

Introduction

- Is there an association between social media use and depression in adolescents and young adults?
- 8.1% of U.S. adults experience a depression disorder
- 72% of U.S. adults use social media in some form
- There have not been many studies on the effects that social media has on the mental health of social media users
- If more sociological causes of depression can be determined, new initiatives can be put into place to prevent and reduce depressive symptoms.

Method

Databases	Search Key Terms	Inclusion Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WorldCat • Academic Search Complete • MEDLINE • Gale Academic OneFile • PsychINFO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Social Media Use" • "Depression" • "Adolescent" • "Young Adults" • "Social Media" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles published in the past five years • Peer-Reviewed • Relevant to adolescent and young adult populations

Results

Overview of Studies

- Four studies found a positive association between social media use and depression
- Lin et al., 2016
- Woods & Scott, 2016
- Twenge, Joiner, & Rogers, 2017
- Boers et al., 2019
- One randomized controlled trial found that limiting social media use decreases depressive symptoms
- Hunt, Marx, Lipson, & Young, 2018
- One cross-sectional study found that passive social media use is associated with depressive symptoms while active social media use is not
- Escobar-Viera et al., 2018
- One cross-sectional study found no association between social media use and depression
- Banjanin et al., 2015

Highlighted Studies

- ***Randomized controlled trial conducted by Hunt, Marx, Lipson, & Young***
 - 143 participants sorted into 2 groups
 - Experimental group limited social media use to 10 minutes per application per day
 - Control group resumed normal social media use
 - Participants with high levels of depression at the baseline in the experimental group reported a 37% decrease in BDI score (a measure of depressive symptoms)
- ***Cross-sectional study conducted by Woods & Scott***
 - 467 adolescent participants completed a questionnaire to measure social media use and The Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale to measure depressive symptoms.
 - The results of the study found higher depression levels in groups with increased overall social media use (correlation coefficient = 0.11, $p < 0.01$)

Depression Score (BDI) Across Duration of Experiment

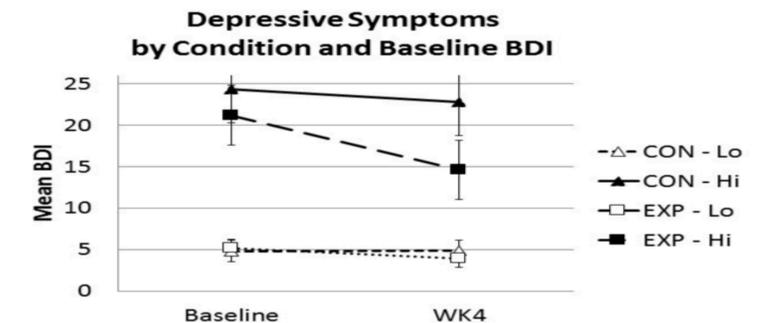


Figure 2: source: Hunt, Marx, Lipson, & Young, 2018

Conclusion

- It appears that there is an association between social media use and depression, increased social media use and increased depressive symptoms, and passive social media use and increased depressive symptoms.
- **Limitations of the review:**
 - Five of the seven studies included were cross-sectional in design
 - Cross-sectional studies are relatively cheap, quick, and easy to perform, however since the exposure and outcome data are recorded at the same time, the order of causality cannot be determined.
 - This means that it cannot be determined whether increased social media use causes depressive symptoms, or if people experiencing depressive symptoms use more social media.
 - Social media is difficult to define.
 - Are online dating websites social media? Are work-related apps like LinkedIn social media?
- Further research should be done to determine the direction of the association, as well as examining how various social media sites and various ways that users interact with these sites are associated with depressive symptoms before making recommendations or initiatives about limiting social media use.



Figure 1