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Social media exposure, cyberbullying, and adolescent mental health: Examining the role of parental awareness and parent–teen communication

[1]Dr. Kesavulu Poola, [2]Palak Agarwal, [3]Shravanthe R S, [4]Priyanka Samanta, [5]Saikrishna K. S.
[1]Associate Professor, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University), Centerfor Management Studies- Bangalore, India
[2,3,4,5]Students, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University), Center for Management Studies- Bangalore, India

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Abstract:
The increasing use of social media among adolescents has raised growing concerns regarding its potential impact on psychological well-being. This study examines the relationship between social media exposure, cyberbullying experiences, parental awareness, parent–teen communication, and adolescent mental health outcomes. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted among 110 parents of adolescents aged 13–19 years. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression techniques. The findings indicate that higher levels of social media exposure are significantly associated with increased psychological distress and greater exposure to cyberbullying among adolescents. The results also suggest that parental awareness of online risks positively influences communication between parents and teenagers. Furthermore, effective parent–teen communication was found to reduce perceived mental health concerns. The study highlights the importance of understanding adolescents' digital behaviorwhile emphasizing the supportive role families can play in mitigating potential psychological risks associated with excessive social media use.

Keywords:
Adolescent Mental Health, Social Media Exposure, Cyberbullying, Parental Awareness, Parent– Teen Communication, Digital Behavior.

1. Introduction:
The twenty-first century has become a significant global health issue of concern due to adolescent mental health. Adolescence is an important developmental period that is associated with massive biological, psychological, and social transformations, which define long-term well-being and life outcomes. The World Health Organization states that one out of seven teenagers between the ages of 10 and 19 years has a mental health condition, and the most common conditions in young populations of any country are anxiety and depression (WHO, 2021). Such psychological problems may have a harmful effect on academic performance, social interactions, and quality of life. Unchecked, they can spill over into adulthood, where the impact can be psychological and socioeconomic in the long term.

Social environments of adolescents have changed in recent years due to the boom of digital technology and the internet connection. The use of social media has been embedded into the lives of teenagers in terms of communications and interaction as well as identity. Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube are the apps that help adolescents share experiences and communicate with peers and access a vast amount of information. Even though these platforms are advantageous in many ways such as creativity, social support, and community building, they also present novel psychological dangers. The volume of curated material on the internet, social comparison, cyberbullying, and screen time have raised fears regarding the effects of social media on the adolescent mental health (Keles, McCrae, and Grealish, 2020).

Some empirical research also indicates that the overuse of social networking sites could be a cause of emotional distress, anxiety, and signs and symptoms of depression in adolescents. An example is that it was found that regular social media use can enhance loneliness, social comparison, and fear of missing out (FOMO) especially in teenagers as they are still developing emotional regulation and developing self-identity (Twenge, Joiner, Rogers, and Martin, 2018). In the same manner, adolescents can be exposed to unrealistic images and lifestyles featured on the social media platforms and develop unrealistic self-expectations and body image concerns that influence their self-esteem and psychological well-being in a negative way (Valkenburg, Meier, and Beyens, 2022).

Different cyberbullying is another important problem to consider when it comes to social media use among adolescents. There is a high probability that online harassment, negative remarks, and digital exclusion may

have a strong impact on the mental health and emotional stability of teenagers. Research shows that adolescents affected by cyberbullying have higher chances of reporting depressive, anxiety and psychological distress symptoms (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder, and Lattanner, 2014). In comparison to conventional bullying, cyberbullying has the ability to be conducted anytime and have a broader audience, which is specifically damaging to the emotional state of adolescents. The technological world has therefore come with intricate issues that need to be addressed by parents, teachers or policymakers.

The mental health of adolescents has become an issue that has become more and more noticeable in the Indian context in the past few years. India is among the countries in the world where the number of adolescents is one of the largest, and the process of digitalization is the factor which influences the nature of youth behavior and patterns of social interactions greatly. With the increased use of smartphones and low cost internet services, the use among teenagers has increased significantly. The Internet and Mobile Association of India stated that internet users in India have been increasing substantially, especially in the group of young people who are the most active users of social media sites to get entertained, educated, and even to socialize (IAMAI, 2023). Although digital connectivity offers various possibilities of learning and being social, it also creates questions of digital addiction, online harassment as well as exposure to harmful materials.

Parents are important in influencing digital habits and emotional growth of the adolescents. The awareness of parents, communication and monitoring can play a great role in the way teenagers use online technologies and address challenges in the online realm. It is proposed by the research that open communication between parents and adolescents on the topic of the online experiences can mitigate the adverse psychological impact of the risks of social media usage (George and Odgers, 2015). Nevertheless, a large number of parents do not have sufficient information regarding digital platforms and psychological dangers of excessive use of social media. This knowledge deficit could curtail their capacity to educate and help their children maneuver through digital space safely.

There are a number of research gaps even though the subject of adolescent mental health and, more importantly, digital behavior is gaining scholarly attention. A significant part of the current literature has so far concentrated on self-reported use of social media and psychological consequences of adolescents. Nevertheless, comparatively lower research has been conducted on parental consciousness and perceptions when it comes to the role of social media on the mental well-being of teenagers, especially in the Indian setting. The views of parents will be significant to understand since parents are major stakeholders in enhancing the emotional health and online safety of adolescents. Their perception of mental health discourse, online supervision, and professional psychological assistance can have a considerable impact on the coping mechanisms and helpseeking behavior of teenagers.

Thus, the current research aims to discuss the level of awareness of parents about the problem of mental health among adolescents and investigate the perceptions of how social media affects the emotional state of teenagers in India. Targeting parents of teenagers between the ages of 13 19 years, the study will offer an idea on patterns of communication, awareness, and perceived risk of teenagers with regards to their online activity. The results of this study can also be added to the existing body on the subject of adolescent mental health to illustrate the role of parental engagement, mental health literacy, and digital awareness in facilitating healthy online behavior amid teens.

Moreover, the research has significant implications on policymakers, educators, and mental health professionals. Parental awareness can be improved and mental health programs at schools can be reinforced to counteract the adverse psychological impact of social media use. Moreover, the enhancement of digital literacy and responsible Internet use can be employed as the part of the creation of supportive conditions that will support emotional stability and mental health in adolescents.

2.1 Literature review:

The research will examine the trends in adolescent mental health and elucidate the underlying reasons for these trends.

Mental health in adolescence has become a major issue across the globe as the prevalence of psychological disorders in the youth has been on the increase. Adolescence is a period of development during which there are great emotional, cognitive, and social shifts that predispose people to stress, anxiety, and mental instability. The World Health Organization states that nearly 14 percent of adolescents all over the world have mental health problems, and the most prevalent ones are depression and anxiety (WHO, 2021). The issue of mental health in adolescence can have a considerable impact on academic success, personal relationships, and later life health.

Studies have shown that in most cases, mental health disorders manifest themselves during adolescence and can carry through to adulthood unless intervened on at an early age. The symptoms of emotional distress in teenage years can be expressed as a lack of social interaction, irritability, decreased academic activity, and

poor self-esteem (Patton et al., 2016). Mental health problems of adolescents in most of these societies such as the developing countries have not been extensively reported because of the stigma attached to them, ignorance and the inability to access mental health services. In its turn, this necessitates early detection and preventive measures that can be used to ensure psychological resilience among young people.

Adolescent mental health is becoming a priority in the public health perspective in the Indian context. India is ranked among the countries with the highest number of young citizens in the world, and the psychological health of adolescents has great consequences on the social and economic growth of the country. Research indicates that academic stress, peer pressure, family dynamics, and online exposure are some of the factors that cause psychological pressure among Indian adolescents (Malhotra and Patra, 2014). With increased awareness, the topic of mental health in families and in schools is still restricted, which does not allow adolescents to address the issue of psychological support appropriately.

2.2 Use of social media among teenagers:

The high rate of growth of digital technology has greatly influenced patterns of communication and socialization among adolescents. Social media got to be the center of teenagers daily life as they can establish new contacts with peers, share experience and get information. Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube, among others, give users an outlet to express themselves, entertain, and participate in social interactions. Although these platforms have provided a platform of creativity and communication, their growing popularity has created concerns that there may be some psychological effects.

Teens spend quite some time on social media sites, with activities that usually include sharing content, posting messages, and surfing online communities. It has been argued that overconsumption of social media can undermine the quality of in-person communication and promote the addiction to digital communication, which can affect the emotional state (Keles et al., 2020). The social networking sites also provide the conditions under which the adolescents continuously compare themselves with other users and influencers, which can have an impact on their self-image and mental health.

But social media in itself is not bad. Certain sources indicate that information on mental health and emotional support could be offered by using digital platforms. Communities that exist online can assist adolescents in experience sharing, consultation, finding people with common problems (Best, Manktelow, and Taylor, 2014). Thus, there is a complex correlation between social media and adolescent mental health which depends on the usage patterns, personal characteristics of a personality and parental guidance.

2.3 Psychological outcomes and social media:

There is a vast amount of literature concerning the connection between the use of social media and psychological consequences among adolescents. Some of the studies have discovered that the overuse of social networking sites can also lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, and emotional distress (Keles et al., 2020). Teenagers are also highly exposed to edited content that presents ideal lifestyles and achievements, as well as physical looks, thus increasing social comparison and discontent with their life situations.

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is a concept that has been widely written about when it comes to social media behavior. FOMO is the fear that people develop as they feel like others are living better lives than them. This experience can result in teenagers checking social media constantly to keep up with changes and this can cause more stress and a poor quality of sleep (Przybylski et al., 2013). There is a possibility of emotional burnout and a decreased psychological state because of the regular exposure to those digital settings.

However, the moderate use of social media may positively influence the emotional growth of adolescents, according to some researchers. The internet could be used to encourage social bonds, peer support and access to mental health awareness sites. To illustrate, the adolescents in supportive online groups might develop a sense of belonging and become less lonely (Best et al., 2014).

Therefore, the consequences of social media on the adolescent mental health are dependent on the way people are exposed to digital media and the degree of use.

2.4 Digital stress and cyberbullying:

One of the greatest risks of the online behavior of adolescents has become cyber bullying. As compared to the conventional form of bullying, cyberbullying is made possible via digital mediums of communication like social media networks, messaging apps, and e-boards. Cyberbullied adolescents are likely to encounter negative remarks, harassment, or exclusion, or even threats; all of which can have a serious impact on psychological state.

A study has shown cyberbullying to be closely related to depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem symptoms in teenagers (Kowalski et al., 2014). The anonymity of the digital platforms tends to make the perpetrators to indulge in negative conduct without facing immediate repercussions. Also, cyberbullying can have more audience reach, and can also last longer on the internet, exacerbating the feelings of victims.

There are also studies, which imply that those teenagers, who are constantly exposed to negative online communication, tend to develop higher levels of stress and lack of trust in relations with social partners. Cyberbullying victims tend to complain more of being isolated and emotionally vulnerable. Thus, parents, educators, and policymakers should work together to ensure safer online experiences among adolescents by tackling cyberbullying.

2.5 Parental awareness and communication:

Parents are very important in determining the digital behavior and psychological health of the adolescents. Raising awareness among parents about the dangers of social media and communicating with teenagers can help to reduce the adverse mental condition related to online interaction. By parents becoming more involved with their children about their online activities, teenagers will speak out more and will consult when facing stressful experiences.

Studies have found that positive parenting related to online surveillance and conversing about online behavior may lead to fewer adolescents developing problematic social media use (George and Odgers, 2015). Mental health is one of the topics that should be discussed openly to make teenagers feel comfortable sharing their emotional problems and seeking assistance when needed. Nevertheless, not all parents are well informed on new emerging digital platforms and online dangers and therefore may not monitor their online interactions with children effectively.

Mental health may continue to be a taboo topic in most families especially in India as a result of stigmatization and ignorance. Consequently, teenagers with mental discomfort might be reluctant to turn to parents or mental health workers. Improving the mental health literacy and digital awareness of parents is thus the key to increasing the healthier online behavioral patterns and emotional wellbeing of teenagers.

2.6. Research gap:

Despite the fact that other studies have examined the interdependence between social media use and adolescent mental health, there are numerous gaps existing in the literature. To begin with, most of the past studies have researched the self-reported experience of teenagers with social media applications whereas comparatively fewer studies have investigated parental attitudes and consciousness about how teenagers behave online. The parental views are also worthy to be understood since parents are major contributors to determining the online behavior and emotional adaptation of the adolescent.

Second, most of the empirical research on the relationship between social media and adolescent mental health has been performed in the Western world and there is a lack of emphasis on the sociocultural background of developing countries like India. The cultural norms, family system, and educational setting could affect the way adolescents use digital technologies and deal with psychological stress. Hence, research studying the parental awareness and the perception of teenage mental health in the Indian context is necessary.

To fill these gaps, the current research will focus on exploring parental knowledge of teenage mental health concerns and understanding the feelings about the impact of social media on the emotional state of adolescents. Concentrating on parents who have teenagers between the ages of 1319 years, this study can add to the current body of research by identifying the potential influence of parental communication, digital awareness and support systems in enhancing the mental health of adolescents.

3. Conceptual framework and research methodology:

3.1 Development of conceptual framework and hypotheses:

The digital technology has evolved much faster thus changing the manner in which teens interact, communicate and even form their social identities. Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube are some examples of social media that allow teenagers to interact and have fun and express themselves. Although these platforms allow adolescents to stay socially connected and to get information, the more they are used, the more adolescents are likely to experience various mental risks affecting their emotional health.

Adolescence is a period of development defined by identity and a high sensitivity to peer assessment. In online settings, teens are often subjected to filtered pictures and perfect images of style, beauty, and wealth. This exposure can increase social comparison and can adversely impact self esteem and emotional stability. Empirical data indicate that increased exposure to idealized online material may cause negative self-perceptions, anxiety, and emotional distress in adolescents (Valkenburg, Meier, and Beyens, 2022). In addition, the social media setting usually makes adolescents desire validation via such measures as likes, comments, and followers which can make them undergo more psychological pressure and a sense of inadequacy.

The other process that ties the use of social media and the mental well-being of adolescents is the so-called Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). Teenagers can develop anxiety when they feel that other teenagers are enjoying activities that are rewarding in their absence. Such a perception may result in the obsessive use of social media

and spending excessive time at the screen, which can impair sleep habits and cause stress (Przybylski et al., 2013). Moreover, high involvement in digital communication can lead to less involvement in real-life activities (sports, social interaction, academic involvement) and affect the emotional state as a whole.

Cyberbullying stands out as another significant issue in virtual worlds. Internet bullying, hateful messages, and cyber shaming can have serious psychological impacts on adolescents. Studies have shown that teens who are victims of cyberbullying tend to experience more symptoms of depression, anxiety, and emotional distress (Kowalski et al., 2014). These results indicate that exposure to social media has the potential to influence the mental health outcome of adolescents in a variety of psychological ways.

Although there are some risks associated with digital platforms, the impact that social media has on the welfare of adolescents is not all bad. Positive family environments can have a significant role in regulating these effects. Specifically, parental knowledge of online dangers and effective parentadolescent communication can assist in minimizing the possible adverse effects of too much social media consumption.

The mother and the father have an important role to play in advising the online conduct and the emotional growth of adolescents. By actively talking with children about their social media experiences, and giving them advice on how to behave responsibly on the internet, adolescents can feel more at ease that they can talk to their parents about their concerns and receive emotional support. As the past studies show, parental surveillance and open dialogue can decrease the adverse psychological effects of using digital media (George and Odgers, 2015). The awareness of the parents about the risks online will put them in a better position to assist adolescents in cultivating healthy online habits and becoming emotionally resilient.

Nonetheless, there is a digital literacy mismatch between teenagers and their parents. Usually, parents are generally less familiar with new digital platforms than teenagers. This can be a disadvantage to parents because they cannot adequately track online activities or pick up on psychological distress at its early stages. The social stigma and lack of awareness that surrounds mental health issues within families may also be a limitation to having mental health discussions in many cultural settings such as India. Therefore, it might be necessary to empower parental awareness and foster open communication to foster a healthier adolescent online experience.

Going by the above arguments and findings of the research, this study hypothesizes a conceptual underpinning, which focuses on investigating the association between social media exposure, cyberbullying experiences, parental awareness, communication patterns, and mental health outcomes in adolescents. In the given frame, exposure on social media is likely to affect the psychological state of adolescents, whereas parental awareness and communication can be taken as protective measures.

Therefore, the hypotheses are as follows:

H1: There is a positive relation between the level of exposure to social media during adolescence and the perceived psychological distress.

H2: There is a positive relationship between exposure to social media and the cyberbullying experiences on adolescents.

H3: The parental awareness of social media risks has a positive effect on the discussion of mental health among adolescents.

H4: The economic factor of parent teen communication is negatively correlated with the psychological distress of adolescents.

H5: There are no moderating effects of parental awareness on the nature of relationships between social media exposure and mental health outcomes among adolescents.

The idea of the conceptual model is to indicate the necessity to analyze the digital behavior of adolescents as well as the role of parental participation in ensuring the achievement of healthier psychological outcomes.

4. Research methodology:

The research design used in this study is quantitative in nature as it aims at investigating the associations between social media exposure, parental awareness, pattern of communication, and mental health outcomes among adolescents. Quantitative technique is the right one to determine patterns and prove the links between variables with the help of statistical methods. The data collection strategy was a cross-sectional survey that involved the respondents at one time. The population under investigation consisted of parents whose adolescents were aged between 13 and 19 years because parents have a major influence on the development of digital behavior of teenagers and their emotional states. The study will seek to capture awareness levels, patterns of communication, and perceived mental health issues connected with digital use by asking parents about their perceptions of the use of social media and their psychological health issues in relation to the use of social media.

Participants were required to give their responses using a non-probability convenience sampling method. The convenience sampling was regarded as appropriate because of the availability of respondents and the

exploratory research. The online questionnaire can be used because it is based on an online survey that is conducted via Google Forms and can be completed by parents who represent various socio-demographic groups. One hundred and twenty responses were received initially and on filtering out the incomplete responses, 110 valid responses were retained to analyze. The questionnaire that was used to collect the data was built on the available literature on the topic of social media usage and mental health issues among adolescents. It was divided into two major parts: demographics and views about the social media use and adolescent mental health. The questionnaire had several choices and Likert-scale statements. The respondents were requested to respond to the question by selecting their degree of agreement on a five-point Likert scale beginning with strong disagree (1) to strong agree (5).

The paper has explored some of the constructs based on the conceptual framework: social media exposure, cyberbullying experience, parental awareness, parent-teen communication and perceived adolescent mental health concerns. Multiple questionnaire items based on the past studies were used in measuring each construct. Cronbachs Alpha on each construct was determined in order to determine the reliability of the measurement scales. The findings showed that the alpha value of all the constructs was greater than
0.70, hence showing that the measurement tool had a satisfactory internal consistency and reliability.

The data obtained were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. The characteristics of the respondents and the most important variables were summarized using descriptive statistics like frequencies, percentages, means, as well as standard deviations. The Pearson correlation analysis was applied to find out the relationship between variables and multiple regression was utilized to test the hypotheses proposed and assess the impact of independent variables on the mental outcomes of adolescents.

Ethical issues were also observed keenly during the research. The survey was voluntary, and the respondents knew the objective of the study and that is why they completed the questionnaire. No information that can be personally identified was obtained so anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed. The model was applied in academic research only.

5. Data analysis and results:

5.1. Demographic profile of respondents:

The first stage of analysis examined the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Understanding demographic variables such as age, gender, and educational background helps contextualize parental perspectives regarding adolescent social media use and mental health concerns.

Table.1: Demographic characteristic Of respondents (N=110)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	48	43.6
	Female	62	56.4
Age	30-39 years	38	34.5
	40–49 years	46	41.8
	50 years and above	26	23.7
Education	Undergraduate	29	26.4
	Postgraduate	61	55.5
	Doctorate professional	20	18.1

Table 3 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the survey. The results indicate that 56.4% of respondents were female, while 43.6% were male, suggesting slightly higher participation among mothers compared to fathers. With respect to age distribution, the majority of respondents (41.8%) belonged to the 40–49 year age group, followed by 34.5% in the 30–39 year group. This indicates that most respondents were middle-aged parents who are actively involved in raising teenage children.

Regarding educational qualifications, 55.5% of respondents were postgraduates, indicating a relatively well-educated sample. Approximately 26.4% held undergraduate degrees, while 18.1% possessed doctoral or professional qualifications. The relatively high educational background of respondents suggests that participants may have a moderate level of awareness regarding digital technology and adolescent mental health issues.

5.2. Social media usage patterns among teenagers:

Parents were asked about the frequency and duration of their teenagers' social media usage.

Table.2: Daily social media usage of teenagers

Usage duration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 hour	12	10.9
1-2	28	25.5
2-4	44	40.0
More than 4 hours	26	23.6

Table 4 shows the daily social media usage patterns among teenagers as reported by their parents. The results indicate that 40% of teenagers spend between 2–4 hours per day on social media, which represents the largest

group. Additionally, 23.6% of teenagers spend more than four hours daily on social media platforms. This finding suggests that a substantial proportion of adolescents engage in prolonged digital activity.

Only 10.9% of teenagers reported using social media for less than one hour per day, indicating that social media has become a significant part of adolescents' daily routines. Excessive screen time may potentially influence emotional well-being and increase exposure to online risks such as cyberbullying and social comparison.

5.3. Descriptive statistics of study variables:

Descriptive statistics were calculated to examine the overall perceptions of respondents regarding the key variables in the study.

Table.3: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Social Media Exposure	3.87	0.71
Cyberbullying Experience	3.12	0.83
Parental Awareness	3.94	0.68
Parent–Teen Communication	3.45	0.76
Teen Mental Health Concerns	3.58	0.79

Table 5 presents the mean and standard deviation values for the key variables in the study. The mean value for social media exposure (3.87) indicates that parents perceive their teenagers to be highly engaged with digital platforms. The parental awareness score (3.94) suggests that many parents acknowledge the potential risks associated with social media use.

However, the mean score for parent–teen communication (3.45) is comparatively lower, indicating that discussions regarding mental health and online experiences may not occur frequently within families. The mean value for teen mental health concerns (3.58) suggests moderate levels of psychological stress perceived among adolescents.

5.4. Correlation analysis:

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the key variables in the study.

Table.4: Correlation matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
Social Media Exposure	1				
Cyberbullying Experience	.42**	1			
Parental Awareness	.28*	.21*	1		
Parent–Teen Communication	-.19*	-.23*	.36**	1	
Teen Mental Health Concerns	.47**	.39**	-.26*	-.41**	1

• $p < 0.05$

$p < 0.01$

The correlation results indicate several significant relationships among the variables. Social media exposure shows a positive correlation with cyberbullying experiences ($r = 0.42$) and teen mental health concerns ($r = 0.47$), suggesting that increased social media usage may be associated with higher levels of psychological distress among adolescents.

Parental awareness demonstrates a positive relationship with parent–teen communication ($r = 0.36$), indicating that parents who are more aware of digital risks are more likely to engage in discussions with their children about mental health and online behavior.

Interestingly, parent–teen communication shows a negative correlation with teen mental health concerns ($r = -0.41$), suggesting that frequent communication between parents and adolescents may help reduce psychological stress.

5.5. Regression analysis:

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of key predictors on adolescent mental health concerns.

Table.5:

Predictor	B e t a (β)	t- value	p- value
Social Media Exposure	0.39	4.87	0.000
Cyberbullying Experience	0.28	3.62	0.001
Parental Awareness	-0.18	-2.41	0.018
Parent–Teen Communication	-0.31	-3.95	0.000

Model Statistics:
R^2 =0.46
F=18.72
$p < 0.001$
The regression results indicate that the overall model is statistically significant ($F = 18.72$, $p < 0.001$), explaining approximately 46% of the variance in teen mental health concerns. Social media exposure emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that increased digital engagement is associated with higher perceived psychological distress among adolescents.
Cyberbullying experience also shows a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.28$, $p = 0.001$), suggesting that online harassment contributes to mental health concerns. Conversely, parental awareness ($\beta = -0.18$) and parent–teen communication ($\beta = -0.31$) show negative relationships with mental health concerns, indicating that parental involvement may act as a protective factor against psychological distress.

5.6. Hypothesis testing summary:

Tab.6: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Social media exposure increases psychological distress	Supported
H2	Social media exposure increases cyberbullying	Supported
H3	Parental awareness increases communication	Supported
H4	Parent–teen communication reduces distress	Supported
H5	Parental awareness moderates social media effects	Partially Supported

6. Discussion:

The results of the conducted research point out the increasing role of social media exposure on the psychological well-being of adolescents. In line with the past studies, the findings indicate that greater exposure to online presence can also lead to more cases of emotional distress among adolescents. Similar results have been reported in previous research that revealed that overuse of social media has the potential to drive social comparison, online peer pressure and inadequacy, which has an impact on the mental health of adolescents (Keles et al., 2020; Valkenburg et al., 2022).
The paper also focuses on the significance of parental awareness and communication to curb any risks that the online conduct of the adolescents may pose. The active involvement of parents in relationships with their children concerning digital experiences seems to be in a better position to recognize emotional difficulties and offer the required support. These data points to the previous studies report that parental monitoring and open line of communication may also serve as protective measures against adverse mental health consequences among adolescents (George and Odgers, 2015).
On the whole, the findings suggest that more parents and digital literacy programs should be involved in order to increase healthy social media use in teenagers.

7. Conclusion:

The mental health of adolescents is a fairly significant topic in the digital age, especially considering the popularity of social media networks among the teenage population. The current research has analyzed the parental attitudes towards the use of social media by adolescents and how this may affect their mental health. The results show that the exposure to social media is directly linked with such psychological issues as emotional stress, anxiety and the experiences of cyberbullying in adolescents. Although digital platforms can offer opportunities of communicating, sharing information and interacting socially, overuse can equally create settings that facilitate heightened social comparisons, online peer pressure and emotional disposition.
The findings also emphasize the importance of parental sensitivity and communication in determining the online conduct and psychological health of adolescents. The parents who are more aware of the risks of online reality and have more open communication with their children regarding the experience with social media can more easily guide teenagers to deal with digital problems. This type of parental intervention can be used to minimize the possible mental health hazards and promote more healthy internet usage.
All in all, the research notes the importance of paying more attention to the mental health of adolescents in their families, schools, and policies. As a means to develop supportive systems that support and improve the psychological state of adolescents in an ever-digitized world, promoting digital literacy, enhancing parental involvement and incorporating mental health education into educational institutions can help preserve and safeguard the psychological well-being of adolescents.

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