lead to increased anxiety among consumers.

Furthermore, a recent study examining the impact of negative experiences with online shopping applications revealed that such experiences and subsequent disappointments can also contribute to feelings of anxiety in consumers.

2.3.2 What makes Social Media Usage cause Anxiety among youths

The excessive use of social media can rewire the brain to constantly crave instant gratification, which may result in obsessive, compulsive, and addictive tendencies. This pattern of behavior can worsen mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, ADHD, and body dysmorphic disorder. Young people who start using social media at an early age are particularly vulnerable to developing these disorders and are at greater risk of engaging in addictive behaviors later in life.

It is crucial for parents and caregivers of children and teenagers to be vigilant for signs of these mental health conditions. They should also monitor if their child is spending excessive time on screens or starts being dishonest about their online activities.

It is unsurprising that social media has strongly captured the attention and engagement of Nigerian youth, a trend that became even more pronounced during the pandemic when social interactions shifted largely to online platforms. Adolescents who spend more than three hours daily on social media are at an increased risk of developing mental health challenges. Since the onset of the pandemic, there has been a noticeable rise in depression and anxiety among teenagers, often accompanied by issues such as low self-esteem, eating disorders, negative body image, and suicidal ideation.

Social media platforms are intentionally engineered to capture our attention, and teenagers are particularly vulnerable to their addictive nature. Understanding how social media affects the brain and recognizing when a teen is struggling with its impact is essential. When the brain becomes accustomed to the dopamine surges triggered by online interactions, resisting the urge to use social media becomes increasingly difficult, often leading to compulsive usage patterns. This strong pull toward social media stems from our innate human drive to seek connection and

social engagement. For millions of years, our survival has depended on social connection. Living in groups offered protection from threats, improved resource sharing, and supported reproductive bonding. To reinforce this behavior, our brains release dopamine when we form social bonds, encouraging repeated connection. However, modern social media platforms have exploited this natural reward system, turning social interaction into a kind of digital drug, making us increasingly susceptible to compulsive overuse.

These platforms can flood the brain's reward system with intense surges of dopamine, similar to the effects produced by substances like heroin, methamphetamine, or alcohol. They do this by amplifying the pleasurable aspects of human connection that we're naturally drawn to. In addition, the element of novelty plays a significant role; dopamine is released when our brain's curiosity and exploration systems detect something new and potentially rewarding. On top of that, artificial intelligence algorithms track our previous preferences and continuously present slightly varied content to maintain our interest, creating a cycle that is hard to break.

Moreover, the human brain is not built to handle the constant barrage of comparisons that the digital world imposes. Faced with an endless stream of seemingly flawless individuals, many of whom are carefully curated or filtered representations, we may begin to feel inadequate. Over time, this relentless pressure can lead to feelings of defeat and hopelessness, ultimately resulting in depression. Neuroscientists refer to this psychological state as learned helplessness.

Dopamine, the primary neurotransmitter linked to addiction, is released by specific neural pathways in the brain when we experience something rewarding, such as securing food, shelter, clothing, or a potential mate. Evolution has wired our brains to associate these experiences with pleasure because they enhance our chances of survival and reproduction. However, the era of primitive survival has long passed. In Dopamine Nation, it is argued that modern life, with its

unprecedented levels of comfort and abundance, has made us increasingly susceptible to dopamine-driven addictions. Today, the most common and often unnoticed addictive stimuli are the internet and social media platforms. After engaging with these digital experiences, the brain enters a dopamine-deficient state, struggling to recalibrate after the unnaturally intense dopamine surge. This explains why using social media can feel pleasurable in the moment, but leaves many feeling depleted or low immediately afterward.

2.3.3 The level to which Social Media usage causes Anxiety

The following are the extent on which social media causes Anxiety;

- **Fear of missing out (FOMO):** Seeing others share their accomplishments or memorable experiences online can naturally lead to a sense of missing out. This fear of being left behind, often referred to as FOMO (fear of missing out), can provoke anxiety and may drive individuals to increase their own activity on social media in an attempt to keep up.
- **Comparison and self-esteem:** Constantly browsing through curated snapshots of other people's lives can encourage unhealthy comparisons. Being exposed primarily to their achievements and joyful moments may lead you to feel inadequate by comparison, which can lower self-esteem and heighten feelings of anxiety.
- **Pressure to present a perfect image:** Many individuals present only the most polished and positive aspects of their lives on social media. The constant pressure to create idealized content in order to attract likes and approval from others can contribute to increased levels of stress and anxiety.
- **Overuse and time consumption:** Social media platforms are intentionally built to encourage habitual use, which can easily lead to overconsumption. Excessive time spent

scrolling can intensify feelings of anxiety, particularly when it begins to disrupt daily routines and responsibilities⁴³.

2.3.4. How Social Media usage can cause Anxiety disorders

There are some usage of social media that is causative to anxiety among youths and these are;

- **Unrealistic Expectations:** believing that one must present a perfect online image can create fear and pressure to adapt.
- **Fear of Online judgement:** worrying about being judged, criticized, or ridiculed online can lead to anxiety and self-censorship.
- **Information overload:** feeling dazed by the constant stream of information on Social Media can lead to anxiety.

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Chapter Three

3.0 Research Methodology.

This chapter gives an outline of research methods that were followed in the study and it provides information on the participants, the sample size and techniques, data analysis, research designs, method of data collection, population.

3.1. Research Design

The research design selected for this study is a Mixed Method Research Design which is also a Descriptive Research Design. Descriptive research design is a method that aims to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon by collecting and analysing data through various means like survey, observations or case studies, without manipulating variables or establishing cause and effect relationships.

3.2 Population of the Study

In a study, the population refers to the entire group of individuals, objects, or events that researchers are interested in, or that the study aims to generalize findings to. It's the broader set from which a sample might be drawn. The estimated population of Ibadan North Local Government in 2025 is 462,420.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

Samples will be chosen by using taro Yamane formula, The Taro Yamane formula, used for determining sample size in research, is: $n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$, where 'n' is the required sample size, 'N' is the total population size, and 'e' is the margin of error or desired level of precision.

The sampling technique of this study is the simple random sampling under the Probability sampling techniques, probability sampling means that every member of the target population has a known chance of being included in the sample, while the simple random sampling, every

member of the population has an equal chance of being selected.

Sample was derived by $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$

$n = 462,420 / (1 + 462,420(0.05)^2)$

$n = 462,420 / (1 + 462,420 * 0.0025)$

$n = 462,420 / (1 + 1,156)$

$n = 462,420 / 1,157$

$n = 400$. This 400 respondents will be youths.

3.4 Description of the Research Instruments

The research instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered through an online google survey platform. The link was generated and sent out to youths to fill in through their social media (whatsapp) platforms.

3.5 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity in an instrument refers to the degree to which it accurately measures what it is intended to measure. In simpler terms, it's about whether an instrument is measuring the right thing and whether it's doing so effectively. The online questionnaire is validable because it is used to collect data from a large number of people in a short period of time and it was complete. The online questionnaire is a valid instrument because it accurately reflects the concept or variable it's designed to assess.

3.6 Reliability of Research Instrument

Instrument reliability refers to the extent to which an instrument regularly measures what it is intended to measure, providing stable and dependable results. It's a decisive aspect of research, ensuring that the results are consistent and reliable, not due to random error or chance. Reliability can be measured using various methods, including test-retest, equivalent

forms, and consistency. The online questionnaire is reliable because it provides consistent and stable results, allowing researchers to trust the findings.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

A mixed-methods approach was used in this study. These involved the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. Survey was classified under my quantitative approach and use content analysis as my qualitative approach. These methods were applied to address the various objectives of the study. Survey was used to address research objectives 1, 3, 4, in order to know the level at which social media usage causes anxiety disorder in youth in Ibadan North Local Government and to know the social media platforms that are prevalent among the youths and how the usage of social media platforms causes anxiety. Content analysis was conducted on social media platforms such as Whatsapp, X, Facebook and Instagram. The content analysis was used to address the research objectives 2, in order to identify the possible actions on social media platforms that trigger anxiety disorder among youths, content analysis was conducted on social media platforms such as Whatsapp, X, Facebook and Instagram. Data was collected between May and June 2025, from youths who were serving as NYSC Corpers in the Ibadan North local Government area. The corp members often gathered once a week at the local government headquarters in Agodi, Ibadan, for their community development service (CDS). Three of the community development service coordinators were contacted at Agodi, to arrange access to the corp members that were included in this study. Their indulgence was sought and obtained to assist in sharing the link of the survey to the various Community development service whatsapp groups. The link shared to respondents to fill is:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeSkG8hbY9dRF-MmHlligbRFNPmiverFZil1WY_8YylovD-WoQ/viewform?usp=header

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis of the quantitative data. The SPSS is a statistical software package used for analysing data and making data driven decisions. It is a widely used tool in various fields including social sciences, market research, health research and government, to analyse data and gain insights. Data obtained from the survey will be analysed to obtain descriptive statistics such as mean, mode and median and percentages especially in the aspect of Age, gender and educational attainment of the respondents. With regard to the qualitative method, content analysis was conducted, after checking for contents on various social media platforms such as whatsapp, Instagram etc, i highlighted possible areas where anxiety disorder are triggered due to social media usage.

Chapter Four

4.0 Results and Discussion of Findings.

This chapter deals with the summary of collected data and statistical analysis of the study using demographical data analysis for clarity and easy understanding. A survey link was sent to 400 youths in Ibadan North Local Government online to fill the questionnaires, all links that were sent to 400 people online was filled representing 100% response rate. Data collected with online questionnaires were presented and analysed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and data obtained from the survey will be analysed to obtain descriptive statistics.

4.1 Demographic Data analysis

This is the data information about the ages, gender, educational background and socio-economic status of the respondents who are youths.

Table 1. Age of Respondents

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage
18-20	131	32.8%
21-25	238	59.5%
26-30	31	7.7%
Total	400	100%

Gender of Respondents

Sex	Number of respondents	Percentage
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Male	174	43.3%
Female	226	56.7%
Total	400	100%

The table above

shows the age bracket of the respondents used. Age 18-20 were 131 representing 32.8%, 21-25 were 238 representing 59.5% and 26-30 were 31 representing 7.7%.

Also the table above shows, 174 respondents were males representing 43.3% and 226 were female respondents representing 56.7%.

4.2 Presentation of Data

Table 2. Do you use social media?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
YES	400	100%
NO	0	0%
Total	400	100%

From the table above, it shows that 100% respondents use social media.

Table 3. What social media do you use?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
Instagram	60	16%
WhatsApp	150	41%
Snapchat	84	22%
X	56	14%
Facebook	50	7%
Total	400	100%

This table shows that people using Instagram are 60 measuring 16%, while those using WhatsApp are 150 measuring 41%, 22% of respondents use Snapchat, while 14% use X, 7% use Facebook.

Table 4. How much time do you spend on social media?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
10mins	62	16%
15mins	110	27%
30mins	103	26%
1hr	75	18%
2hrs	31	8%
3hrs	19	5%
Total	400	100%

This table shows that people who spend 10mins on social media are 62 which measures 16%, while those who spend 15mins on social media are 110 respondents which measures 27%, those who spend 30mins on social media are 103 respondents which measures 26%, those Who spend 1hr on social media are 75 respondents and measures 18%, those who spend 2hrs on social media are 31 and measures 8%, those who spend 3hrs on social media are 19 respondents measuring 5%.

Table 5. When do you use social media?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
Every time	123	35%
Weekly	64	13%
Monthly	18	4%
Daily	186	44%
Only on specific month	9	4%
Only on specific days	0	0%
Total	400	100%

35% of respondents use social media every time, 13% use social media weekly, 44% use social media daily, 4% of respondent use it monthly, 4% also use it on specific days.

Table 6. where do you use social media?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
At home	120	28%
At School	170	40%
At Office	30	10%
Anywhere	80	22%
Total	400	100%

The table shows that people who use social media at home measures 28%, respondents who use social media at work measure 10%, respondents who use social media in school are 40%, respondents who use it everywhere measure 22%.

Table 7. Do you feel uneasy when you can not access your social media account?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
YES	230	63.33%
NO	170	36.67%
Total	400	100%

These table shows that 63% of respondents feel uneasy when they can't access their social media account, and 36.67% of respondents don't feel uneasy when they can't access their social media account.

Table 8. Have you gone a day without Social media?

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	120	30%
No	280	70%
Total	400	100%

These table shows that 30% of respondents can go a day without social media and 70% can't go a day without social media.

Table 9. Do you suffer from Anxiety Disorder?

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	206	56.67%
No	194	43.33%
Total	400	100%

This table shows 56.67% respondents suffer from anxiety disorder, while 43.33% don't suffer from anxiety disorder.

Table 10. Do you have trouble sleeping or concentrating cause of your anxiety issues?

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	206	56.67%
No	194	43.33%
Total	400	100%

56.67% of respondents have trouble sleeping and concentrating due to anxiety issues, 43% of them don't have issues sleeping and concentrating despite having the anxiety issues.

Table 11. Do you avoid certain situations or activities due to anxiety disorder?

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
No	140	40%
Yes	260	60%
Total	400	100%

40% of respondents don't avoid certain situations due to having anxiety disorder, while 60% do avoid certain situations due to having anxiety disorder.

Table 12. Does your use of social media contribute to your anxiety disorder?

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	230	73.33%
No	170	26.67%
Total	400	100%

This table shows that 73% of respondent think their usage of social media contributes to their anxiety disorder, 26.67% claim that their social media usage doesn't contribute to their anxiety disorder.

Table 13. What causes to you develop anxiety from using social media?

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Fear of missing out	200	50%
Cyber-bullying	45	11.25%
Body shaming	31	7.75%
Dislikes	34	8.50%
Negative comments	90	22.50%
Total	400	100%

This table shows that people who develop Anxiety from using social media by feeling left out, measure 50%, those that feel cyber bullying is a major fear factor that grip them from using social media, measures 11.25%, negative comments measures 90%, dislikes measures 8.50%, Anxiety gotten from using social media due to body shaming measures 7.75%.

Table 14. If you claim to use social media, have you faced any online harassment?

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	237	67%
No	163	33%
Total	400	100%

This table shows that 67% of respondents claim to have faced online harassment and 33% respondents claim to not have faced online harassment.

Table 15. Have you ever at one point look at somebody online and compare your life with them in terms of monetary aspect?

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	283	71.5%
No	117	28.5%
Total	400	100%

This table shows 71.5% compare their life with those online in terms of monetary and 28.5% don't compare their lives with people online in terms of Monetary Aspect.

Table 16. Do you feel pressured to present a perfect picture online for the likes?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	328	82%
No	72	18%
Total	400	100%

This table shows that 82% respondents feel pressured to present a perfect picture online for likes, 18% don't feel pressured.

Table 17. Is social media a way for you to cope with anxiety?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	253	73.73%
No	147	26.27%
Total	400	100%

This table shows that 73.73% of respondents agree that they use social media to cope with anxiety issues, 26.27% of respondents don't use social media to cope with anxiety disorder.

Table 18. Do you talk to friends about your anxiety issues?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	161	40.30%
No	239	59.70%
Total	400	100

This table shows that the respondents who talk to their friends about their anxiety issues are 40.3%, those who don't share their anxiety issues to their friends are 59.7%.

Table 19. who would you turn to for help against anxiety?

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
Parents	100	25%
Counsellors	122	31%
Teachers	42	9%
Friends	90	23%
online motivation speakers	46	12%

Total	400	100
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This table shows that 25% of the respondent would turn to their parents for anxiety assistance, 31% would turn to counsellors for anxiety assistance, 9% would ask from teachers, 90% would turn to friends for anxiety assistance, 46% prefer to seek anxiety assistance from online motivation speakers.

The highlights of findings of content analysis done to identify the possible actions on social media platforms that trigger anxiety disorder among youths.

According to secondary data, which is the content analysis, this secondary data is recognised as a qualitative study on how to identify the possible actions on social media platforms that causes anxiety, over some time, it was seen on various snapchat and Instagram statuses, the excessive spending of cash in which is termed as naira abuse in club houses, this can cause social media to make someone develop fear of missing out, the secondary data helps to identify two aspects in which social media content and usage cause anxiety, these are;

1. Career aspect: Career Aspect can also cause fear of missing out, which causes youths to loose focus in their academic work or official work. For instance, Celebrity works are also careers, most of them are footballers, actors, actresses, e.t.c, which most of these celebrities have social media pages to post themselves or advertise their business or careers, so they can solicit for support or to entertain fans, meaning that fans of younger age gain interest in younger celebrity. Footballer for instance we use Kylian Mbappe, a footballer who is young at age 25, who earns, a lot of talented people who are in Nigeria who have the potential to be at that level,

to earn more, and they play in Nigeria, who are older, they feel they are wasting their time, some have given up due to the fear that they can't make it.

2. LifeStyle: Lifestyle aspect can also influence fear because Social media Apps are where people post more of personal lifestyle, clubbing lifestyle, a youth struggling to get employment or struggling to make more money to fend for himself, comes online on snapchat and sees extravagant lifestyle in club, where people of his age spend dollars, bundle of naira's and he is in the same country with them wondering where they get the money from, he will fear and feel like he is missing out, this anxiety can make a youth steer away from his way of life, make him do something drastic in reality.

4.2.1 Research Questions

The Research Questions that this study focused on are listed below, and the data's have been collated on the research questions, below is a full answer to the research questions according to the findings;

i) To what level does social media usage cause anxiety disorder among youths in Ibadan North Local Government?

The level at which social media usage causes anxiety disorder among youths is very high, it is because of what they call 'Media dependency', youths often use it for entertainment, friendship, love and business. Media dependency is what makes the level of social media usage high enough to cause anxiety, it is created by the amount of time spent and when they use it, in table 4 and 5, table 4 shows that people spend various times on social media, 10mins, 15mins, 30mins, 1hr, 2hrs, 30mins time has the second highest respondent, and table 5 shows the various days that people use social media, in the result it is shown that 44% of the respondent which is the majority of this study use social media daily, and 15-30mins per day is enough to cause

anxiety disorder among user, especially when what they depend on, on social media is not in their space and reality, they begin to fear that they miss out, it affects them mentally, it can become a disorder if not treated as soon as possible.

ii) what are the actions on social media platforms that causes anxiety disorder in youths in Ibadan North Local Government, Oyo state, Nigeria?

Content viewing, friendship, business, romance, is what youths use on social media that makes them depend on it so much that they develop anxiety disorder, the more they keep using social media without facing reality, they develop fear of not making it in life, fear of being lonely, which can have a devastating effect on a youth.

And in this study, table 13 shows the various causes of what makes youths develop Anxiety, respondents have responded, majority of them claim to say that they have developed anxiety through the feeling of the fact that they are lacking behind and they are missing out when they see their age mate posting luxurious life on social media.

iii) which social media platforms is prevalent among youths in Ibadan North Local Government?

In table 3, various social media platforms was highlighted in table 3, for youths to pick the one they are familiar with, in this study, Whatsapp is the most prevalent social media app among youths in this study in Ibadan north Local Government.

iv) How can the usage of social media lead to youth's anxiety disorder?

The content on social media and also being a social media influencer or a celebrity who has various Instagram pages can bring about anxiety disorder, people tend to throw insult on personality when they don't do what they like or post content that's not suited for them, people also tend to just harass people for any slight mistake on internet, online harassment of different type like Beauty shaming, body shaming, wealth oppression, insults.

In this study, Table 14, majority of respondents face online harassment which can give them anxiety that's derived from insults seen online. Also in table 16, It shows that the pressure to post a perfect picture to meet demands of online fans also shows how the usage of social media app can cause anxiety and majority of respondents feel the pressure and when they done meet up with expectations, they fear they are missing out cause their colleagues are being liked and validated on social media.

4.2.2 Hypothesis

There is no significant influence of social media usage on anxiety disorder among youths in Ibadan North Local Government.

4.3 Discussion of findings

This study was conducted in Ibadan North Local Government in Ibadan, Oyo State, and it sought to address the influence of social media on anxiety disorder on youths, it was addressed towards 400 youths, 32.8% were from the ages 18-20, 59.5% were from the ages of 21-25, 7.7% were from the ages of 26-30. Out of this 400 youths, 43.3% were males, while 56.7% were females.

In this study, it could be seen that out of the population of the 400 youths, that 100% use social media and 19.75% don't use social media, and also 56.67% of youths suffer from anxiety and 43.33% don't suffer from anxiety.

According to the findings to the research questions, the research question 1 was to know the level of which social media usage cause anxiety disorder among youths in Ibadan North Local Government, this study has sorted it out and has determined that the level is high, and as seen in table 4 and 5 in the data presentation, table 4 shows that people spend various times on social media, 16% spend 10mins, 27% spend 15mins, 26% spend 30mins, 18% spend an 1hr, 8% spend 2hrs, 15mins have the highest respondent, 27%, 30mins time has the second highest respondent, 26%, and table 5 shows the various days that people use social media, in the result it is shown that 44% of the respondent which is the majority of this study, use social media daily and 15-30mins per day is enough to cause anxiety disorder among user, especially when what they depend on, on social media is not in their space and reality, they begin to fear that they miss out, it affects them mentally, it can become a disorder.

This study also sought the actions on social media platforms that causes anxiety disorder in youths in Ibadan North Local Government, Oyo state, Nigeria, In table 13, it was discovered that people who develop Anxiety from using social media by feeling left out, measure 50%, those that feel cyber bullying is a major fear factor that grip them from using social media, measures 11.25%, those that feel negative comments causes Anxiety disorder measures 90%, those who feel dislikes causes anxiety disorder measures 8.50%, Anxiety gotten from using social media due to body shaming measures 7.75%.

This study also sought to know which social media platforms is prevalent among youths in Ibadan North Local Government, In table 3 of data presentation, it was discovered that 41% of youths are use whatsapp more, in this study youths are more prevalent with whatsapp.

This study also shows how the usage of social media causes anxiety amongst youth, The content on social media and also being a social media influencer or a celebrity who has various Instagram pages can bring about anxiety disorder, people tend to throw insult on personality when they don't do what they like or post content that's not suited for them, people also tend to just harass people for any slight mistake on internet, online harassment of different type like Beauty shaming, body shaming, wealth oppression, insults.

67% of respondents face online harassment which can give them anxiety that's derived from insults seen online. It also shows that the pressure to post a perfect picture to meet demands of online fans also shows how the usage of social media app can cause anxiety and 82% of respondents feel the pressure and when they don't meet up with expectations, they fear they are missing out cause their colleagues are being liked and validated on social media.

Chapter Five

5.0

Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study was addressed towards 400 youths, and the study was conducted in Ibadan North Local Government in Ibadan, Oyo State, and it sought to address the influence of social media on anxiety disorder on youths 32.8% were from the ages 18-20, 59.5% were from the ages of 21-25, 7.7% were from the ages of 26-30. Out of this 400 youths, 43.3% were males, while 56.7% were females.

In this study, it could be seen that out of the population of the 400 youths, that 100% use social media and 19.75% don't use social media, and also 56.67% of youths suffer from anxiety disorder and 43.33% don't suffer from anxiety disorder.

According to table 10 and table 11, it can be seen that the anxiety is not more normal, it has become a disorder because 56% of respondents have trouble concentrating due to anxiety and 60% of respondent avoid activities due to anxiety.

According to the findings, it shows that people spend various times on social media, 16% spend 10mins, 27% spend 15mins, 26% spend 30mins, 18% spend an 1hr, 8% spend 2hrs, 15mins have the highest respondent, 27%, 30mins time has the second highest respondent, 26%, and the findings also show that 44% of the respondent use social media daily and 15-30mins per day is enough to cause anxiety disorder among user, especially when what they depend on, on social media is not in their space and reality, they begin to fear that they miss out, it affects them mentally, it can become a disorder.

This study also sought the actions on social media platforms that causes anxiety disorder among youths in Ibadan North Local Government, it was discovered that people who develop Anxiety from using social media by feeling left out, measure 50%, those that feel cyber bullying is a major fear factor that grip them from using social media, measures 11.25%,

those that feel negative comments causes Anxiety disorder measures 90%, those who feel dislikes causes anxiety disorder measures 8.50%, Anxiety gotten from using social media due to body shaming measures 7.75%.

This study also sought to know which social media platforms is prevalent among youths in Ibadan North Local Government, It was discovered that 41% of youths use whatsapp more, in this study youths are more prevalent with whatsapp.

This study also shows how the usage of social media causes anxiety amongst youth, The content on social media and also being a social media influencer or a celebrity who has various Instagram pages can bring about anxiety disorder, people tend to throw insult on personality when they don't do what they like or post content that's not suited for them, people also tend to just harass people for any slight mistake on internet, online harassment of different type like Beauty shaming, body shaming, wealth oppression, insults. 67% of respondents face online

harassment which can give them anxiety that's derived from insults seen online. It also shows that the pressure to post a perfect picture to meet demands of online fans also shows how the usage of social media app can cause anxiety and 82% of respondents feel the pressure and when they don't meet up with expectations, they fear they are missing out cause their colleagues are being liked and validated on social media.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings, it has been concluded that Social media has its own advantages and disadvantages, it has been noted that exposure to social media contents can trigger fear which is known as anxiety, 50% of youths experience anxiety because they are unable to meet the standards of living of other content creators.

The social media space can bring a lot of pressure and can cause lots of self-esteem due to not being able to meet up with that pressure, the pressure to be liked and validated, in this study 82% of youths feel pressured to post a picture online for likes, they will do anything for the picture to be liked, clout chasing.

People must know that social media is a fun place to be, that social media can also be used to ease depression, anxiety, most people use social media to have fun, communicate with friends, video call friends, one of the most important thing people need to know social media can bring or cause any anxiety when they can't access their friends on social media, uncontrolled engagement

in using social media that impairs the state of wellbeing the findings of this study in table 17 shows that 73.73% of this findings show that people use social media to cope with anxiety.

5.3 Recommendation

The following recommendations are made based on the problem of the study and findings;

- i. This study recommends that people must be well disciplined, matured, must be well guided before using social media, so that they are not easily influenced by what is bad on the social media space.
- ii. This study recommends that people should have a real life, social media breaks the barriers of distance and communication. Social media has come to stay, people should be happy to accept and use social media as a way of life or add it as part of their existence.
- iii. This study recommends that youths must develop strong self-esteem, ethics and moral values, so that they don't develop unnecessary fear from the social media applications when using social media.
- iv. This study recommends that people think through on their actions and thoughts on social media content, they should know what is good and bad and healthy for their minds, if

people want to watch anything scary on the social media, they should watch it in early hours.

5.4 Contribution to knowledge

This study helps people know what to search for on the social media app, it also helps people know what to avoid and what to watch because they already have a way of life.

This study also helps other respondents realise that in life, fear is normal, we should not fear our good lifestyle and that we should be contented with it and also show people that no one is missing out and we all run on a different time in life.

This study also helps people know how to care for their mental health, once they are aware of this anxiety disorder. It will also make people learn how to control the usage of their social media applications.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

The use of social media captivates behaviour and psychological patterns of a person, so researchers can also try to find out whether it is the usage of media or the obsessive usage on the use of social media that makes the health status of the mind of people especially youth unstable.

Limitations of the study

The difficulties faced in this study are;

- i. Respondents were hard to find in this study
- ii. Data was hard to collect because of cyber security, respondents didn't want to click the link because of fear of personal data being leaked.

Acronyms

A.D.H.D - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

A.S.D - Autism Spectrum Disorder.

U.G.T - Uses and gratification theory.

O.C.D - Obsessive-compulsive disorder.

A.P.A - American Psychiatric Association.

S.I.T- Socially interactive technologies.

M.O.S- Metal–Oxide–Semiconductor.

A.C.E- Adverse childhood Experiences.

W.H.O- World Health Organisation.

S.U.D- Substance use disorder.

P.T.S.D- Post-traumatic stress disorder.

A.L.S- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis

D.S.M- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

B.B.S- Bulletin board system.

S.C.T- Social cognitive theory.

I.C.D- International Classification of Diseases.

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Appendix I

Lead City University, Ibadan

Faculty of communication and Information Science Department

of Mass Communication and Media Technology.

Questionnaire.

Dear respondents,

I am inviting you to engage in this research by completing the following survey, the aim is to find out the Influence of Social Media usage on Anxiety disorder amongst youth in Ibadan North Local Government. The form needs less than 15 minutes to complete, I assure you that information gotten will be used only for academic purposes. Filling this questionnaire will help me in completing my research and make the understanding of this research focus easy.

Name: Olomola Adeolu

Level: M.Sc, Mass Communication and Media Technology.

Please fill appropriately;

1. What is your age?

☐ 18-20

☐ 21-25

☐ 26-30

2. What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

3. Do you use social media?

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. What type of social media do you use?

☐ Instagram

☐ whatsapp

☐ 2go

☐ Snapchat

☐ X

☐ Facebook

☐ Eskimi

☐ Thread

5. How many hours do you spend on social media?

☐ 30mins

☐ 1hr

☐ 2hrs

☐ 3hrs

☐ 15mins

☐ 5hrs

☐ 10mins

6. When do you use social media?

☐ Everytime

☐ weekly

☐ Daily

☐ only on specific month

☐ only on specific days

☐ only on specific time

7. Where do you use social media?

☐ At home

☐ At work

☐ At school

☐ Everywhere

8. Do you feel unease when you can't access your social media account?

☐ No

☐ Yes

9. Have you gone a day without social media?

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. Do you feel you're missing out if you don't use social media for a day?

☐ No

☐ Yes

11. Do you suffer from anxiety disorder?

☐ Yes

☐ No

12. Do you have trouble sleeping or concentrating cause of your anxiety issues?

☐ Yes

☐ No

13. Do you avoid certain situations or activities due to anxiety?

☐ No

☐ Yes

14. Do you think your use of social media contributes to your anxiety?

☐ Yes

☐ No

15. What causes to you develop anxiety from using social media?

☐ Cyber-bullying

☐ Body shaming

☐ Dislikes

☐ negative comment

☐ oppression(material things)

16. If you claim to use social media, Have you faced any online harassment?

☐ Yes

☐ No

17. Have you ever looked at somebody online and compare your life with them, in terms of financial aspect?

☐ Yes

☐ No

18. Do you feel pressured to present a perfect picture online for the likes?

☐ Yes

☐ No

19. Is social media a way for you to cope with Anxiety?

☐ No

☐ Yes

20. Do you talk to friends about Anxiety issues?

☐ Yes

☐ No

21. Who would you turn for help against anxiety?

☐ parents

☐ teachers

() friends

() Online advisers.

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

The University Compliance Certification

This is to certify that this thesis by Adeolu OLOMOLA with matric NO: Lcu/Pg/005489 in the Department of Mass Communication and Media Technology, Faculty of communication and information science, Lead City University, Ibadan is in full compliance with the approved university format and style.

Head of Department

Dr. Yemi Oginni

Date

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