



# The Impact of Social Media Usage on Stress Levels Among High School Students in South Goa

Nida Sheik

Child and Adolescent Psychology

**Abstract-** This research investigates the impact of social media usage on stress levels among high school students, with a focus on gender differences and the role of social comparison. The study addresses a critical research problem that is the excessive use of social media among adolescents and its implications for mental health. The primary objectives include examining how social media influences stress, identifying gender-specific stressors, and exploring the psychological mechanisms, such as social comparison, academics, and others, that exacerbate stress levels. Employing a qualitative approach, the study collected data from 120 students by administering a personal data sheet, perceived stress scale, and social media use scale to gain deeper insights into students' experiences. Key findings reveal that excessive social media use correlates with heightened stress, and the higher the amount of time spent on social media, led to higher the stress among students. The research highlights the dual nature of social media as both a source of connection and a contributor to mental health challenges. These findings have significant implications for educators, parents, and policymakers, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to promote mindful digital engagement and reduce stress-inducing behaviors online. By addressing these challenges, this study contributes to fostering healthier online practices among adolescents.

**Keywords-** Social media use, Stress levels, Gender, Children, Mental Health.

## I. Introduction

The impact of social media on children's mental health is a critical area of study, particularly given the pervasive nature of these platforms in teenagers' lives. With children and adolescents averaging seven hours of social media use daily, this digital engagement significantly shapes their communication styles, social interactions, and information-processing abilities (Keles et al., 2019). Social media use by adolescents is nearly universal. Up to 95% of children ages 13–17 report using a social media platform, with more than a third saying they use social media “almost constantly”.

Although age 13 is commonly the required minimum age used by social media platforms, nearly 40% of children ages 8–12 use social media (Vogels et al., 2022). For several reasons, understanding the relationship between social media usage and stress levels is essential. First, research indicates that excessive social media engagement is linked to increased anxiety, depression, and stress among teenagers. The U.S. Surgeon General's 2023 advisory highlights that adolescents who spend more than three hours per day on social media are at double the risk for negative mental health outcomes (Anderson & Jiang, 2023; Roberts & Kim, 2023).

Moreover, social media alters traditional peer interactions, creating new dynamics that can amplify feelings of inadequacy and fear of missing out. These platforms often



promote a comparison culture, where adolescents measure their self-worth against curated online personas, negatively affecting overall psychological well-being (Course-Choi & Liebert, 2020). As academic pressures increase, the intersection of social media use and academic performance becomes increasingly relevant. The distractions and pressures of maintaining an online presence can exacerbate stress levels among high school students (Katella, 2024).

Several researchers have attempted to clarify the complex relationship between mental health and social media use among adolescents and teenagers (Keles et al., 2019). For instance, a study published in 2024 found a strong correlation between high levels of social media use and symptoms of anxiety and depression among adolescents. Factors such as cyberbullying, social comparison, and disrupted sleep patterns were identified as significant contributors to these mental health challenges (Ahmed et al., 2024). Additionally, the relationship between social media usage and poor sleep quality has been extensively studied. Adolescents engaging with screens late at night often experience inadequate sleep, which can lead to cognitive impairments and heightened emotional distress (Orben & Przybylski, 2019; Naslund, 2020).

Social media has both positive and negative impacts on children and adolescents, shaping their social experiences and mental health. On the positive side, social media can foster connections, gain information, and socialize, allowing them to build supportive communities and express themselves creatively. It provides access to information and facilitates friendships, especially for marginalized groups seeking affirmation and support. However, excessive use poses significant risks, including increased anxiety, depression, and feelings of inadequacy due to social comparison. Furthermore, exposure to harmful content and cyberbullying can exacerbate emotional distress, particularly among vulnerable populations. Thus, while social media can offer valuable benefits, its potential for harm underscores the need for mindful usage and protective measures against excessive engagement (Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The US Surgeon General's Advisory, 2023).

Researching how social media affects high school students' stress levels is not just an academic pursuit but also important research into the psychological well-being of the coming generations. Understanding the implications of digital interactions as they become more ingrained in daily life will be essential to creating successful interventions meant to encourage teens and children to adopt healthier online behaviors. In an era where social media is widespread, this research has the potential to educate parents, educators, and mental health experts on the nuances of digital engagement.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **1. Users and Gratification Theory**

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), developed by Elihu Katz and Jay Blumler in the 1940s, explores why individuals actively seek out specific media to satisfy various needs. This theory posits that audiences are not passive consumers but engage with media based on their psychological and social requirements, such as information, emotional support, or entertainment (Blumler & Katz, 2024).



Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) categorizes the needs that drive individuals to engage with media into several dimensions. Cognitive needs involve the desire for information and knowledge, prompting individuals to seek media that enhance their understanding of the world. Affective needs pertain to emotional experiences, as people consume media for enjoyment or to find solace through storytelling or music. Personal integrative needs focus on enhancing self-esteem and personal identity, helping individuals reinforce their self-concept and develop a sense of belonging. Social integrative needs relate to social connections, where individuals use media to interact with others and maintain relationships, often seeking platforms that facilitate communication and community engagement. Tension release needs to address the desire for escapism and relaxation, as people turn to media to distract themselves from daily stressors or unwind after a long day.

In the context of social media usage among high school students, UGT can provide insights into how different platforms may influence stress levels. Students might use social media for social interaction to alleviate feelings of isolation or for escapism to distract themselves from academic pressures (Bhatiasevi, 2024).

#### **Social Comparison Theory (SCT)**

Social Comparison Theory (SCT), introduced by Leon Festinger in 1954, posits that individuals have an inherent drive to evaluate themselves by comparing their abilities, opinions, and traits with those of others. This theory suggests that when objective standards are unavailable, people turn to social comparisons as a means of self-assessment. Festinger identified two types of comparisons: “upward comparisons,” where individuals compare themselves to those perceived as better, and “downward comparisons”, where they compare themselves to those perceived as worse (Cherry, 2024; Social Comparison Theory, n.d.).

Students often use social comparisons through platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook, where curated images and posts can create unrealistic standards. This may lead to feelings of inadequacy or anxiety when students perceive themselves as falling short compared to their peers. The pressure to conform to these idealized representations can exacerbate stress levels, as students strive to achieve social acceptance and validation. Moreover, the impact of social comparison on mental health is significant; frequent upward comparisons can diminish self-esteem and increase stress, while downward comparisons may provide temporary relief but can also foster a sense of superiority that is not sustainable (Irmer & Schmiedek, 2023).

#### **Social Learning Theory**

Albert Bandura’s (1977) Social Learning Theory (SLT) explains that individuals learn behaviors through observation and imitation, integrating cognitive and behavioral approaches within a social context (Sutton & Nash, 2021). SLT identifies four key components: attention, influenced by the model’s appeal and complexity; retention, involving memory encoding; reproduction, requiring practice; and motivation, driven by perceived rewards (McLeod, 2024; Cherry, 2024).

In digital spaces, students observe peer behaviors, shaping their own actions and stress levels. Positive online interactions, such as support-seeking, can encourage healthy



coping strategies, while exposure to negative behaviors, like bullying, may increase anxiety. Vicarious reinforcement plays a crucial role, as adolescents learn from others' experiences, influencing their mental well-being (Sutton & Nash, 2021; Cherry, 2024).

## II. Review of Literature:

Acosta-Gómez et al. (2018), in "Stress in High School Students: A Descriptive Study," examined stress levels among high school students. Most students reported normal (54%) or low (39%) stress levels, with female students consistently experiencing higher stress than males. The study identified exams (49%) as the primary stressor, followed by career choices, family issues, and financial difficulties. Students coped effectively through activities such as listening to music, socializing, and engaging in physical exercise.

Audage N. C. and Middlebrooks J. S. (2008), in "The Effects of Childhood Stress on Health Across the Lifespan," define childhood stress as children's physical and emotional responses to challenges. Stress is categorized as positive (short-lived), tolerable (intense but temporary), and toxic (prolonged adversity without support). Toxic stress harms brain development, emotional regulation, and overall health. The article also links Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) to long-term health issues, including mental disorders and substance abuse, and recommends strategies for stress management.

Bozzola et al. (2022), in "The Use of Social Media in Children and Adolescents: Scoping Review on the Potential Risks," highlighted the risks of social media use, particularly during the pandemic, using SM for 3+ hours daily. Key issues included mental health problems such as depression in 19 studies, anxiety, and addiction in 10 each, poor dietary habits due to food marketing, cyberbullying, sleep disturbances, body image concerns notably among girls, aggression, online grooming, sexual risks, and physical health issues like eye strain, headaches, and musculoskeletal problems.

Davis S. L. & Soistmann H. C. (2022), in "Child's Perceived Stress: A Concept Analysis," define perceived stress in children as any real or imagined threat that overwhelms them, causing changes across emotional, psychological, developmental, and physiological domains. Common

stressors include academic pressures, safety concerns, bullying, family issues, and social media. High stress levels can lead to physical, emotional, and behavioral problems such as depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, and altered physiological responses, like elevated cortisol. The study's limitations include database and year restrictions (2010–2020) and a focus solely on English-language articles.

Kelly et al. (2019), in "Social Media Use and Adolescent Mental Health: Findings From the UK Millennium Cohort Study," examined the impact of social media on the mental health of 14-year-olds in the UK. The study identified a significant link between social media use and depressive symptoms, particularly among girls. Female participants using social media for 3–5 hours daily showed a 26% increase in depressive symptoms,



while usage exceeding 5 hours led to a 50% increase. Excessive use was also associated with online harassment, poor sleep quality, low self-esteem, and negative body image.

Liu et al. (2024), in "The Impact of Social Media on Children's Mental Health: A Systematic Scoping Review", analyzed studies from 2014 to 2024 on children aged 6–13. The review found mixed effects of social media use: moderate, active engagement improved social connections and emotional expression, while excessive use was linked to anxiety, stress, depression, poor sleep, cyberbullying, body image issues, and negative emotions from passive scrolling. Influencing factors included gender (girls are more affected by body image concerns), age (younger children are more vulnerable), and the role of parental guidance and social support. Limitations involved varied study designs, small samples, potential bias, and challenges in isolating age-specific findings.

Mishra et al., (2023) study "Influence of Gender on Stress among School Children: A Cross-sectional Study" found that female students reported significantly higher total stress levels compared to male students. The research concluded that female students experienced higher levels of stress in social, emotional, and family domains, while male students reported more stress in financial and vocational areas. The study had several limitations: a small sample size, no consideration of participants' past significant stressful events, and findings that may not apply to all school students particularly those in urban areas, where challenges and stressors differ from rural environments.

Nesi et al. (2023), in "How Girls Really Feel About Social Media", studied its effects on girls aged 10–15, finding that 40% experienced depressive symptoms. While social media offered identity affirmation and access to mental health resources, platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat posed risks, including addiction-like behaviors, sleep disruption, safety concerns, and exposure to harmful content. Social comparison often leads to feelings of inadequacy. Despite these challenges, many value social media for connection and entertainment.

Parray & Khan (2023), in "Impact of Social Media on Child Development," highlighted the negative effects of social media on children's physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development. Key issues included stress, privacy concerns, cyberbullying, anxiety, insomnia, sexting, depression, online harassment, self-harm, and substance abuse. While recognizing benefits for learning and connection, the study emphasized significant risks, noting that children often exhibit adolescent-like behaviors by the fifth grade. The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified social media use, impacting behavior and social interactions.

Pourrajab et al. (2014) titled "Different Effects of Stress on Male and Female Students" highlights how stress disrupts students' environmental adaptation, impacting both their physical and mental health. Female students generally report higher stress levels than males, due to their emotional sensitivity, particularly from academic pressures and financial concerns. Male students, on the other hand, tend to experience more stress related to family matters. The study suggests that addressing stress in students requires gender-specific approaches to improve academic success and well-being.



Singh and Kumari's (2022) study titled "Understanding Stress among Adolescents: An Empirical Study" assessed stress sensitivity among secondary school adolescents in India. The findings revealed that boys had higher stress sensitivity scores than girls, with average scores of 56.48 and 53.13, respectively, indicating a gender difference in stress perception. Additionally, urban adolescents exhibited higher stress sensitivity compared to their rural peers, with average scores of 58.84 and 51.43, respectively, highlighting the influence of environmental factors on stress levels.

Swain S. K. (2024), in "The Impact of Social Media Among School-Going Children", highlights social media's profound effects on children's cognitive, academic, social, and moral development. The study notes that 87% of American children aged 12–17 use the internet, with high social media activity among children as young as 5. While social media offers benefits like educational resources and improved social interactions, it also poses risks such as cyberbullying, mental health issues, sleep disturbances, and reduced self-esteem. The study recommends strategies to better manage children's social media use.

This research aims to address the existing gap in the existing literature. It focuses specifically on high school students, as much of the prior research primarily examines stress and social media usage among adolescents, teenagers, and adults, neglecting the unique challenges faced by younger children.

**Aim:** To understand and find the correlation between the impact of social media usage and stress levels among high school students.

**Objectives:**

- To analyze the social media usage pattern among children
- To determine the correlation between social media usage and stress levels among students
- To assess the stress levels of high school students
- To understand the difference in stress levels between males and females.
- To identify the specific social media factors (e.g., social comparison, FOMO) that may be associated with increased stress levels.

**Hypothesis:**

- **H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no correlation between social media usage and stress levels among high school students.
- **H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a correlation between social media usage and stress levels among high school students.
- **H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the amount of time high school students spend on social media and their stress levels.
- **H<sub>2</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between the amount of time high school students spend on social media and their stress levels.
- **H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference in stress levels among males and females.
- **H<sub>3</sub>:** There is a significant difference in stress levels among males and females.
- **H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference in social media usage among males and females.



- **H4:** There is no significant difference in social media usage among males and females.

**Statement of the Problem:**

"Is there a correlation between social media usage and stress levels among high school students?"

**Significance of the Study:**

This study will make a valuable academic contribution to the literature on children in the digital age, addressing a significant research gap as limited existing research focuses on children compared to adolescents and adults. The research aims to promote a better understanding of digital wellness among children, providing broader perspectives and knowledge about social media usage among young users and its associated impacts.

The findings will be particularly beneficial for parents, teachers, and professionals, equipping them with essential insights to better understand and manage children's social media use. Furthermore, this research will assist schools in developing informed social media policies and guidelines, enabling them to create meaningful assignments that encourage the use of traditional learning resources such as books and library materials. Ultimately, this study will contribute to the development of effective strategies and interventions to support children's healthy engagement with digital media.

**III. Research Methodology Research Design:**

The research design of this study is quantitative and correlational, allowing for the collection of numerical data to be statistically analyzed and correlations between social media usage and stress levels among high school students.

**Sample:**

A stratified random sampling method will be used to ensure representation across grades 9th and 10th and genders. A total of 120 high school students aged 13-15 years participated. This age group is particularly relevant as they are likely to be active social media users and may experience stress related to academics, social pressures, etc.

**Data Collection Methods:**

The data will be collected in a school through structured questionnaires, including a Personal Data Sheet, Perceived Stress Scale, and Social Media Usage Scale.

**Instruments:**

A personal data sheet will be included to gather demographic information such as age and gender, alongside questions assessing social media habits and their psychological impacts, such as anxiety or stress related to social media usage and its effects on academic performance.

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), developed by Cohen et al. (1983), measures perceived stress in individuals aged 12 and older over the past month. Comprising 10 items, it assesses feelings of unpredictability, uncontrollability, and overload. The scale



has strong reliability (Cronbach's alpha: 0.72–0.93) and validity, with stress levels classified as low (0–13), moderate (14–26), and high (27–40).

The Social Media Usage Scale (SMUS), created by Lin et al. in 2016, measures the psychological effects of social media usage among individuals aged 13 and up. This scale comprises 22 items divided into five subscales: social interactions (6 items), entertainment (4 items), information seeking (4 items), convenience (4 items), and social comparison (4). It is noted for its high internal consistency and test-retest reliability, as well as strong construct and convergent validity.

#### Data Analysis Plan:

The statistical analysis for this study will be conducted using SPSS. The following methods will be employed:

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** Mean, median, mode, and standard deviation will be calculated to summarize demographic data and social media usage patterns.
2. **Pearson Correlation Coefficient:** This coefficient will analyze the relationship between social media usage and stress levels among students, and find a relationship between hours spent on social media and stress levels among high school students.
3. **Independent Samples T-test:** This test will compare the mean stress levels and social media usage between male and female students.

## IV. Results and Discussion

The findings of the study focus on the relationship between social media usage and stress levels among high school students. The data analysis highlights the correlation between social media usage and stress levels, the correlation between time spent on social media to stress, and gender-specific differences. These results are discussed in light of existing theories and prior research, providing a deeper understanding of how digital engagement impacts students' psychological well-being.

- $H_0$ : There is no correlation between social media usage and stress levels among high school students.
- $H_1$ : There is a correlation between social media usage and stress levels among high school students

Table 1  
Pearson's Correlation Between Perceived Stress Scale and Social Media Use Scale

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>r</i>
Perceived Stress Scale	120	20.68	5.513	
Social Media Use Scale	120	46.82	16.325	0.207*

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

As seen in Table 1, the correlation between perceived stress levels and social media usage among high school students is presented. The mean of perceived stress level was calculated at 20.68 ( $SD = 5.513$ ), while the mean score for social media usage stood at



46.82 ( $SD = 16.325$ ). The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.207$ ) reveals a statistically weak positive relationship at the 0.05 level. This indicates that greater social media use is linked to higher stress levels. These results are related to previous research, such as the study by Parray & Khan (2023), which noted that excessive social media interaction correlates with increased stress and anxiety. Additionally, the findings also support the Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954), suggesting that students may compare themselves to idealized representations online, thereby heightening their stress. Since the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted, it confirms that a correlation exists between social media use and stress levels.

- $H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between the amount of time high school students spend on social media and their stress levels.
- $H_2$ : There is a significant relationship between the amount of time high school students spend on social media and their stress levels.

Table 2  
Pearson's Correlation Between Hours Spent on Social Media and Levels of Stress

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>r</i>
Hours Spent on Social Media	120	3.17	0.847	
Levels of Stress	120	2.02	0.485	0.566*

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As seen in Table 2, it examines the relationship between the number of hours spent on Social media and stress levels. The mean time spent on social media was 3.17 hours ( $SD = 0.847$ ), while the mean stress level was 2.02 ( $SD = 0.485$ ). The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.566$ ) indicates a positive relationship, suggesting that as social media usage increases, stress levels also tend to rise significantly. These results are consistent with the studies of Bozzola et al. (2022) identified a range of risks associated with prolonged social media use, including mentalhealth issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress, particularly when usage exceeded three hours daily. Similarly, Kelly et al. (2019) highlighted that excessive social media use (3–5+ hours daily) significantly increased depressive symptoms, especially among girls, while also linking it to poor sleep quality and low self-esteem. Liu et al. (2024) further contextualized these effects, noting that excessive use contributes to stress and anxiety, with gender and age playing moderating roles. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) can also help explain this, as students may use social media to relieve stress but instead experience greater stress due to excessive engagement. Since the alternative hypothesis (H2) is accepted, indicating a significant relationship between time spent on social media and stress levels.

**$H_0$** : There is no significant difference in stress levels among females and males.

**$H_3$** : There is a significant difference in stress levels among females and males.



Table 3  
 Independent Samples t-test Comparing Perceived Stress Levels Between Females and Males

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-test</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>df</i>
Females	60	21.13	0.847			
Males	60	20.22	0.485	0.910	0.365	118

The above Table 3, compares stress levels between male and female students using an Independent samples t-test. The mean stress level for females was 21.13 (SD = 0.847), while for males, it was 20.22 (SD = 0.485). The t-test result ( $t = 0.910$ ,  $p = 0.365$ ) shows no significant difference in stress levels between genders. This finding contrasts with previous studies, such as Mishra et al. (2023), which found that female students tend to report higher stress levels than males due to emotional and social pressures. The lack of a significant difference in this study could be due to factors such as a smaller sample size or other external stressors affecting both genders similarly. Since the p-value exceeds 0.05, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted, suggesting there is no significant difference in stress levels between males and females.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference in social media usage among males and females.  
**H<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant difference in social media usage among males and females.

Independent Samples t-test Comparing Social Media Usage Between Females and Males

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-test</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>df</i>
Females	60	44.78	15.118			
Males	60	48.85	17.338	-1.369	0.173	118

As seen in Table 4, it investigates whether social media usage differs between male and female students. The mean social media usage score for females was 44.78 (SD = 15.118), while for males, it was 48.85 (SD = 17.338). The t-test result ( $t = -1.369$ ,  $p = 0.173$ ) indicates no significant difference in social media usage between genders. This finding aligns with research like Liu et al. (2024), which reported that while the type of social media engagement may differ between genders, overall usage patterns are often similar. Additionally, the Uses and Gratifications Theory suggests that both genders may engage with social media for similar needs, such as entertainment, information-seeking, and social interaction. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted, indicating no significant difference in social media usage between male and female students.

## V. Summary and Conclusions

In conclusion, these findings underscore a significant correlation between social media usage and stress levels among high school students. The study reveals a complex relationship between social media engagement and stress, as demonstrated in Table 1, while Table 2 confirms that higher levels of social media use are associated with increased stress. Although social media provides opportunities for connection and



access to information, excessive engagement is linked to heightened anxiety, stress, depression, body image concerns, and other psychological issues. Furthermore, the findings suggest that high social media usage contributes to overall stress and greater exposure to harmful content. These results align with existing research, which highlights the risks of cyberbullying, sleep disturbances, and addiction-like behaviors associated with social media use. However, Tables 3 and 4 indicate no significant gender differences in stress levels or social media usage, suggesting that both male and female students might experience similar digital influences.

**Limitations:**

The limitations considered when interpreting this study's findings are that the research was conducted with a relatively smaller sample size of 120 students, equally divided between males and females, which may limit generalizability. The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential bias, as participants might have inaccurately reported their social media usage and stress levels, either due to over-/under-estimation or misunderstanding of the assessment scales. Additionally, while the study focused on social media's impact and stress levels, other academic stress was not measured, as indicated by participants' personal data sheets. Finally, the limited existing research literature on children, compared to adolescents and young adults, highlights a significant research gap in this area and constrains our ability to contextualize these findings within the broader academic discourse.

**Implications:**

The study has significant implications for education, mental health awareness, parental guidance, and academic research. In the educational sphere, schools should establish policies that encourage balanced social media use. This can be achieved by incorporating book-based assignments and integrating digital literacy programs into the curriculum. Additionally, public awareness campaigns can educate students on both the benefits and risks of social media, emphasizing mindful usage and effective stress management techniques. Recognizing key stress triggers, such as academic pressure, social expectations, fear of missing out (FOMO), and social comparison, can further support digital wellness initiatives through self-monitoring tools and coping strategies. These efforts ultimately foster a healthier online environment for students.

Parents also play a crucial role in mitigating the negative effects of social media. They can set clear boundaries, use parental controls to filter harmful content, and engage in open discussions about online experiences to identify stressors early. Moreover, modeling healthy digital habits can encourage a more balanced lifestyle for children and adolescents. Finally, this study contributes to academic literature by addressing research gaps related to specific populations, particularly children. By exploring the intersection of social media use, sleep deprivation, and anxiety, the findings offer valuable insights that can inform future research and policy development.

**Ethical Considerations:**

To ensure ethical conduct throughout the study, informed consent will be obtained from the school and participants, thoroughly explaining the study's purpose and procedures involved, and emphasizing their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. The data collected will be kept confidential and used solely for academic



purposes. Following data collection, participants will be debriefed about the research and its significance.

#### **Scope for Future Research:**

Future research could focus on conducting longitudinal studies to track the long-term effects of social media usage on stress levels and the overall mental health of high school students. It can help to develop various intervention strategies aimed at reducing stress related to social media use. This might include: Digital literacy programs, Mindfulness techniques for social media consumption. Similarly, Future research could explore the potential positive and negative effects of social media use on children and adolescent well-being, such as social support and identity formation among adolescents, screen addiction, procrastination, and others. Lastly, investigating the interplay between social media use, stress levels, and academic performance could provide valuable insights for educational policy and practice.

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