

SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION: ITS MENTAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES AMONG THE YOUTH AND LEGAL APPROACH TO IT**Dusiyarova Barno Shuhratovna***The master student of Media Law**Tashkent State University of Law*

Abstract. *Today in our fast-paced global world the social media platforms have already become crucial part of our lives. As everything has two sides, although social media tools can be informative asset to our techno-new world, it has enough bad influence on people's mental state. In this article those issues are discussed and scientifically proven facts are written below.*

Keywords: *social media platforms, mental health concerns, psychiatric problems, dopamine, brain transmitter and etc.*

Introduction. With social media usage on the rise, mental health concerns are becoming a more significant issue. Among psychiatric problems, social media use is the second most common cause of impairment. Numerous academic works have attempted to establish connections between mental health disorders and social media use. To develop a comprehensive, evidence-based strategy for the prevention and treatment of social media-induced psychiatric diseases, it is necessary to address the recent research that offers important viewpoints on these conditions. The emergence of anxiety as well as other psychological issues like stress, sadness, sleeplessness, anxiety, reduced subjective happiness, and a feeling of mental deficiency is closely linked to social network use. According to most of the referenced research, the chance of mental health issues brought on by social media is directly correlated with the quantity of time spent on these websites, the frequency of use, and the number of platforms used. Numerous theories have been put forth, such as the harm that unhealthy comparisons do to one's self-esteem, social media burnout, stress, emotional dysregulation brought on by social media obsession, and the emergence of social anxiety as a result of fewer in-person social interactions. There have been theories suggesting that increased social media use is a coping mechanism for anxiety that already exists. Given the current trend of a sharp shift toward online social life, the era of ever-increasing digitization, and the need for attention from others, it is anticipated to take a gruesome toll on the population's mental health, which therefore warrants more attention to mental health care.

Literature. The topic of social media addiction has already been researched so far. Especially American scientists are good at writing about this topic. Among them we can highlight Scott Miller, the author of "Social Media and Technology Addiction" (2021)

study and article²⁷. Another writer is Isaac Vaghefi from Baruch College in New York, he reviewed the past studies and researched longitudinal paper study. Over the course of four years, the authors conducted 248 surveys and 101 interviews to gather data. They then evaluated the data to create a model that illustrates how social media addiction progresses over time. Vaghefi's study offers a longitudinal perspective and helps to understand how user behaviors change over three phases — starting from nominal, non-problematic use, then turning into a compulsion and finally an addicted type of use. This is in contrast to other studies in this area that have only provided a snapshot of user behavior at a given time. Another woman professor Anna Lembke has also researched this topic and given some amazing results which are related to neurotransmitters including dopamine. She mentioned the main link between the brain and addiction. Her book called “Dopamine Nation” (2021) is mainly about this less-discussed topic²⁸.

Methods. The American scientists' works and studies were analyzed. Based on those papers, it was found that social media users are possibly in danger with their mental state. Because it was already mentioned and concluded that social media addiction is almost same as addictive drugs or behaviors. However, when it comes to scientific research and its final results, it is not concise to conclude for every individual in the globe. It means, American study might not work with Asian people. So, with comparing methods, we can just give some options and opinions of foreign countries' writers and at the same time we can encourage national scientists to carry out an experiment with geographical order in the country. An inductive technique involves a researcher first gathering relevant data related to their area of interest. After gathering a sizable amount of data, the researcher will pause data collecting to take a step back and evaluate their data from above. At this point, the researcher searches the data for patterns while attempting to formulate a theory that could account for those trends. Deductive researchers will begin with a strong social theory and use evidence to examine the theory's implications. Stated otherwise, they employ the identical procedures as inductive research, but they progress from a general to a more specialized level by reversing the order of steps. The deductive research approach is primarily linked to scientific inquiry. After reviewing extant ideas on the phenomenon they are examining, the researcher looks at what other people have done and examines theories-derived hypotheses.

Results. Social media addiction has already become one of the world's global concerns. According to the latest study, the usage of social media and social networking sites (SNSs) has increased dramatically. Globally, there were more than 4.26 billion social media users in 2021; by 2027, that figure is expected to rise to nearly six billion.

²⁷ Isaac Vaghefi, “Social Media Addiction: A Systematic Review through Cognitive-Behavior Model of Pathological Use”, 2021.

²⁸ <https://www.annalembke.com/dopamine-nation>

Needles to mention that using social media on a regular basis is essential. Internet users spend 144 minutes a day on average on texting and social media, which is more than 30 minutes comparing to 2015. In 2011 around 35% adults spent their time on social media apps and today those figures have increased sharply: 85%! Especially in the pandemic period internet became our unique tool to stay connected with the world. However, the population is getting more and more glued to their screens although there is lot to do outside and even though the pandemic is already over²⁹.

Addiction is described as a single medical disorder by the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) that encompasses both behaviors and substances. The official recognition of gambling illness as a behavioral addiction has been extended by the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Internet addiction, commonly referred to as internet addiction disease (IAD), is a major global health concern. More than 300 published neuroscience research have established the biological basis of internet addiction as a medical condition. About 10 million people, or 20% of the population, are thought to be seriously at risk of developing an online addiction, according to estimates made by the South Korean government more than ten years ago when it designated internet addiction as a public health emergency. Many behaviors are indicative of internet addiction, such as excessive usage of social networking, gaming, shopping, gambling, pornography, and even what psychologists are simply calling smartphone addiction.

According to studies by various analytical companies, there are two social networks that can be called the most “dangerous” from the point of view of acquiring addiction. These are Instagram (regular viewing of the luxurious life of models and other celebrities can seriously undermine the psyche of an ordinary person and lead to an incorrect perception of one’s own life) and TikTok (an endless feed with short, enticing videos does not allow one to be distracted by business). Digital detox, which has become quite popular recently, is unlikely to help a person who has already developed an addiction. Today you won’t surprise anyone with the names “Vkontakte”, “Odnoklassniki”, “Facebook”, “Twitter” or “Instagram”. Surely, everyone is registered in at least one of these social networks, and maybe in all of them at once. But everyone’s time and purpose for being on social networks are different. Someone goes to their page solely to chat with friends, someone to listen to music, and someone strives to learn as much as possible about their friends and acquaintances by looking at photos and news (“news feed”).

We are promoting the latest technology tools while they will put the human psychology at risk. Scientists Hussain and Griffiths have concluded that overuse of internet may lead to mental-psychological disorders, such as depression, anxiety, stress, ADHD and OCD. Dozens of the hundreds of scientific study publications on internet-

²⁹ Isaac Vaghefi, “Social Media Addiction: A Systematic Review through Cognitive-Behavior Model of Pathological Use”, 2021.

related addictions that have been published have examined the particular relationship between ADHD and online addiction. What's more fresh and sparkly than downloading a new TikTok video, playing a video game, finding the best bargain on groceries, or checking for updates on a social media feed? The ADHD brain is inclined to be pulled to the shiny and novel. Since people with ADHD are already time-blind, it is much simpler for them to become lost in the never-ending stream of knowledge (or rubbish) that can be found when browsing through sports, stocks, news, YouTube, and other websites. Furthermore, many individuals with ADHD already have a reduced awareness of consequences³⁰. The impulsive type with ADHD who battles with online addiction is not a good friend of Amazon One-Click.

Another part of the problem is that social media addiction decreases the social interactions of people in real life. Some scientists including Anna Lembke say, we're far away from final conclusion, we're still learning and researching the topic itself. According to her the level of addiction is measured by the amount of dopamine release in the brain. In fact, dopamine is actually what we call "happiness hormone". When the brain reduces the dopamine we feel pleasure, but from what? People get hungry and they want to eat the most-wanted food ever – that's the process of dopamine. The dopamine release is 2 times faster with chocolate and private relationship between partners. And it is also 2,5 times faster with alcohol and certain types of drugs. The point is that there is no exact number or amount of dopamine release with social media addiction. Looking at the other part of the coin, dopamine can give an instant gratification, the rest of the process can be absolutely down. This is the scientific prove of this neurotransmitter: when one feels oneself extremely high and there is always the point to be extremely down. So in a nutshell, we can say that social media addiction gives a short-period of happiness but at the end of the line we will not finish the day happily anyway. Unfortunately, there is not any kind of law module which suits for the protection from social media addiction. The main reason for that is scientists and researchers including professors are still discussing the word of "addiction" in the context of social media. Some say, with the amount of dopamine it is plain as a day that social media overuse is definitely addiction. And some others say that it is not still considered as an addiction, because the certain results have not been reached yet.

The first reason why social networks are so attractive to humans is that when we "wander through the open spaces" of social networks, the pleasure centers in our brain are activated. This is greatly facilitated by positive ratings ("likes") and pleasant comments on our photos. What do we do when we receive a pleasant emotion? Right. We return to the network to get it again. So it turns out that the more a person is approved on a social network, the more time he spends there. The second reason is related to the peculiarities of a person's perception of information posted on social

³⁰ I. Vaghefi and L. Lapointe, "Can IT hurt productivity? An investigation of IT addiction," presented at the Proceedings of the 34th international conference on information systems, Milan, Italy, 2013.

networks. We get it quickly and little by little. Moreover, this information is extremely diverse and heterogeneous. For example, when visiting the VKontakte website, we can immediately turn on the music, while simultaneously viewing brief news, small notes and articles, comments, and at the same time still have time to respond to messages from friends. Our brain begins to quickly adapt and get used to this pace. It's like a quick and easy process of "clicking" seeds. Here it is also worth emphasizing the heterogeneity of the information received. This distinguishes it from information in search engines. To find something in a search engine, such as Google or Yandex, you need to at least know exactly what to look for. Moreover, you still need to formulate a fairly clear request. And this, of course, requires some time and effort. In turn, to find something interesting on a social network, no such effort is required - you just need to open the news feed. Thus, social networks attract people mainly due to their accessibility, simplicity and diversity. The third reason is people who are unsure of themselves, suffering from complexes, such as, for example, an "inferiority complex" with their appearance, or they lack attention in real life. And on social networks, few people know who we really are, because if we have a rich imagination, you can present yourself as a hero-lover, a macho, or just a super-smart genius.

In the global news market some problems are linked with each other. Social media use can be also harmful even if we do not mention the addiction itself. For example werther and papageno effects can also contribute the negative aspects of social media. Werther effect is based on the work of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's novel "The Sorrows of Young Werther" and it is a copycat suicide of oneself after they encounter suicide related content on social media platforms. In his groundbreaking study on the impact of suggestion on suicide, David Philipps used the term "Werther Effect" for the first time in a scientific context in 1974. It was discovered that, between 1947 and 1968, suicides rose as soon as a suicide death was reported in American and British publications³¹. This rise was discovered to be primarily localized to the area where the news report was broadcast. The internet and social media have become more challenging in the twenty-first century, and experts are just beginning to think about how sites like Twitter and Facebook can affect suicide. Interestingly, the Papageno Effect suggests that altering the way suicides are covered in the media may help to lower the suicide rate. In this context, the Papageno effect, opposite to the Werther effect, should also be discussed. It manifests itself when the media talk or show about effective methods, mechanisms and ways in which vulnerable people can cope and overcome difficult situations. The term "Papageno" comes from the opera "The Magic Flute" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The protagonist is on the verge of suicide for fear of losing a loved one, but he is stopped by friends who support him and help him overcome the moment of crisis.

³¹ <https://www.annalembke.com/dopamine-nation>

In 2019 American former senator Jaw Hawley proposed the SMART act (Social Media Addiction Reduction Technology Act). The bill was directly dedicated to social media addiction and its primary duty was to prevent people from being addictive user on the platforms³². Needless to mention, there are some laws and lawsuits related to Social media and Social privacy or Copyright laws on the internet. Unfortunately, none of them are specifically about addictive behaviours toward social platforms. In this term, the SMART act did a lot of work: according to lawmakers based on the act there should have been auto-stopping function on every social network. “To prohibit social media companies from using practices that exploit human psychology or brain physiology to substantially impede freedom of choice, to require social media companies to take measures to mitigate the risks of internet addiction and psychological exploitation, and for other purposes” – as it was already written in the pages of the act.

When it comes to the legal part of the issue, it should be worth mentioning that there is not any kind of law paper in terms of social media addiction. However I the American law called COPPA - The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. There is a regulation in the US that governs how websites, online services, and mobile apps can obtain and utilize personal information from children under the age of 13. In order to protect children's data, COPPA mandates that these sites get verifiable parental consent before collecting personal information from them. It also establishes specific privacy and security guidelines. The purpose of COPPA is to protect children's privacy and safety by giving parents authority over the information that is gathered about them online. Only this paper exists when we refer to the protection of social media addiction among youth. But the main problem is here not only about the youth, but also about the adults.

In Norway, for example, from 1975 to 2005 it was generally forbidden to cover this topic in the press. In 2006, the situation changed, but local journalists are advised: “Be careful when reporting suicide and attempted suicide. Avoid describing methods, as well as other points that may provoke similar actions among readers. In general, journalists are advised to follow the recommendations of the World Health Organization. When providing information about suicide, it is advisable to refuse unnecessary videos and images, do not put the word "suicide" in the title, limit the number of sentimental references and comments about the deceased - the news should be restrained, without "embellishments" and attempts to "squeeze out a tear." In addition, at the end of such materials, it is advised to indicate, for example, telephone hotlines where you can turn for help in case of thoughts of suicide³³. Daily occurrences, significant life events (such as trauma), results of close relationships, social network patterns, interpersonal interactions, and learning processes all exhibit a stronger tendency for bad events to prevail over good ones. lousy feelings have a greater influence than happy ones, as do

³²<https://www.hawley.senate.gov/sites/default/files/2019-07/Social-Media-Addiction-Reduction-Technology-Act.pdf>

³³ Wikstøl D, Horn MA, Pedersen R, Magelssen M. Citizen attitudes to non-treatment decision making: a Norwegian survey. BMC Med Ethics. 2023 Mar 8;24(1):20. doi: 10.1186/s12910-023-00900-5.

lousy parenting, bad feedback, and bad feelings are absorbed more completely than good ones. Avoiding negative self-definitions is more motivating for the self than pursuing positive ones. Positive impressions and stereotypes take longer to form and are more easily refuted than negative ones.

Various hypotheses, such as diagnosticity and salience, can explain certain findings, but when such variables are controlled, the larger power of unpleasant events is still discovered. There are very few outliers, which suggests higher good power. People's propensity to pay attention to negative news reflects a fundamental aspect of human cognition, which is that people preferentially pay attention to unpleasant stimuli across a wide range of disciplines. Negative attentional biases start in childhood and last throughout adulthood as a quick and spontaneous reaction. Additionally, negative information may be more "sticky" in our brains; when learning about oneself, learning about others, and making judgments, individuals give negative information more weight than good information. This could be because negative information triggers threat responses automatically, allowing for preparation and the avoidance of potentially unpleasant or hazardous situations.

The role of the Internet, especially social media in relation to suicidal behavior is twofold: encouraging (provoking) as a risk factor and protective (anti-suicidal). The role of the Internet as a risk factor in certain groups of the population (especially adolescents and youth) is shown on the example of reports from domestic and foreign media. This same segment of the population shied away from standard psychiatric care. Individuals vulnerable to suicide (including depressive, socially outcast) especially gravitate towards the Internet. Such individuals are suggestible and tend to group in "death groups". Along with restrictive legislative measures (monitoring, closing of suicidal sites), it is necessary to "compensately" develop anti-suicidal sites. They can discuss topical issues of suicidal behavior with professionals and volunteers with successful experience in overcoming crisis situations, receive online help, monitor (self-assessment) of suicidal behavior, and train professionals. According to the World Health Organization, around 800,000 people worldwide commit suicide each year. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people aged 15-29. In his large study, Phillips noted that each new high-profile publication about suicide increased the number of suicides among teenagers by about 7%, regardless of the age of the first victim. The "examples" of famous people are especially contagious for fragile minds. Thus, an American sociologist attributed the wave of suicides that covered the United States after the death of Marilyn Monroe to the Werther effect. Loud headlines, juicy details, any trifles and details - journalists literally "savored" this topic. The cult actress passed away on August 5, 1962 (the official version of death is suicide). In the same month, there were 200 more suicides

than usual. At the same time, the number of suicides among adolescents increased by 12%³⁴.

Conclusion. A powerful and potentially hazardous combination is created in each phase by the usage of social media characteristics that provide constant availability, entertainment, and content exchange to satisfy social and psychological demands including connection, belonging, validation, and social engagement. According to Vaghefi, "we get a dopamine release every time we get a notification or someone likes our post." "The same brain response is seen in certain addictive behaviors and drugs." As it was mentioned above we're still working on the module of social media laws. In Uzbekistan we barely find appropriate law module to fit human rights, however we are still lacking certain lines of social media use and its overuse consequences.

In a nutshell, it can be said that the use of national and spiritual values is of great importance in the formation of spiritual education in the minds of young and old members of our society. Development of society takes place through broad-minded, capable, talented personnel. As a result of the growth of young people's worldview, their confidence in building a free and prosperous country, a free and prosperous life, a democratic, civil society with their own strength and opportunity will increase. Every country relies on the social psychology of its growing generation, which encompasses many qualities, in its national development. In the ancient East and West, in the Middle Ages, in the development stages of the classification of sciences, in industrial and today's post-industrial, informational societies, the trust, faith, psychology and worldview of the successor generation are the main issues to be solved correctly. considered. In order to raise a mature, knowledgeable generation, attention is paid to the formation of their worldview and way of thinking, to their education in secondary, special and higher educational institutions. Today's era is not without such demand. Only knowing how to see it in time, adapting it to the opportunities of the time, will lead to great success. Along with the use of social network achievements, the need to use educational methods that shape the spiritual world of the young generation is one of the noteworthy aspects of today.

Today's teenagers have physical, mental and political advantages over their predecessors. Sexual maturation, socialization process, mental growth are manifested earlier in them. For this reason, boys and girls are considered teenagers from 10-11 to 14-15 years old. Adolescence is the transition from childhood to adulthood. Adolescents experience sudden changes in their mental processes and their mental activity. Therefore, there are definite changes in interpersonal relations between students and teachers, and between adults and teenagers. Difficulties arise in the process of these changes. This happens first of all during the educational process: new information, the form, style and methods of presenting information leave the teenager unsatisfied. The

³⁴ <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-03-2022-covid-19-pandemic-triggers-25-increase-in-prevalence-of-anxiety-and-depression-worldwide>

fact that parents do not know the psychology of teenagers well, that they raise their children in the family, and that they care for them too much, are factors that lead to the breakdown of the child's behavior in the family. The decline in productivity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities is perhaps one of the mass media's most alarming negative effects. Social media, a widely used form of mass communication, is infamous for its ability to draw attention away from its intended audience. The continual interruptions and overload of information, according to scientists, prevent our brains from thinking deeply and hardly ever improve our long term memory. Although mass media has a significant global impact, its drawbacks exceed its benefits. People's perspectives on the world are changing quickly as a result of technology, and there are countless opportunities to quickly and easily access information. According to media psychology, "mass media influence" refers to how the media affects people's behavior, thought processes, and decisions. This effect may be harmful or beneficial. People may experience poverty, crime, nudity, violence, poor mental and physical health disorders, and other catastrophic outcomes as a result of the harmful effects of the media on society³⁵.

For instance, it's very uncommon for a crowd to attack innocent people after being enraged by rumors that have circulated online. The biggest illustration of how the mainstream media has a harmful impact on society is these unreported news headlines. Whether through direct or indirect sources, people typically learn diverse facts about the world, but the impact of the media on society is undeniable. This wave includes both educated and illiterate individuals, which increases the media's and the regulating authorities' obligations. They need to be more cautious when it comes to the method and timing of news dissemination. In some circumstances, the influence of mass media—whether good or bad—can be extremely important. This is one of the main reasons why during some delicate situations in the city or state, residents may experience situations where news broadcasts and internet service are prohibited.

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