

## THE HIDDEN PRESSURE BEHIND PERFECT SOCIAL MEDIA LIVES

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### **Abstract**

*This article discusses the concept of the “perfect life” created on social networks and its impact on the worldview of young people. Nowadays, many young people compare their lives, opportunities and lifestyle with the lives portrayed on social media. Bloggers, famous people and content creators often share the best moments of their lives, their achievements and successes with the public. However, the difficulties, hard work and problems behind these successes are rarely revealed.*

*During the study, the views of 10 participants were examined and their responses were analysed based on percentage values. The results showed that the lives presented on social networks do not always accurately reflect real life. This article highlights the importance of using social media wisely and critically evaluating the information found online.*

### **Keywords:**

*Social media, idealized lifestyle, adolescents, psychological pressure, social comparison, self-esteem, mental health, digital communication, online influence, youth behavior.*

### **Introduction**

Nowadays, social networks have become an integral part of people's lives. In particular, platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and YouTube have millions of users, a large proportion of whom are young people. On these platforms, users usually share the most enjoyable and successful moments of their lives. As a result, viewers only see beautiful photos, interesting videos and successful lifestyles.

However, the difficulties, stress, failures and daily problems behind these images are often hidden. This is why many young people start comparing their lives to the lives they see on social media. This comparison can lead to a loss of self-confidence, a lack of motivation and a feeling of dissatisfaction with life.

Furthermore, spending a lot of time on social media can reduce young people's interest in education, increase stress and depression, and have a negative impact on a healthy lifestyle. For this reason, this issue has become one of the most pressing topics in modern society. The purpose of this article is to identify the hidden pressure that

social networks exert on young people's minds and to study its impact on mental and physical health.

### **Methodology**

The aforementioned study was conducted to determine the impact of social networks on young people. Ten participants took part in the study. Information was collected using a questionnaire. The participants were asked seven questions about the benefits and disadvantages of social networks and their impact on daily life.

The questionnaire consisted of the following questions:

Do social networks have a strong impact on people of all ages, especially teenagers? Why?

How much pressure do social networks put on people?

What are the main negative effects of social networks?

Is the way teenagers use social media appropriate?

Is it possible to fully trust the lifestyle portrayed on social media?

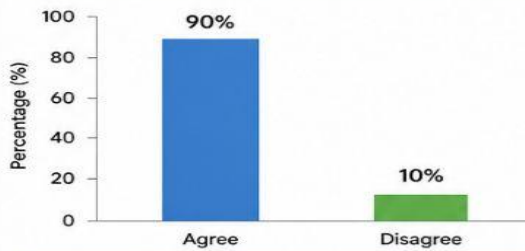
Should time limits be set for using social media?

What kind of information should be shared on social media?

The participants' answers were collected and analysed, and the results were evaluated using percentage indicators. To provide a clearer picture of the data, diagrams and graphs were used. The research results revealed that social networks have a significant impact on the mental health, self-perception and daily activities of young people.

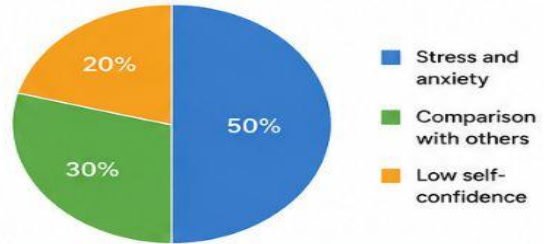
## RESULTS

### 1. Social media strongly affects young people.



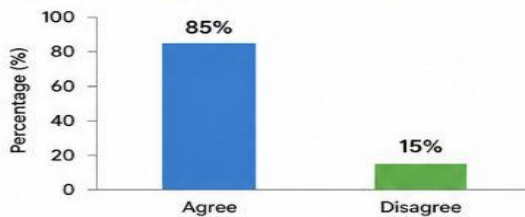
The majority of respondents (90%) believe that social media strongly affects young people.

### 4. Main negative effects of social media.



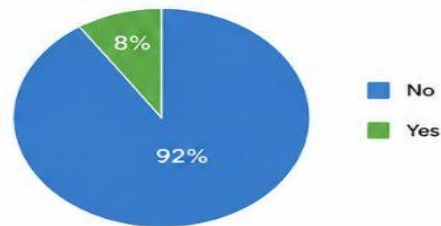
Half of the respondents (50%) stated that stress and anxiety is the main negative effect.

### 2. Social media pressure affects people emotionally.



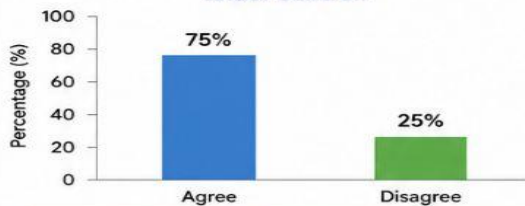
Most participants (85%) said that social media pressure affects people emotionally.

### 5. Should people trust social media life?



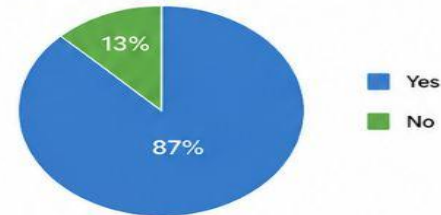
A large majority (92%) stated that people should not fully trust the life shown on social media.

### 3. Teenagers can use social media under control.



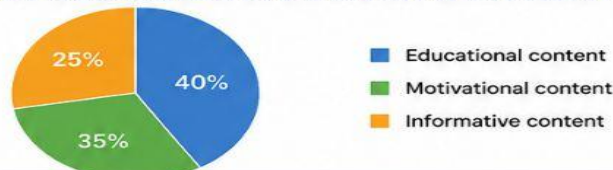
Most respondents (75%) believe that teenagers can use social media under control.

### 6. Should social media time be limited?



The majority of respondents (87%) agree that social media time should be limited.

### 7. What content should be shared more often on social media?



Educational content (40%) was chosen most often, followed by motivational (35%) and informative content (25%).

## Discussion

1. Social media is replete with images of 'perfection'. But many are unrealistic and contribute to a pervasive sense of never being good enough: not thin enough; not pretty enough; not cool enough. Try too hard and you risk being condemned for being 'attention-seeking', don't try hard enough and you're slacking. Rosalind Gill challenges polarized perspectives that see young women as either passive victims of social media or as savvy digital natives. She argues the real picture is far more ambivalent. Getting likes and followers and feeling connected to friends feels

fantastic, but posting material and worrying about 'haters' causes significant anxieties. Gill uses young women's own words to show how they feel watched all the time; worry about getting things wrong; and struggle to live up to an ideal of being 'perfect' yet at the same time 'real'. It's the wake-up call we all need. Also available as an audiobook.

2. Social media have been battered in recent years by growing concerns about disinformation, privacy breaches, and the spread of harmful speech. This article itemizes the problems surrounding social media and political authority in the form of "three painful truths"—so termed because, although there is an emerging consensus around these points, many people are reluctant to squarely acknowledge the depth of the problems and the fundamental changes that would be required to mitigate them. The first painful truth is that the social-media business is built around personal-data surveillance, with products ultimately designed to spy on us in order to push advertising in our direction. The second painful truth is that we have consented to this, but not entirely wittingly: Social media are designed as addiction machines, expressly programmed to draw upon our emotions. The third painful truth is that the attention-grabbing algorithms underlying social media also propel authoritarian practices that aim to sow confusion, ignorance, prejudice, and chaos, thereby facilitating manipulation and undermining accountability. Moreover, the fine-grained surveillance that companies perform for economic reasons is a valuable proxy for authoritarian control.

3. This article explores the cultural and psychological shift in how societies attribute value in the digital era, emphasizing the increasing preference for visibility and immediate recognition over substantive, long-term achievement. Drawing from interdisciplinary fields such as neuroeconomics, behavioural psychology, sociology, and media theory, the study investigates how cognitive biases—such as effort discounting, temporal discounting, and availability heuristics—interact with dopamine-driven reward systems to shape perception in an attention-based economy. The authors argue that social media and platform capitalism have transformed prestige into performative visibility, undermining civic virtue, intellectual effort, and institutional trust. By integrating insights from evolutionary psychology and cultural anthropology, the article provides a theoretical framework for understanding this transition and its implications for education, democracy, and individual well-being. It concludes with policy and pedagogical recommendations aimed at revaluing effort, mastery, and ethical contribution in a digitally saturated society.

### **Conclusion**

This study found that social media has a significant impact on the lives of young people. The "perfect life" displayed on social media often does not accurately reflect real life, as it mainly highlights successes, happy events and positive aspects. As a

result, some young people may compare their lives with those of others, lose self-confidence, and experience stress and depression.

The survey results showed that the majority of respondents believe that social media has a strong influence on young people and that it is necessary to set time limits on its use. Respondents also said that not all information on social networks can be trusted and that it is necessary to approach it critically.

In summary, social networks can be a valuable source of information and a means of communication, but if used incorrectly, they can have negative consequences. Therefore, users, especially young people, must use social networks sensibly, manage their time effectively and not confuse information found online with real life.

### References

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