# Examining the Impact of Social Media Consumption on Mental Health Issues among Emerging Adults: Help-Seeking Behavior

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**Abstract:** This study examined the impact of social media consumption on mental health issues among emerging adults, with implications for health-seeking behavior. The study examined the extent of social media consumption, prevalent mental health problems experienced by emerging adults who heavily use social media, and the significant association between social media consumption and specific mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness among emerging adults. The study was carried out among emerging adults between the ages of 18 and 24 who were voluntary participants. Research consent was given before being asked to participate in the study. The instrument for data collection was a modified and adapted Likert scale instrument with a Cronbach-Alfa result of.81, indicating the consistency of the instrument. Findings from the study established the regression model, which shows that "social media consumption" and "the effect of social media" have statistically significant effects on mental health issues. Higher social media consumption is associated with lower levels of mental health issues, while a greater effect of social media is associated with increased mental health issues (emotional problems and suicidal thoughts). Based on the findings, it was recommended that encouraging individuals to be mindful of their emotional responses to social media interactions could be beneficial, and additionally, mental health professionals could consider discussing social media usage patterns and their potential emotional effects during therapy sessions.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Mental Health Issues, Emerging Adults

## BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The widespread adoption of social media has become an indispensable aspect of the daily lives of a vast number of people across the globe, leading to a fundamental shift in the manner in which people establish connections, engage in communication, and disseminate information. The increasing pace of technological progress and the broad availability of smartphones and internet access have led to a significant rise in the popularity of social media platforms across different age cohorts, with a particular emphasis on emerging adults aged 18 to 25 years (Lenhart, 2015). The individuals in question, who are in the early stages of adulthood, find themselves in a crucial period of transition, whereby they must confront the many obstacles associated with this phase of life. Additionally, they are concurrently subjected to a substantial amount of social media influence (Arnett, 2000). The expanding digital environment has raised worries about the possible effects of social media usage on the mental well-being of young people (Primack, *et al*., 2017). Understanding the relationship between the utilization of social media and mental health has significant inference due to the potential wide-ranging implications of mental health problems on several aspects of individuals' lives, including their well-being, interpersonal connections, and general contentment with life (Twenge, *et al*., 2017; Ajike, *et al*., 2022).

A developmental stage known as emerging adulthood is characterized by significant life changes, including the transition from academic to professional pursuits, the creation of new social networks, and the development of personal identities (Arnett, 2000; Peters, 2012; Suleiman, 2016). During this time, social media provides emerging adults with a platform to connect with peers, access information, and express themselves (Manago, *et al*., 2014). However, while social media can be a source of social support and entertainment, it also presents potential risks. Research has suggested associations between heavy social media use and mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety, loneliness, and low self-esteem (Primack, *et al*., 2017; Vannucci & McCauley Ohannessian, 2019; Suleiman, 2016). These mental health issues can be exacerbated by exposure to cyberbullying, unrealistic social comparisons, and the constant pressure to present an idealized image of oneself online (Vujeva & Furman, 2011; Fardouly, *et al*., 2023). Recent research conducted in Nigeria examined the phenomenon of help-seeking among young individuals. The findings revealed a notable deficiency in help-seeking behavior, mostly attributed to limited information and misconceptions around mental health service utilization (Aluh, *et al*., 2019; Ajike, *et al*., 2022). Therefore, it is important to investigate the correlation between the use of social media and the resulting mental health consequences within this particular demographic. This research is essential for the purpose of developing effective mental

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health treatments and fostering a state of digital well-being.

Previous studies on social media's effects on mental health have shown contradictory results, stressing the need for more thorough examinations. Numerous extant scholarly investigations have directed their attention towards the examination of adolescents, adults, or particular mental health concerns, overlooking the distinctive encounters and obstacles encountered by developing adults (Suleiman, 2016; Primack, *et al*., 2017; Ajike, *et al*., 2022). The primary objective of this research is to address the existing knowledge gap by concentrating on the emerging adult cohort and examining the magnitude of social media engagement as well as the emotional consequences associated with its use. The use of the Likert scale in this study will allow for a comprehensive examination of the many aspects of social media participation and its possible impact on emotional well-being. The results obtained from this research have the potential to make a valuable contribution towards the establishment of evidence-based recommendations for responsible use of social media and the provision of mental health assistance specifically designed for this demographic.

Given the notable influence of social media on the lives of young people, the need to address mental health concerns and foster positive social media practices emerges as a subject of public health significance (Vannucci & McCauley Ohannessian, 2019; Twenge, *et al*., 2017). By understanding the link between social media use and mental health problems in this age group, educators, mental health experts, and policymakers can create targeted interventions and educational programs to help young adults develop digital well-being and emotional strength (Vannucci & McCauley Ohannessian, 2019; Moreno, *et al*., 2015). Moreover, acquiring a deeper understanding of the mental health requirements of young individuals in transition with regards to social media may facilitate the identification of possible elements of risk and protection. These findings can subsequently guide the development of preventative measures and early intervention methods (Twenge, *et al*., 2017). The anticipated outcomes of this research are anticipated to provide a valuable contribution to the larger initiatives focused on fostering the psychological well-being and mental health of young people as they navigate the many difficulties and possibilities given by the digital age.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study aims to investigate how social media consumption affects the mental health of emerging adults, who are increasingly using these platforms. This is a critical concern as these individuals are going through significant life transitions and developmental challenges. The study will explore the potential associations between social media use and mental health problems like depression, anxiety, loneliness, and self-esteem issues, as well as the impact of cyberbullying and unrealistic social comparisons on their well-being. Understanding this relationship will help inform mental health interventions and promote digital well-being for this vulnerable population.

Additionally, the study will examine the phenomenon of reluctant help-seeking behavior among emerging adults with mental health issues. The digital era and social media have reshaped how individuals seek support, but they may be discouraged from openly discussing their emotional struggles due to a culture of self-reliance and the portrayal of perfect lives on social media. This lack of health-seeking behavior may lead to untreated mental health issues and potentially worsen their overall well-being. Therefore, understanding the connection between social media consumption, reluctance to seek help, and mental health problems is crucial to addressing emerging adults' mental health challenges effectively.

The study will also explore how emerging adults subjectively interpret their social media experiences and how these interpretations influence their emotional well-being. The pressure of maintaining a specific online persona may lead to feelings of inadequacy, self-consciousness, and stress. Understanding these individual perspectives will provide valuable insights into the nuanced effects of social media on mental health. Furthermore, investigating help-seeking behavior in relation to social media usage and mental health issues will shed light on how emerging adults cope with emotional challenges within the digital landscape. This comprehensive approach will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between social media, mental health, and emerging adulthood, enabling the development of targeted strategies to promote positive digital experiences and mental well-being.

## METHODOLOGY

The research population includes 18–25-year-old emerging adults. Emerging adults are between

youth and adulthood, undergoing life transitions including education, jobs, and social interactions (Arnett, 2000). This cohort is important since they use social media most in Nigeria (Ugwu, *et al*., 2023) and may be affected by its mental health effects (Lenhart, 2015). An online survey was utilized to purposively sample emerging people from different educational, employment, and community environments. A total sample size of 532 participants indicated their interest in participating in the study. However, a sample of 22 did not complete or withdraw from the study, leaving the sample size at 510 respondents. Purposive sampling ensures that the sample covers heavy and light social media users and those with mental health disorders connected to their use (Patton, 2014). The research captured a broad variety of experiences and viewpoints on social media's possible influence on emerging adults' mental health.

The research instrument for this study consists of a structured questionnaire that includes Likert-scale items. The Likert-scale items measure social media consumption patterns, mental health issues (emotional problems and suicidal thoughts), and help-seeking behavior related to emotional challenges. A modified Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) adapted from Marmara, *et al*., (2021). The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a small group of participants to ensure the clarity, validity, and reliability of the items before being administered to the main sample. A Cronbach-Alfa result of.87 for help seeking behavior,.91 for mental health issues,.89 for effects of mental health, and an overall value of.81 for the instrument together. The online survey method of data collection was adopted through the distribution of questionnaires through emails, social media platforms, and relevant online forums. The researcher ensures adherence to ethical guidelines, ensuring participant confidentiality, voluntary participation, and informed consent (American Psychological Association, 2017). Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of their responses. Also, an option to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty was stated in the consent form. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequencies, to assess the extent of social media consumption and the prevalence of mental health issues among the sample. Bivariate correlations and regression analysis were used to examine the relationships between social media consumption and, mental health problems.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic analysis of the respondents in the study. From the table, the majority of respondents are female, accounting for 66.1%, while males constitute 33.9% of the participants. The age distribution shows that the highest number of respondents falls within the age group of 20–21 years (31.6%), followed by 22–23 years (29.8%), 18–19 years (22.5%), and 24–25 years (16.1%). Also, from the table, the majority of the respondents have tertiary education, making up 57.5%, while respondents with secondary education account for 40.8%, and those with primary education are the smallest group at 1.8%. The largest group of respondents are students who are not employed (30.8%), followed by unemployed individuals actively seeking work (21.0%), part-time employed (19.2%), and full-time employed (4.9%).

Furthermore, respondents were asked to indicate the social media platform they usually use. The most frequently used social media platform among respondents is Instagram (23.3%), then Tiktok (15.1%), WhatsApp (17.1%), Twitter (10.0%), and Snapchat (12.4%). Additionally, a sizable portion of the respondents (37.6%) spend 1-2 hours per day on social media, with more than 4 hours (29.4%), 2-4 hours (25.1%), and 30 minutes to 1 hour (7.8%) following. When activities carried out on social media are measured, respondents indicate that the most common activities engaged in on social media are following celebrities or influencers (37.3%), watching videos (22.7%), reading news or articles (20.6%), and gaming or using social media platforms for gaming (5.3%). However, the data provides valuable insights into the socio-demographic characteristics and social media usage patterns of the respondents, which will be crucial in analyzing the relationship between social media consumption and mental health outcomes among emerging adults.

The descriptive findings of the degree of social media usage among emerging adults are shown in Table 2. The data presented in the table reveals several noteworthy findings. Firstly, a substantial majority of respondents, specifically 73.1%, expressed agreement with the notion that they dedicate a considerable amount of time to engaging with social media on a daily basis. Additionally, 58.6% of participants concurred that social media constitutes an integral component of

their daily routine. Additionally, a significant proportion of respondents, amounting to 57.3%, acknowledged the frequency with which social media is used to listen to news and keep up with trends. In general, the findings suggest that a considerable segment of emerging adults exhibit a high level of social media engagement, with a majority expressing the belief that social media is a fundamental component of their daily routines and a key means of entertainment. Moreover, a significant proportion of individuals have a strong inclination to often monitor alerts and consistently share information on various social media platforms. The result agrees with Primack, *et al.*, (2017), who also reported a high level of use of social media among young adults. However, this outcome offers useful details about the level of engagement users displayed on social media platforms.

To examine the perceived effect of social media consumption on emerging adults, mental health, a descriptive analysis carried out in Table 3 showed that the highest percentage of respondents (60.0%) disagreed that they often experience anxiety or nervousness while using social media, 34.3% agreed that social media use tends to make them feel more self-conscious about their appearance and body image, (56.1%) disagreed that they frequently compare their lives and achievements to others on social media. 73.7% disagreed that social media interactions leave them feeling lonely or isolated, 73.3% disagreed that they have encountered cyberbullying or negative comments on social media affecting their mental well-being, 67.8% disagreed that using social media has contributed to a decline in their overall mental health and well-being, 51.8% disagreed that they feel pressured to maintain a certain image or persona on social media, causing stress and anxiety. 34.5% agree that they have experienced depressive feelings or mood changes due to their social media interactions, 47.8% disagree that social media use has impacted their sleep patterns and contributed to difficulty sleeping, and 59.4% disagree that their excessive social media use has affected their ability to focus and concentrate on other tasks.

In Table 4, a descriptive result on the help-seeking behavior of emerging adults when confronted with personal or emotional problems was reported. From the table, majority of the respondents (46.1%) are "Unlikely," and 37.5% are "Extremely Unlikely" to seek help from their intimate partner when confronted with personal or emotional

problems. A significant portion of respondents (44.3%) are "Unlikely," and 43.9% are "Extremely Unlikely" to seek help from a friend when facing personal or emotional problems. The responses are divided, with 59.4% saying they are "Unlikely" to seek help from a parent, while 25.5% are "Extremely Unlikely" and 15.1% are "Likely." The majority of respondents (90.0%) are "Unlikely" to seek help from other relatives or family members. A substantial percentage of respondents (47.5%) are "Unlikely," while 22.0% are "Likely," and 15.5% are "Extremely Unlikely" to seek help from a mental health professional. Most respondents (59.2%) are "Unlikely," and 40.8% are "Extremely Unlikely" to seek help from a doctor when facing personal or emotional problems. A considerable percentage (65.9%) are "Unlikely," while 22.4% are "Extremely Unlikely," and 8.6% are "Likely" to seek help from a religious leader. The majority of respondents (47.5%) are "Unlikely," and 39.4% are "Extremely Unlikely" to seek help from anyone when confronted with personal or emotional problems, while 13.1% are "Likely." This result highlights potential barriers to seeking support and the importance of promoting help-seeking behaviors among individuals facing personal challenges.

In order to further examine if respondents will seek help when experiencing suicidal thoughts, responses in table 4 showed that a significant percentage (39.4%) of respondents are "Likely," and 29.0% are "Unlikely" to seek help from their intimate partner when experiencing suicidal thoughts, (52.5%) are "Unlikely," while 35.7% are "extremely unlikely" to seek help from a friend when facing suicidal thoughts, 38.4% "Extremely Unlikely," 33.1% "Unlikely," and 28.4% "Likely" to seek help from a parent if experiencing suicidal thoughts, (53.9%) are "extremely unlikely," and 32.9% are "Unlikely" to seek help from other relatives or family members when facing suicidal thoughts. Also, a significant percentage (81.4%) of respondents are "Likely" to seek help from a mental health professional if experiencing suicidal thoughts, while only 10.0% said they are "Extremely Unlikely, most respondents (46.1%) are "Unlikely," and 40.6% are "Extremely Unlikely" to seek help from a doctor when experiencing suicidal thoughts. A considerable percentage (52.9%) are "Unlikely," while 35.3% are "Extremely Unlikely," and 8.6% are "Likely" to seek help from a religious leader if facing suicidal thoughts and (55.9%) are "Unlikely," and 31.0% are "Extremely Unlikely" to seek help from

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anyone when experiencing suicidal thoughts, while 13.1% are "Likely."

However, the findings indicate that a substantial portion of respondents are unlikely to seek help from their intimate partner, friends, family members (including parents and other relatives), or religious leaders when experiencing suicidal thoughts. However, a significant majority are open to seeking help from mental health professionals in such a situation. The high percentage of individuals who would not seek help from anyone underscores the importance of raising awareness about the need for support and encouraging help-seeking behavior for individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts.

To establish the relationship between social media consumption and its effects on mental health issues (emotional problems or suicidal thoughts) of emerging adults (Table 6), a correlational analysis was carried out, and the results indicate a significant positive correlation between "social media consumption" and "effect of social media," $r(510) = 0.269$, $p < 0.01$. Also, there was a significant negative correlation between "social media consumption" and "emotional problems," $r(501) = 0.153$, $p < 0.01$. This suggests that higher social media consumption was associated with reports of emotional problems among the participants. There was no significant correlation found between "social media consumption" and "suicidal thoughts score," $r(510) = 0.013$, $p = 0.770$. This indicates that social media consumption did not appear to have a significant relationship with the occurrence of suicidal thoughts among the participants. There was a non-significant correlation between "effect of social media" and "emotional problem," $r(501) = 0.074$, $p = 0.100$. This suggests that there was no significant association between participants' perceptions of the effect of social media and their reports of emotional problems. Furthermore, there was a non-significant correlation between "effect of social media" and "suicidal thoughts score," $r(501) = -0.024$, $p = 0.588$, and a significant positive correlation between "emotional problem" and "suicidal thoughts score," $r(510) = 0.285$, $p < 0.01$. This suggests that higher levels of emotional problems were associated with higher scores related to suicidal thoughts among the participants. Furthermore, a regression analysis was carried out to establish the combined effect of social media consumption and its effects on mental health issues (emotional problems or suicidal thoughts). The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results revealed a

statistically significant relationship between the predictor variables (effect of social media and social media consumption) and the dependent variables (mental health issues; emotional problems, and suicidal thoughts) $(f(2, 498) = 11.104, p < 0.001)$. However, the regression model shows that "Social Media Consumption" and "the effect of Social Media" have statistically significant effects on mental health issues. Higher social media consumption is associated with lower levels of mental health issues, while a greater effect of social media is associated with increased mental health issues. However, it's important to note that these predictor variables collectively account for only 4.3% of the variance in mental health issues, suggesting that other factors beyond social media also influence participants' mental health.

Based on the findings in this study, several important insights can be drawn from the relationships between social media consumption, the effect of social media, and mental health issues (emotional problems or suicidal thoughts) among the participants. The study found a significant correlation between social media consumption and emotional problems. This suggests that higher levels of social media consumption are associated with moderate or lower reports of emotional problems. This finding agrees with popular concerns about the harmful impact of excessive social media usage on mental health, indicating that the relationship may be more nuanced than previously thought (Vujeva & Furman, 2011; Fardouly, *et al*., 2023).

Furthermore, the study revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between the effect of social media on mental health issues such as emotional problems and suicidal thoughts. This suggests that participants who perceived a greater impact of social media on their lives reported higher levels of emotional problems and were more likely to experience suicidal thoughts. This result is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Twenge, *et al*., 2017; Ajike, *et al*., 2022). This finding underscores the importance of considering not just the time spent on social media but also the emotional impact it has on individuals. The regression analysis further clarified the combined effects of social media consumption and the effect of social media on mental health issues. The model demonstrated that both variables together explain a small but significant proportion (4.3%) of the variance in mental health issues. This implies that, while social media usage and its

perceived impact play a role in mental health, other factors not explored in this study may also be influential.

**List of Tables**

**Table 1:** Socio demographic analysis of respondents

| Variables | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 173 | 33.9% |
| | Female | 337 | 66.1% |
| Age in groups | 18-19years | 115 | 22.5% |
| | 20-21years | 161 | 31.6% |
| | 22-23 years | 152 | 29.8% |
| | 24 - 25 years | 82 | 16.1% |
| Educational level | Primary education | 9 | 1.8% |
| | Secondary education | 208 | 40.8% |
| | Tertiary education | 293 | 57.5% |
| Employment status of respondents | Employed full-time | 25 | 4.9% |
| | Employed part-time | 98 | 19.2% |
| | Unemployed and actively seeking work | 107 | 21.0% |
| | Unemployed and not seeking work | 70 | 13.7% |
| | Student (Not employed) | 157 | 30.8% |
| | Student (Part-time employed) | 53 | 10.4% |
| Social media platform regularly use | Facebook | 68 | 13.3% |
| | Instagram | 119 | 23.3% |
| | Twitter | 51 | 10.0% |
| | Snapchat | 63 | 12.4% |
| | Tiktok | 77 | 15.1% |
| | Linkedln | 18 | 3.5% |
| | Pinterest | 18 | 3.5% |
| | WhatsApp | 87 | 17.1% |
| | Telegram | 9 | 1.8% |
| Time spend on social media | 30 mins to 1 hrs | 40 | 7.8% |
| | 1-2 hours | 192 | 37.6% |
| | 2-4 hours | 128 | 25.1% |
| | More than 4 hours | 150 | 29.4% |
| Activities engaged in on social media de | Posting updates or sharing content | 24 | 4.7% |
| | Interacting with friends and family | 25 | 4.9% |
| | Following celebrities or influencers | 190 | 37.3% |
| | Watching videos | 116 | 22.7% |
| | Reading news or articles | 105 | 20.6% |
| | Participating in online communities or groups | 23 | 4.5% |
| | Gaming or using social media platforms for gaming | 27 | 5.3% |

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**Table 2:** Descriptive result of level of Social Media Consumption among emerging adults

| S/N | Disagree | | Undecided | | Agree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Freq** | **Per** | **Freq** | **Per** | **Freq** | **Per** |
| Item 1 | 7 | 1.4% | 130 | 25.5% | 373 | 73.1% |
| Item 2 | 88 | 17.3% | 123 | 24.1% | 299 | 58.6% |
| Item 3 | 142 | 27.8% | 76 | 14.9% | 292 | 57.3% |
| Item 4 | 112 | 22.0% | 82 | 16.1% | 316 | 62.0% |
| Item 5 | 71 | 13.9% | 56 | 11.0% | 383 | 75.1% |
| Item 6 | 83 | 16.3% | 237 | 46.5% | 190 | 37.3% |
| Item 7 | 90 | 17.6% | 128 | 25.1% | 292 | 57.3% |
| Item 8 | 38 | 7.5% | 113 | 22.2% | 359 | 70.4% |
| Item 9 | 103 | 20.2% | 145 | 28.4% | 262 | 51.4% |
| Item 10 | 316 | 62.0% | 80 | 15.7% | 114 | 22.4% |

**Table 3:** Descriptive result of effect of social media consumption on emerging adults' mental health

| S/N | Disagree | | Undecided | | Agree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Freq** | **Per** | **Freq** | **Per** | **Freq** | **Per** |
| Item 1 | 306 | 60.0% | 87 | 17.1% | 117 | 22.9% |
| Item 2 | 203 | 39.8% | 132 | 25.9% | 175 | 34.3% |
| Item 3 | 286 | 56.1% | 68 | 13.3% | 156 | 30.6% |
| Item 4 | 376 | 73.7% | 20 | 3.9% | 114 | 22.4% |
| Item 5 | 374 | 73.3% | 28 | 5.5% | 108 | 21.2% |
| Item 6 | 346 | 67.8% | 99 | 19.4% | 56 | 11.0% |
| Item 7 | 264 | 51.8% | 136 | 26.7% | 110 | 21.6% |
| Item 8 | 219 | 42.9% | 176 | 34.5% | 115 | 22.5% |
| Item 9 | 244 | 47.8% | 121 | 23.7% | 145 | 28.4% |
| Item 10 | 303 | 59.4% | 16 | 3.1% | 191 | 37.5% |

**Table 4:** Descriptive result of help seeking behavior when confronted with personal or emotional problems

| | | Extremely Unlikely | | Unlikely | | Likely | | Extremely likely | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Freq** | **Per** | **Freq** | **Per** | **Freq** | **Per** | **Freq** | **Per** |
| 1 | Intimate partner (e.g., girlfriend, boyfriend, husband, wife) | | | 191 | 37.5% | 235 | 46.1% | 84 | 16.5% |
| 2 | Friend (not related to you) | 224 | 43.9% | 226 | 44.3% | 44 | 8.6% | 16 | 3.1% |
| 3 | Parent | 130 | 25.5% | 303 | 59.4% | | | 77 | 15.1% |
| 4 | Other relative/family member | 51 | 10.0% | 459 | 90.0% | | | | |
| 5 | Mental health professional (e.g. psychologist, social worker, counsellor) | 79 | 15.5% | 242 | 47.5% | 112 | 22.0% | 77 | 15.1% |
| 6 | Doctor | 208 | 40.8% | 302 | 59.2% | | | | |
| 7 | Minister or religious leader (e.g. Pastor or Alfa) | 114 | 22.4% | 336 | 65.9% | 44 | 8.6% | 16 | 3.1% |
| 8 | I would not seek help from anyone | 201 | 39.4% | 242 | 47.5% | 67 | 13.1% | | |

**Table 5:** Descriptive result of help seeking behavior when confronted with suicidal thought

| | | Extremely Unlikely | | Unlikely | | Likely | | Extremely likely | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Freq | Per | Freq | Per | Freq | Per | Freq | Per |
| 1 | Intimate partner (e.g., girlfriend, boyfriend, husband, wife) | 77 | 15.1 | 148 | 29.0 | 201 | 39.4 | 84 | 16.5 |
| 2 | Friend (not related to you) | 182 | 35.7 | 268 | 52.5 | 44 | 8.6 | 16 | 3.1 |
| 3 | Parent | 196 | 38.4 | 169 | 33.1 | 145 | 28.4 | | |
| 4 | Other relative/family member | 275 | 53.9 | 168 | 32.9 | 67 | 13.1 | | |
| 5 | Mental health professional (e.g. psychologist, social worker, counsellor) | 51 | 10.0 | | | 415 | 81.4 | 44 | 8.6 |
| 6 | Doctor | 207 | 40.6 | 235 | 46.1 | 68 | 13.3 | | |
| 7 | Minister or religious leader (e.g. Pastor or Alfa) | 180 | 35.3 | 270 | 52.9 | 44 | 8.6 | 16 | 3.1 |
| 8 | I would not seek help from anyone | 158 | 31.0 | 285 | 55.9 | 67 | 13.1 | | |

**Table 6:** Regression result of relationship between the listed variables

| | | Social Media Con | Effect of Social Media | Emotional Problem | Suicidal Thoughts Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social Media Consumption | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .269** | .153** | .013 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .001 | .770 |
| | N | | 501 | 510 | 510 |
| Effect of Social Media | Pearson Correlation | | 1 | .074 | -.024 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | | .100 | .588 |
| | N | | | 501 | 501 |
| Emotional Problem | Pearson Correlation | | | 1 | .285** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | | | .000 |
| | N | | | | 510 |
| Suicidal Thoughts Score | Pearson Correlation | | | | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | | | |
| | N | | | | |
| **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). | | | | | |

**Table 7:** Regression result of effect of social media consumptions, and it effects on mental health issues (emotional problem or suicidal thoughts)

| Variable | B | Std. Error | Standardized Coefficients Beta | t | Sig. | F | Sif |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Constant) | 29.962 | 1.967 | | 15.231 | .000 | | |
| Social Media Consumption | -.222 | .050 | -.200 | -4.403 | .000 | 11.104 | .000[b] |
| Effect Of Social Media | .113 | .040 | .128 | 2.803 | .005 | | |

R = .207; R-square = 0.043

## IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These findings have practical implications for mental health interventions and social media usage guidelines. Encouraging individuals to be mindful of their emotional responses to social media interactions could be beneficial. Additionally, mental health professionals could consider discussing social media usage patterns and their potential emotional effects during therapy sessions. Public health campaigns and educational programs could also promote digital well-being, encouraging a balanced and thoughtful approach to social media engagement among emerging adults and beyond.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The cross-sectional nature of the research design restricts establishing causality, and the study may not account for all potential confounding variables. Future research could utilize longitudinal or experimental designs to better understand the dynamic relationship between social media and mental health. Additionally, investigating other factors, such as online social support and cyberbullying experiences, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of social media's impact on mental health among different populations.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the complex relationships between social media consumption, the effects of social media, and mental health issues among the participants. The findings highlight the need for further research and tailored interventions to promote digital well-being and address the emotional impact of social media usage. By considering the interplay between social media and mental health, researchers and practitioners can work together to develop strategies that harness the positive aspects of social media while mitigating potential negative effects on emotional well-being.

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**Source of support:** Nil; **Conflict of interest:** Nil.

**Cite this article as:**

Fowowe, P. and Ebunlomo, F.B. "Examining the Impact of Social Media Consumption on Mental Health Issues among Emerging Adults: Help-Seeking Behavior." *Sarcouncil Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies* 3.2 (2024): pp 1-10.