Final Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the beginning of the Spring 2024 semester, we were tasked with an assignment to research a topic of our choosing. After brainstorming, we decided to investigate social media's effects on young adults' mental health. This document will provide a comprehensive overview of the research we have gathered this semester.

This topic was one that we wanted to research further due to the first-hand impact we have observed social media to have, not only on ourselves but also on our friends. We felt that this subject had a lot of ground to cover and could lead us to have a better understanding of how our generation felt and still feels about social media.

To begin our research, each member of our group, consisting of four members, came up with survey questions that we felt would best help us with our research. After combining our individual questions, we narrowed the questions down to 26. The survey questions consisted of open-ended questions, Likert-type scale questions, semantic-differential scale questions, and even rating questions, plus a few more styles. We then moved our questions to Qualtrics to finalize our survey.

On March 27, 2024, we published our survey and began collecting responses. To collect responses, each member of the group posted the link to their socials and encouraged their audiences to answer the questions. After the survey was up for a week, we began sending individual texts to our peers for more diverse responses.

On April 17 we closed the survey for responses and began looking into our findings.

Overall, we found mixed reviews on the effect of social media on the mental health of young

adults. Participants found that social media has a positive impact on their mental health when it comes to staying in touch with long-distance loved ones, but they also shared that social media hurts their mental health when it comes to comparing themselves to others online. For example, when we asked the participants whether they felt more connected and supported by social media interactions or experienced increased stress or anxiety due to social media, out of N=88, 61% said that they felt more connected and supported by social media interactions whereas 39% said that they experience increased stress or anxiety due to social media.

Contrary to our initial expectations, our results leaned towards a neutral stance. This suggests that our age group may not be as significantly impacted by social media as commonly presumed. They also shared their concern for lack of authenticity and transparency on social media which can have an impact on mental health as well. In conclusion, open discussion and more research would be beneficial to make sure that the majority of participants could answer that social media has a positive impact on their mental health.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In modern society, social media has emerged as a formidable force, intricately woven into the fabric of our daily lives. It serves as our primary conduit for news dissemination, educational resources, financial opportunities, entertainment escapades, and the maintenance of social connections. With a staggering 61.4% of the global population actively engaged in its digital realms, social media has become an omnipresent aspect of contemporary existence (70+ Social Media & Mental Health Statistics). However, despite its undeniable influence and benefits, social media presents a double-edged sword, particularly for young adults, who find themselves at the epicenter of this digital revolution.

On one hand, social media serves as a lifeline for young adults, fostering connections that transcend geographical boundaries and satisfying their thirst for knowledge through exposure to diverse perspectives and trends. It enables them to rekindle bonds with distant loved ones and immerse themselves in the latest fashion trends and makeup tutorials (Lindner, Jannik). These positive contributions are often cherished and celebrated.

Yet, this virtual utopia is not without its shadows. The pervasive culture of comparison and the relentless pursuit of validation and fleeting gratification often leave young adults ensnared in a vortex of wasted time and emotional turmoil. The specter of loneliness looms large as meticulously curated feeds amplify feelings of inadequacy (The Annie E. Casey Foundation). Despite these challenges, the allure of connectivity and information access continues to draw young adults into the digital landscape.

Amidst these conflicting realities, we embark on a journey of introspection and inquiry to discern the prevailing sentiment regarding the net impact of social media. While studies by Samaritan Behavioral Health reveal that 72% of online 18-29-year-olds use social networking sites, the American Psychological Association has issued warnings about the potential harm that excessive social media use can bring (Social Media Brings Benefits and Risks). Staggering statistics from sources like Bright Futures NY illustrate the range of emotions evoked by social media, from feelings of being overwhelmed to experiencing pressures to keep up and feelings of loneliness. However, there are also incredible statistics highlighting how social media has facilitated business growth, informed young adults on news and diverse viewpoints, and facilitated job opportunities.

In light of these complexities, we seek to understand whether people in our community perceive social media more as a positive or negative influence in their lives. While social media

often receives a bad reputation, we question whether people truly believe this to be the case, recognizing the nuanced nature of our relationship with this ubiquitous yet enigmatic force.

To address the nuanced effects of social media on the demographics of young adults, we built our survey questions on three research questions:

- RQ 1: How does social media affect your perception of yourself?
- RQ 2: What types of posts affect you negatively vs. positively?
- RQ 3: Do you think the positive effects of social media outweigh the negatives?

The goal of the first question is to find out how social media affects everyone differently. We formed multiple survey questions surrounding this idea to truly identify how social media affects how people perceive themselves.

The goal of the second question is to see if there is a difference in how certain posts affect the viewer negatively or positively. For example, how does a simple picture being posted affect the viewer differently than a video? We formed multiple survey questions based on this idea to see what positively impacts viewers. We believe that this will help us as public relations professionals to keep what posts positively impact viewers in mind.

The goal of the third research question is to see if social media users believe that the positive aspects of social media outweigh the negative effects that it might have on them. We formed multiple survey questions based on this concept to better understand how social media users feel after viewing platforms. Overall, these broad research questions helped us narrow down our survey questions to better grasp what we wanted to study, the effects of social media on teens.

METHOD

We first formulated our survey topic by brainstorming relevant and important issues that affect our generation. We wanted a topic that would appeal to a wide group of people, something most people could relate to. This is how we landed on social media, specifically the impact social media has on young people's mental health. We all agreed that social media has affected us in our lives in both beneficial and harmful ways, but did the benefits outweigh the hardships? This is a question we wanted to look into through implementing our survey. Each member of our group agreed we used social media every day of our lives, so this would be a topic we could maintain throughout the entirety of the semester.

We began our research by talking to our friends. What were their general thoughts about social media? We then moved into more in-depth research by looking at studies from the American Psychological Association and the National Center for Biotechnological Information. All of this information helped us with our project memo. We drafted some basic guiding questions that were also included in our project memo. Some of these questions included "How does social media affect your perception of yourself?", "Do you think the positive effects of social media outweigh the negatives?", and "What platform has the biggest effect on your mental health, if any?" These questions, combined with thorough research from credible sources, allowed us to decide we wanted to have a survey for our final research method. We knew the survey results would allow us to find out the most about the Auburn student body, specifically young people.

Around the same time we completed our project memo, we drafted a team charter. This was necessary to ensure we had a basic operating system and could establish some rules of conduct. When crafting this charter, we did things like come up with our team's mission

statement and designate roles for each member. The roles we defined and assigned are as follows:

- · Create lead for graphics and presentations, group head/communicator: Margaret
- Lead researcher; working to coordinate surveys and outreach of our surveys to the community: Gracie
- Contact with the professor and coordinating meeting times outside of class: Brayden
- Scribe, review all things grammar and spelling: Eva

Next, we began the question formulation process. We began by thinking of questions individually. This allowed us to have a large and diverse pool of questions to choose from. This also ensured that each team member was intimately familiar with the question formulation process and able to create a survey on their own. We were all able to draft certain types of questions like rating, ranking, inventory, etc. This helped us in working as a group. Some questions that were drafted individually included "How would you rate your mental health on a scale of 1 to 10?" and "How much do you agree with this statement: I compare myself to others online?" Each question draft was peer-reviewed by another person in the class, which was very helpful for revisions. After this, we all came together to combine our individual questions to create a survey draft that incorporated all of our best questions.

After we completed the draft of the survey, it was peer-reviewed by another group in the class. This was very helpful for revision and allowed us to polish some things we missed. The study included all necessary survey questions like an open-ended, screener, paired comparison, ranking, rating, inventory, etc.

Finally, it was time to start collecting data. This looked like creating a Qualtrics survey and releasing it to the Auburn public. We opened the survey on March 27th and closed the

survey on April 15th. The Qualtrics survey included all of the questions in our final group survey. We sent the survey out mostly via text but also through some emails. The survey was sent to our friends, colleagues, and other members of the Auburn community to make up over 100 responses which we analyzed and thus concluded the study.

RESULTS

- 1. Please indicate your age below by choosing one of the following:
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18-21
 - c. 22-25
 - d. 26+

If you chose option D, please skip to the end.

N=120

This question analyzes the age of participants. The survey predominantly comprised participants between age 18 and 21, n=106 for 88%. Additionally, n=1 participant was under 18 for 1% of the study, n=3 participants were ages 26+ for 3% of the study and n=10 participants were ages 22-25 for 8% of the study. This means that the vast majority of the study were people ages 18-21 which makes sense considering our setting and demographics here at Auburn University.

- 2. Please indicate your gender below by choosing one of the following:
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Other/prefer not to answer

N=96

This survey question analyzes the gender of participants. The survey predominantly comprised female participants, n=86 for 90%. Additionally, n=9 participants were male for 9% and n=1 participant opted not to disclose their gender for 1% of the study. Since mostly women took this survey, this data is mostly from the perspective of women.

- 3. Please indicate your ethnicity below by choosing one of the following:
 - a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - b. Asian / Pacific Islander
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic
 - e. White / Caucasian
 - f. Multiple ethnicity / Other

This survey question analyzes the ethnicity of n=96 participants. The vast majority of those who completed the survey are white/caucasian, n=87 for 91%, n=4 or 4% selected multiple ethnicity, n= 2 or 2% selected American Indian or Alaskan Native and the same for Asian/Pacific Islander at 2% or n=2 participants. Lastly, n=0 people or 0% selected Hispanic or Other.

4. Please share your thoughts on how social media influences mental health, either positively or negatively.

N=53

After looking through the results, N=53 responded in total to this question about how social media influences mental health, either positively or negatively. After organizing the responses into 4 categories, negative, positive, distinctively both, and depends/other/hard to distinguish we found conclusions. Based on these, n=34 or 64% feel negatively influenced by social media, n=12 or 22% feel positively influenced by social media, n=31 or 58% feel both ways about social media and n=6 or 11% feel another way about social media influence.

5. Before proceeding, we would like to ask: Do you currently use social media platforms? *Please choose one of the following:* Yes or No

If you chose no, please skip to the end.

N = 96

Out of these respondents, n=94 said yes, that they currently use social media platforms. n=2 said that they did not use social media platforms. This means that 98% of our participants use social media, while 2% don't, showing that the majority of people use social media.

- 6. Please indicate which statement you agree with more:
 - a. Social media has a positive impact on my mental health.
 - b. Social media has a negative impact on my mental health.

N=88

This survey analyzes whether social media has a positive or negative effect on the mental health of N=88 participants. n=47 or 53% of participants expressed the belief that social media has a negative effect, while n=41 or 47% indicated a positive effect. This means that people are generally split, but lean more towards social media having a negative effect on mental health.

- 7. Please choose which statement resonates with you:
 - a. I feel more connected and supported by social media interactions.
 - b. I experience increased stress or anxiety due to social media use.

N=88

Among the N=88 respondents, n=54 of 61% reported feeling more connected and supported by social media, while n=34 or 39% acknowledged experiencing increased stress and anxiety from social media use. This

means that most people feel more connected and supported by social media than those who experience stress and anxiety from it but there's still a significant group that feels stress and anxiety from social media usage.

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, how often do you feel social media contributes to feelings of anxiety or stress?

Please choose one of the following:

- 1 (Rarely)
- 2 (Occasionally)
- 3 (Sometimes)
- 4 (Frequently)
- 5 (Always)

N = 88

After analyzing the results, n=6 or 7% of participants rarely feel stress and anxiety attributed by social media, n=24 or 27% of participants reported occasionally experiencing those feelings, n=40 or 45% reported sometimes feeling stress and anxiety due to social media, n=14 or 16% reported frequently experiencing those emotions, and n=4 or 5% reported always feeling stress and anxiety attributed to social media. Interestingly, a greater number of respondents reported rarely feeling stress and anxiety compared to those who reported always experiencing such feelings due to social media. For this survey question the mean is M=2.84, this means respondents are saying social media contributes to feelings of anxiety or stress occasionally to sometimes.

- 9. Which aspect of social media do you believe most impacts your mental health?
 - Please choose one of the following:
 - Comparison with others' lifestyles
 - Cyberbullying or negative comments
 - Fear of missing out (FOMO)
 - Pressure to maintain a certain image
 - Excessive screen time leads to fatigue or insomnia

N=88

In total, N=88 responded to this question analyzing which of 5 aspects of social media do participants believe most impact their mental health. n=37 or 42% of participants identified comparison with others' lifestyles as the most significant factor impacting their mental health, which was the highest category. n=19 or 22% of those surveyed cited fear of missing out. n=14 or 16% highlighted pressure to maintain a certain image, n=14 or 16% also expressed concerns about excessive screen time leading to fatigue or insomnia, and n=4 or 5% mentioned cyberbullying or negative comments, representing the lowest category of responses.

10. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media has a significant impact on my overall emotional well-being."

Please choose one of the following:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree

- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

N=87

Out of N=87 respondents to this question analyzing social media's impact on overall well being, the majority of people remain neutral n=40 or 46% of participants. n=28 or 32% agreed, n=12 or 14% disagreed, n=6 or 7% strongly agreed and n=1 or 1% strongly disagreed. The mean is M=3.3, which means that most people remain neutral but are trending towards agree considering the highest categories are "neutral" and "agree".

11. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media negatively impacts my mental health."

Please choose one of the following:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

N=88

Out of N=88 respondents assessing how social media negatively impacts mental health, most people remain neutral or agreed. n=36 or 41% of participants agreed, with neutral being a close second at n=35 or 40%. n=14 or 16% disagreed, n=3 or 3% strongly agreed and n=0 or 0% strongly disagreed. With a mean of 3.32, this means that people generally think that it negatively impacts mental health in some way but because there's so many people remaining neutral as well, the opinions on the negativity aren't extremely negative, just slightly negative.

- 12. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media causes me to feel stress." *Please choose one of the following:*
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

N=88

Out of N=88 respondents, n=35 or 40% said they remain neutral and n=33 or 38% said they agree. While, n=15 or 17% said they disagree, n=1 or 1% said they strongly disagree and n=4 or 5% said they strongly agree. The mean of this question is M=3.27 which means that most people remain neutral or agree about stress caused by social media but the opinions aren't incredibly strong on either side.

- 13. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media causes me to feel calm." *Please choose one of the following:*
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree

Strongly Agree

N = 88

In total, N=88 responded to this question about whether social media causes people to feel calm. The largest category is neutral with n=43 or 49% of people feeling this way about social media making them feel calm. n=27 or 31% said they disagree, n=15 or 17% said they agree that social media makes them feel calm, n=3 or 3% said they strongly disagree and n=0 or 0% said they strongly agree. The mean of this question is M=2.80 which is the lowest mean in this study meaning that people feel that social media either does not affect their calmness or slightly disagree but their opinions aren't super strong.

- 14. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media causes me to feel overwhelmed."
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

N = 88

Out of N=88 respondents, n=42 or 48% of participants agree that social media causes them to feel overwhelmed, n=23 or 26% said they remain neutral, n=14 or 16% said they disagree, and n=1 or 1% said they strongly agree. The mean for this question is 3.10 which means that people generally think that social media causes them to feel overwhelmed but there's also a lot of people that are neutral to it and probably aren't too affected by social media as far as being overwhelmed.

- 15. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social is helpful to me." *Please choose one of the following:*
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

N = 88

In total we had N=88 respondents to this question about whether social media is helpful or not. Most people agreed with n=58 or 66% of participants selecting that answer. n=20 or 23% said they remain neutral, n=7 or 8% said they strongly agree, n=3 or 3% said they disagree and n=0 or 0% said they strongly disagree. The mean for this question is 3.78 which means that generally people think social media is helpful.

- 16. Please rank the following aspects of social media in terms of their impact on your mental health, with 1 being the most significant and 5 being the least significant:
 - 1. Fear of missing out (FOMO)
 - 2. Comparison with others' lifestyles
 - 3. Cyberbullying or negative comments
 - 4. Pressure to maintain a certain image
 - 5. Excessive screen time leading to fatigue or insomnia

N=85

We had 85 total responses for this question about ranking aspects of social media in terms of their impact on mental health from 1-5 with most significant to least significant. Starting with FOMO, n=25 or 29% ranked it first, n=16 or 18% ranked it second, n=25 or 29% ranked it 3rd, n=15 or 17% ranked it fourth and n=4 or 4% ranked it fifth. For comparison, n=33 or 38% ranked it first, n=33 or 38% ranked it second, n=10 or 11% ranked it third, n=7 or 8% ranked it fourth, and n=2 or 2% ranked it fifth. For cyberbullying, n=4 or 4% ranked it first, n=0 or 0% ranked it second, n=8 or 9% ranked it third, n=5 or 5% ranked it fourth, and n=68 or 80% ranked it fifth. For pressure n=7 or 8% ranked it first, n=20 or 23% ranked it second, n=32 or 37% ranked it third, n=26 or 30% ranked it fourth, and n=1 or 1% ranked it fifth. For excessive n=16 or 18% ranked it first, n=16 or 18% ranked it second, n=11 or 12% ranked it third, n=32 or 37% ranked it fourth, and n=10 or 11% ranked it fifth.

17. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all and 10 being extreme, how much do you believe social media impacts your mental health?

Please choose one of the following:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

N = 88

We had N=88 respondents to this question about how much social media impacts people's mental health. n=1 or 1% choose 1, n=3 or 3% choose 2, n=13 or 15% choose 3, n=10 or 11% choose 4, n=10 or 11% choose 5, n=21 or 24% choose 6 which was the highest category, n=16 or 18% choose 7, n=11 or 13% choose 8, n=1 or 9% choose 9, and n=2 or 2% choose 10. This means most people feel like it impacts them but not extremely.

- 18. Please select all the options that you think best reflect how social media has influenced you negatively:
 - Declining mental health (depression, anxiety)
 - Body image
 - Self-worth
 - Loneliness
 - Social Life
 - Sleep
 - Attention span

N=89

In total, we had N=89 respondents to this question about how social media influences people negatively. n=68 or 76% of participants selected that social media impacts body image negatively, n=66 or 74% said it influences attention span negatively, n=64 or 72% said social media influences their sleep negatively, n=40 or 45#=% of participants selected that social media influences their self-worth negatively, and n=53 or 60% of participants said that it influences their social life negatively, n=38 or 43% said social media impacts their feelings of loneliness negatively, and lastly, n=33 or 37% said social media influences their declining mental health negatively. It's great that the lowest category was about mental health because people feel the least impact on their mental health, but the other categories are just as important to consider.

- 19. Please select all the options that you think best reflect how social media has influenced you positively:
 - Building Relationships
 - Confidence
 - Motivation
 - Creativity
 - Support System
 - Educational
 - Income/job

N=89

After reviewing the results, n=89 people responded to this question and there are mixed opinions, people could also select multiple categories which played a factor. n=67 or 75% of participants feel that social media influences creativity, n=64 or 72% of participants selected that social media influences building relationships, n=54 or 61% of participants selected that social media influences their education, n=32 or 36% of participants selected that social media influences their support system, n=31 or 35% selected that social media influences motivation, n=29 or 33% selected that social media influences their confidence, and n=26 or 29% of participants selected that social media influences their income/job. Many participants selected multiple answers and the results align with our data from the rest of this study.

- 20. Please select the statement that best describes your experience with social media and its effects on your mental health:
 - a) Social media has a positive impact on my mental health.
 - b) Social media has a negative impact on my mental health.
 - c) Social media has a neutral impact on my mental health.

N=89

Out of N=89 respondents, most people said that social media has a neutral impact on their mental health with n=57 or 64% of participants selecting that answer. n=22 or 25% of participants said that social media has a negative impact on their mental health and n=10 or 11% of participants said social media has a positive impact on their mental health. This agrees with most of the information from this study, people tend to feel a combination of positive and negative feelings about social media and their mental health impacts.

We greatly appreciate your valuable contribution to our study. Rest assured, your responses are treated with the utmost confidentiality. Your time and honesty are highly valued. Thank you once more for your participation.

DISCUSSION

The study primarily encompassed participants aged 18 to 21, predominantly comprising females of white/Caucasian ethnicity, reflective of the demographics within our research group.

While our research delves into the impact of social media on young adults, it's crucial to recognize the inherent limitations of our findings. Our study predominantly reflects the experiences and viewpoints of young adult white/Caucasian women, potentially constraining the breadth of insights obtained. Additionally, as college students conducting this research project, we encountered limitations stemming from our limited experience and resources. Time constraints imposed by the end of the semester also necessitated a relatively swift completion of the study. These factors collectively underscore the need for a cautious interpretation of our findings and highlight avenues for improvement in future research endeavors.

Overall, our research suggests that this demographic perceives social media as having a predominantly neutral impact on their mental well-being. Although some acknowledge a minor negative influence, they also recognize various benefits. Many participants do not attribute heightened stress or anxiety directly to social media usage; however, they acknowledge feelings of comparison and discontentment, particularly regarding body image, which occasionally result in feelings of overwhelm.

Responses to inquiries regarding the helpfulness of social media reveal a nuanced perspective, with 66% agreeing. These findings underscore the complex interplay between social media usage and mental health perceptions among young adult white/Caucasian women, while also highlighting the need for more diverse representation in future studies to attain a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

The study findings were somewhat unexpected, considering the extensive research available on both the adverse and beneficial effects of social media. Contrary to our initial expectations, our results leaned towards a neutral stance. This suggests that our age group may not be as significantly impacted by social media as commonly presumed. Notably, a substantial portion of Gen-Z did not grow up immersed in social media culture, potentially contributing to this divergence from anticipated outcomes.

Despite acknowledging the disruptions to their sleep schedules and occasional discontentment, our participants also recognized the invaluable connections and wealth of knowledge facilitated by social media. They perceive it as a tool for staying connected with loved ones and as a platform for learning. This nuanced understanding suggests a complex relationship with social media among our demographic. We believe there is a need to further explore younger demographics to fully grasp social media's multifaceted impact. We advocate for future research endeavors to prioritize diversity by actively seeking out participants from various ethnic backgrounds and genders. This approach will provide a more comprehensive understanding of social media's impact, ensuring insights are not limited to the experiences of white/Caucasian girls but reflect the perspectives of a broader demographic. If we did it again, perhaps we should consider doing a focus group so that we could choose a broad demographic.

Based on the insights gleaned from our study, we propose a shift in PR strategies away from solely focusing on the negative impacts of social media, as a significant portion of young adult females perceive their social media relationship as neutral. Instead, we recommend

directing attention toward the addictive nature of social media, which leads to disrupted sleep patterns and decreased productivity. Our findings indicate that young adult females do not necessarily view social media as detrimental to their mental health. Given that Dove aims to connect with this demographic, we suggest steering clear of mental health-centric campaigns.

Dove could embark on a refreshing campaign encouraging people to unplug from their phones, steering away from the often heavy topics of depression and anxiety. Our modern era is characterized by a pervasive addiction to screens, leading to sleepless nights and continuous comparison with others. Leveraging relatable influencers like Dani Austin, known for their genuine portrayal of everyday life and advice, would lend authenticity to Dove's message. Drawing inspiration from their successful interview-style campaigns, Dove could showcase alternatives to phone-scrolling through the eyes of everyday individuals. Suggestions could range from embracing the outdoors, delving into a good book, or indulging in the therapeutic art of baking. By highlighting the myriad activities waiting beyond the digital realm, Dove would address the prevalent issue of social media time-wasting, without necessarily framing it as a mental health concern. This approach acknowledges that while Gen-Z may not perceive excessive screen time as detrimental to mental well-being, there's a shared recognition of its impact on productivity and genuine connection. Encouraging a shift in behavior towards more fulfilling activities could also alleviate the pervasive comparison culture perpetuated by constant online exposure, as evidenced by our statistics.

APPENDICES

Sources

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Survey Instrument

Q1 Please indicate your age below by choosing one of the following:

O Under 18 (1)

O 18-21 (2)

O 22-25 (3)

O 26+ (4)

Skip To: End of Survey If Please indicate your age below by choosing one of the following: = Under 18

Skip To: End of Survey If Please indicate your age below by choosing one of the following: =
26+
Q2 Please Indicate your gender below by choosing one of the following:
O Female (1)
O Male (2)
Other (3)
O Prefer not to answer (4)
Q3 Please indicate your ethnicity below by choosing one of the following:
O American Indian or Alaskan Native (1)
O Asian / Pacific Islander (2)
O Black or African American (3)
O Hispanic (4)
O White / Caucasian (5)
O Multiple ethnicity (6)
Other (7)

Q4 Please share your thoughts on how social media influences mental health, either positively or negatively.
Q5 Before proceeding, we would like to ask: Do you currently use social media platforms?
O Yes (1)
O No (2)
Skip To: End of Survey If Before proceeding, we would like to ask: Do you currently use social media platforms? = No
Q6 Please indicate which statement you agree with more:
O Social media has a positive impact on my mental health (1)
O Social media has a negative impact on my mental health (2)
Q7 Please choose which statement resonates with you:
O I feel more connected and supported by social media interactions. (1)
O I experience increased stress or anxiety due to social media (2)
Q8 On a scale of 1 to 5, how often do you feel social media contributes to feelings of anxiety or stress?

1 (Rarely) (1)
O 2 (Occasionally) (2)
3 (Sometimes) (3)
O 4 (Frequently) (4)
○ 5 (Always) (5)
Q9 Which aspect of social media do you believe most impacts your mental health? Please choose one of the following:
Comparison with others' lifestyles (1)
O Cyberbullying or negative comments (2)
• Fear of missing out (FOMO) (3)
O Pressure to maintain a certain image (4)
Excessive screen time leads to fatigue or insomnia (5)
Q10 Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media has a significant impact on my overall emotional well-being."

O Strongly Disagree (1)
O Disagree (2)
O Neutral (3)
O Agree (4)
O Strongly Agree (5)
Q11 Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media negatively impacts my mental health."
O Strongly Disagree (1)
O Disagree (2)
O Neutral (3)
O Agree (4)
O Strongly Agree (5)
Q12 Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media causes me to feel stress."
O Strongly Disagree (1)

O Disagree (2)
O Neutral (3)
O Agree (4)
O Strongly agree (5)
Q13 Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media causes me to feel calm."
O Strongly Disagree (1)
O Disagree (2)
O Neutral (3)
O Agree (4)
O Strongly Agree (5)
Q14 Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media causes me to feel overwhelmed."
O Strongly Agree (1)

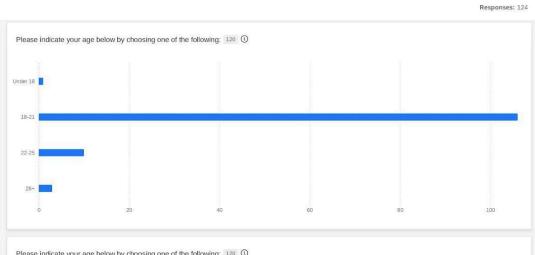
O Disagree (2)
O Neutral (3)
O Agree (4)
O Strongly Agree (5)
Q15 Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media is helpful to me."
O Strongly Disagree (1)
O Disagree (2)
O Neutral (3)
O Agree (4)
O Strongly Agree (5)
Q16 Please rank the following aspects of social media in terms of their impact on your mental health, with 1 being the most significant and 5 being the least significant:
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) (1)
Comparison with others' lifestyles (2)
Cyberbullying or negative comments (3)
Pressure to maintain a certain image (4)

Excessive screen time leading to fatigue or insomnia (5)
Q17 On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all and 10 being extreme, how much do you believe social media impacts your mental health?
O ₁ (1)
O 2 (2)
O ₃ (3)
O 4 (4)
O 5 (5)
O 6 (6)
O 7 (7)
O 8 (8)
O 9 (9)
O 10 (10)
Q18 Please select all the options that you think best reflect how social media has influenced you negatively:
Declining Mental Health (depression, anxiety) (1)
Body Image (2)

	Self Worth (3)
	Loneliness (4)
	Social Life (5)
	Sleep (6)
	Attention Span (7)
Q19 Plea	ase select all the options that you think best reflect how social media has influenced you y:
	Staying Connected (1)
	Building Relationships (2)
	Confidence (3)
	Motivation (4)
	Creativity (5)
	Support System (6)
	Educational (7)
	Income/job (8)

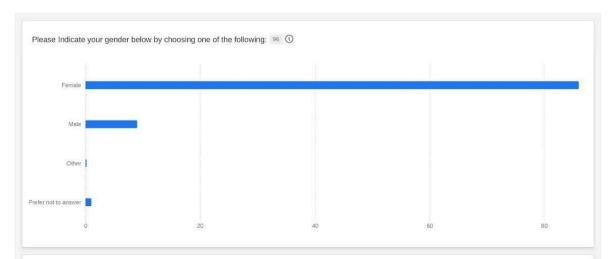
Q20 Please select the statement that best describes your experience with social media and its effects on your mental health:
O Social media has a positive impact on my mental health. (1)
O Social media has a negative impact on my mental health. (2)
O Social media has a neutral impact on my mental health. (3)
Survey Tables, Charts and Graphs

Affects of Social Media on Teens / Page 1



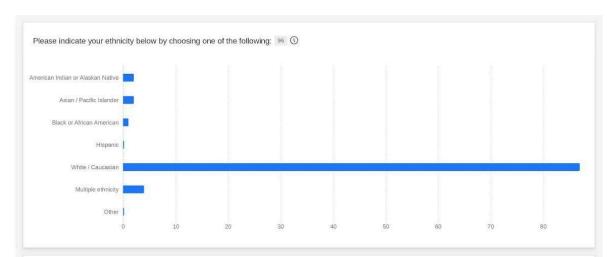
21 - Please indicate your age below by choosing one of the ollowing:	Percentage	Count
Under 18	1%	1
8-21	88%	106
22-25	8%	10
26+	3%	13

Please indicate your age below by choosing one of the following:	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Coun
Under 18	1.00	1.00	1.00	
18-21	2.00	2.00	2.00	10
22-25	3.00	3.00	3.00	1
26+	4.00	4.00	4.00	



22 - Please Indicate your gender below by choosing one of the	Percentage	Coun
ollowing:		
emale	90%	8
nale	9%	
other	0%	
Prefer not to answer	1%	

Please Indicate your gender below by choosing one of the following:	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cour
Female	1.00	1.00	1.00	8
Male	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Other		ä	8	
Prefer not to answer	4.00	4,00	4.00	



23 - Please indicate your ethnicity below by choosing one of the ollowing:	Percentage	Coun
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2%	
Asian / Pacific Islander	2%	
Black or African American	1%	
Hispanic	0%	
White / Caucasian	91%	8
Multiple ethnicity	4%	
Other	0%	

Please indicate your ethnicity below by choosing one of the following:	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cour
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Asian / Pacific Islander	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Black or African American	3.00	3.00	3.00	
Hispanic	și	¥	¥	
White / Caucasian	5.00	5.00	5.00	8
Multiple ethnicity	6.00	6.00	6.00	
Other				

Please share your thoughts on how social media influences mental health, either positively or negatively.
negatively
i think it depends on your perception of reality on social media. a lot of it is fake.
Both
I think it influenced mental health in positive ways by allowing us to connect with others
I think it can influence mental health in a negative way, especially for girls
It can be both positive and negative
Social media can be an amazing tool that can help people like online therapy or people looking for inspiration. But there are so many negative sides like bullying or comparing yourself to others.
I learn about friends and family life events like travel which is positive, however, it can but can be a distraction
Negatively
Both positive and negative. It is good in doses.
Negatuve in a social image way, can make life look so perfectly.
I think social media gives me a lot of anxiety just based off posting and seeing who has liked it and what people think of me.
It causes people to compare themselves too much
It can connect me to long distance friends and family but you can never turn it off which can lead to a comparison game.
Social media can influence mental health negatively by seeing unrealistic standards due to all the filters and photoshopping that one can do to an image
It affects it negatively
Negatively - social media is horrible for us

believe it can be a wide confidence booster as well as having an impact negatively. When used properly it can be a great way to communicate and keep in touch with many people where past generations could not have done so.
think an appropriate use of social media can determine whether it is positive or negative for each individual's health, personally, i find it to be positive!
Soth positive and negative
t can make people feel more connected to eachother but it can also influence negative comparison
both
Creates and standard for how you are "supposed to look or act" but after posting a lot of people send positive comments and make you feel awesome
Both! Makes me happy to see friends and family but makes me anxious to see different scenarios
t caused a bunch of comparison which is negative, but it is awesome to share creativity and to keep up with people
Social media influences my mental health positively. I love online shopping and makeup so it's fun to see what other people are wearing and using
think that in a lot of ways social media is an escape for many people. Where many can come to learn and grow. But with all good, there is inevitably bad. I think many aspects of social nedia allows for harmful, and hurtful messages to go unnoticed except for the person they were intended. Cyberbullying is a huge issue that has come out of social media and has negatively influenced mental health.
Positively
Social media can be both good and bad. Seeing other positive people is very motivating for me and helps me to find more ways to love myself. But on the other hand, there is so much legativity and bullying that happens on social media that can affect so many people.
think that it can be detrimental to mental health in terms of comparison. A lot of people tend to compare themselves to other people.
negative impact
believe social media affects the younger generations negatively due to the constant comparison game.
think social media influences mental health negatively. Constant comparison, insecurity, and less satisfaction in overall view of self.

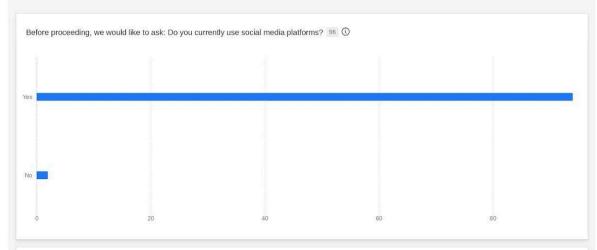
Honestly it's the root of depression and anxiety for me. I compare myself to others and always think about how others are achieving more than I am.
positively
positive- new ideas and outlets. negative- unrealistic expectations and false realities
Social media can sometimes be detrimental to my mental health.
Positively
I believe social media have both positive and negative effects on mental health. Social media provides many things such as connection, support, or even resources for mental health. On the other hand cyber bullying is a very common thing that can be done, even anonymously making the bully making comments and harassing people online without any consequences.
I think social media negatively affects mental health as people share mostly only their highs.
Social media is a very influential tool that can have negative effects on people especially younger impressionable children who use it
Detrimental to attention span
It only influences you in the ways you let it. Constantly stalking celebrities will have a negative impact on your mental health because you only the glamorous life style. You get to choose what you see.
It can do both. You control what media you are exposed to and ingest.
I think it depends on the company, but for the most part it adds a lot of competitive nature to it
It makes me feel bad about my body/face. It makes me feel connected to other people
I think it can both positively and negatively it for different reasons and in different ways
I believe that a lot of mental health issues stem from social media. I believe that especially for girls we compare ourselves to others and try to put out this amazing front of our life that really may not be true.
I think social media influences mental health both positively and negatively. On the positive side it helps to promote interaction and relationships with people which improves mental health. I believe it can be a negative influence because in some ways social media promotes life/body standards that might not be feasible for all people.

I think it effects people negatively
It makes you unable to be content with what you have in life
Social media can negatively effect mental health by creating unrealistic standards expectations and a source of comparison especially for girls. It also is used as a numbing mechanism and distraction from dealing with mental stress.
Negatively
I think social media can have both positive and negative aspects. It helps connect people and help people stay in touch with those far away. Although, I do really think that the negative side outweighs the positives. I feet like it makes people lonely, compare themselves more, and feel more insecure.
I feel like it is both ways. Sometimes we can compare ourselves to people on social media so that is negative. But sometimes we can get positive ideas from people so that is a positive effect!
Positively
positive
Social media has both negative and positive effects on mental health. It allows me to keep up with people who I love but also breeds comparison and discontentment at times.
Negatively
I think there is a definite negative affect of social media on mental health
I think, in many ways, social media can boost mental health because it is an outlet for people to express themselves. In other ways, it can have a negative impact on mental health through means such as pressure to adapt to certain lifestyles, jealousy, bullying, etc.
can have both kinds of impacts
It influences my mental health in both positive and negative ways
Negatively
I think that while social media can be a valuable tool for communication, the cons outweigh the pros and it has detrimental effects on mental health, especially in young adults and children.

Social media negatively impacts mental health specifically for young girls comparing themself to unrealistic standards portrayed by the media. However, social media also connects people together and fosters social connections.
l believe that social media has both positive and negative affects on mental health. Positive (through bringing affirmation, negative through promoting comparison)
Positively affects mel
Social media can negatively influence mental health because it creates a false reality of the "perfect" life.
Positive
I believe it impacts people positively and negatively. It's easy to quickly compare yourself to others who appear to have a better life than you. However, it can also be very inspiring,
Very negatively. It can be used positively, but I think for the majority of people, it is negative.
I think social media mostly influences mental health negatively due to the comparison and constant worry about looks
positive
it negatively does bc it gives false body images and often makes people feel bad about themselves
It is negatively affected
I think it's mix but definitely leads to negative thoughts
I think social media affects mental health both positively and negatively. Positively because it is a way to connect to others and learn new things, negatively because sometimes "influencers" set extreme standards.
Social media has a negative impact on my mental health.
Keeps me connected with friends, takes up too much of my time
l enjoy social media to connect with friends and family, but it is often really draining.

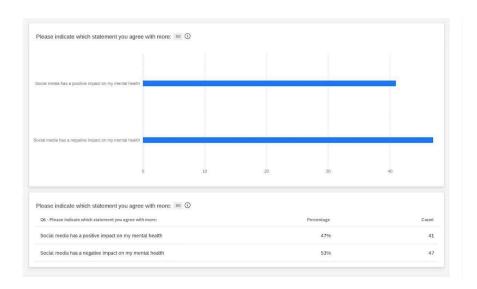
negatively because people compare themselves physically mentally and emotionally

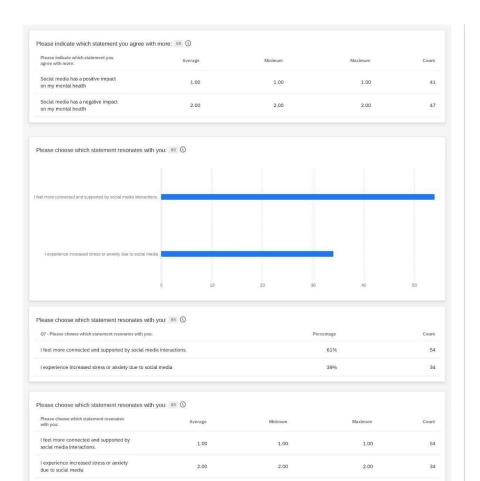
I think social media has both positive and negative effects with excellent online resources but also creating body image issues and self-inflicted comparison to those you see online.

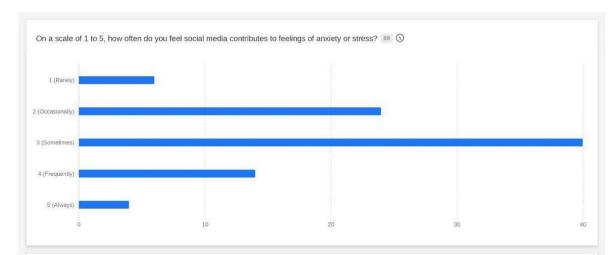


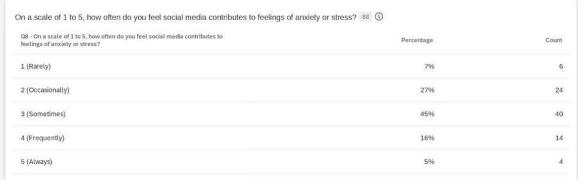
25 - Before proceeding, we would like to ask: Do you currently use ocial media platforms?	Percentage	Cou	
/es	98%		
No	2%		

efore proceeding, we would like to ask: to you currently use social media	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cou
es	1.00	1.00	1.00	
lo	2.00	2.00	2.00	

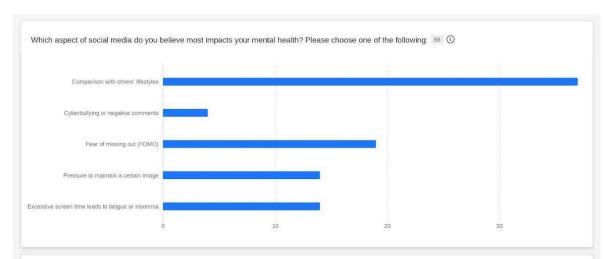






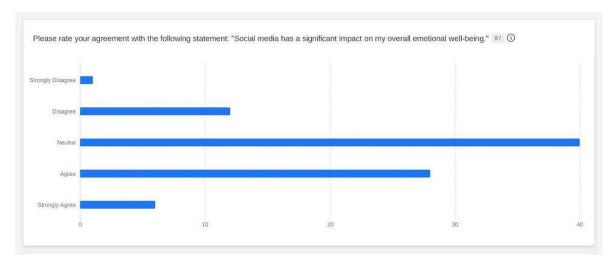


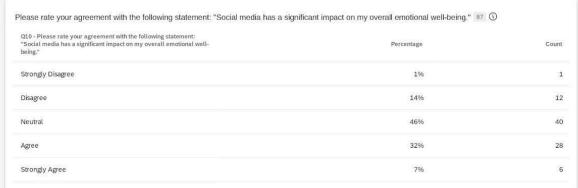
On a scale of 1 to 5, how often do you feel social media contributes to fee	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cour
1 (Rarely)	1.00	1.00	1.00	
2 (Occasionally)	2.00	2.00	2.00	2
3 (Sometimes)	3.00	3.00	3.00	4
(Frequently)	4.00	4.00	4.00	1
5 (Always)	5.00	5.00	5.00	



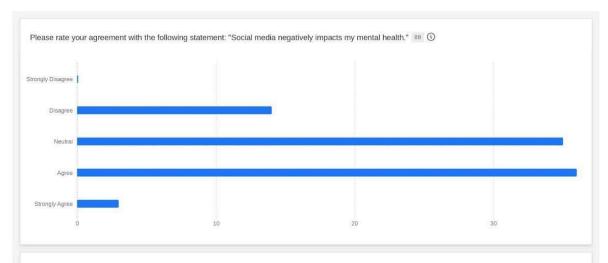
9 - Which aspect of social media do you believe most impacts your mental		
is a which aspect of social media do you believe most impacts your mental lealth? Please choose one of the following:	Percentage	Coun
Comparison with others' lifestyles	42%	3
Cyberbullying or negative comments	5%	
Fear of missing out (FOMO)	22%	1
Pressure to maintain a certain image	16%	1
Excessive screen time leads to fatigue or insomnia	16%	1

Which aspect of social media do you believe most impacts your mental health	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Coun
Comparison with others' lifestyles	1.00	1.00	1.00	3
Cyberbullying or negative comments	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Fear of missing out (FOMO)	3.00	3.00	3.00	1
Pressure to maintain a certain image	4.00	4.00	4.00	1
Excessive screen time leads to fatigue or nsomnia	5.00	5.00	5.00	1



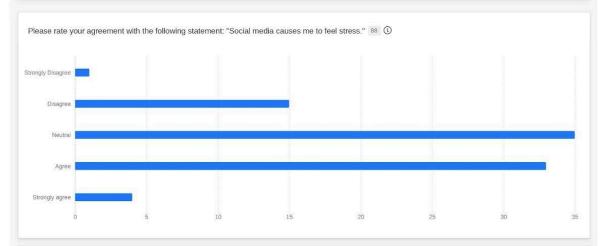


Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media has	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Strongly Disagree	1.00	1.00	1.00	3
Disagree	2.00	2.00	2.00	1:
Neutral	3.00	3.00	3.00	40
Agree	4.00	4.00	4.00	28
Strongly Agree	5.00	5.00	5.00	(



111 - Please rate your agreement with the following statement: Social media negatively impacts my mental health."	Percentage	Coun
Social media negativety impacts my mental neards.		
Strongly Disagree	0%	3
disagree	16%	1
leutral	40%	3
gee	41%	3
strongly Agree	3%	

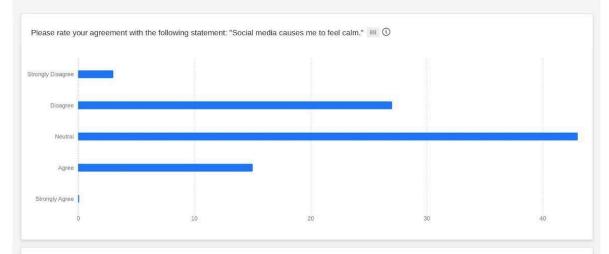
Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media nega	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cou
Strongly Disagree	ži.	×	WI.	
Disagree	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Neutral	3.00	3.00	3.00	
Agree	4.00	4.00	4.00	
Strongly Agree	5.00	5.00	5.00	



ease rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media causes	The to leer stress. So S	
212 - Please rate your agreement with the following statement: Social media causes me to feel stress."	Percentage	Cou
Strongly Disagree	1%	
Disagree	17%	1
Neutral	40%	3
\gree	38%	3
Strongly agree	5%	

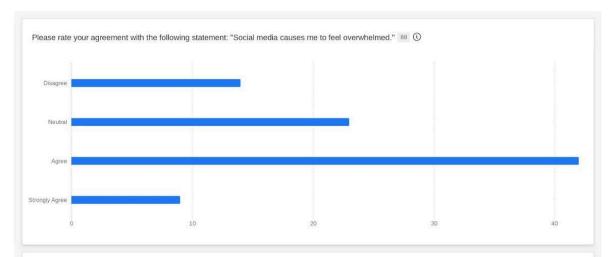
Please rate your agreement with the		-83	25.00	
following statement: "Social media caus	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Coi
Strongly Disagree	1.00	1.00	1.00	

Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media caus	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Neutral	3.00	3.00	3.00	35
Agree	4.00	4.00	4.00	33
Strongly agree	5.00	5.00	5.00	4



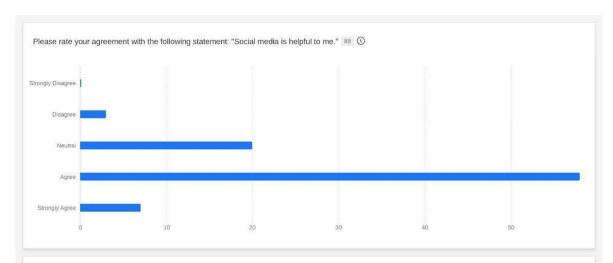
ease rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media causes	sine to leer caim. 66 G	
21.3 - Please rate your agreement with the following statement: Social media causes me to feel calm."	Percentage	Count
Strongly Disagree	3%	3
Disagree	31%	27
Neutral	49%	43
\gree	17%	15
Strongly Agree	0%	C

Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media caus	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cour
Strongly Disagree	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Disagree	2.00	2.00	2.00	2
Neutral	3.00	3.00	3.00	14
Agree	4.00	4.00	4.00	1



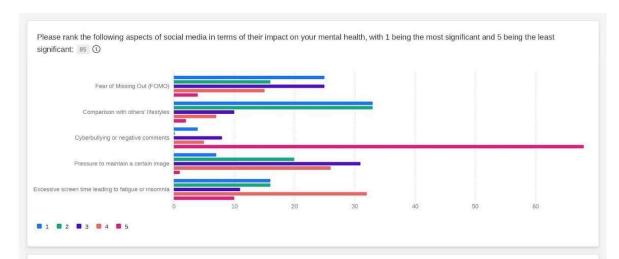
214 - Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media auses me to feel overwhelmed."	Percentage	Coun
Jisagree	16%	1
Neutral	26%	2
Agree	48%	4
Strongly Agree	1%	

Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media caus	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cour
Disagree	2.00	2.00	2.00	1
Neutral	3.00	3.00	3.00	2
Agree	4.00	4.00	4.00	4
Strongly Agree	1.00	1.00	1.00	

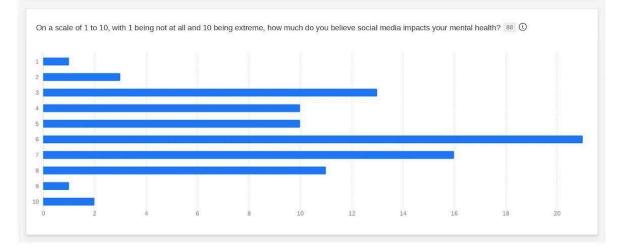


215 - Please rate your agreement with the following statement: 'Social media is helpful to me."	Percentage	Coun
Strongly Disagree	0%	
Disagree	3%	
Neutral	23%	2
Agree	66%	5
Strongly Agree	8%	

Please rate your agreement with the following statement: "Social media is h	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Coun
Strongly Disagree	9	*	81	
Disagree	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Neutral	3.00	3.00	3.00	2
Agree	4.00	4.00	4.00	5
Strongly Agree	5.00	5.00	5.00	

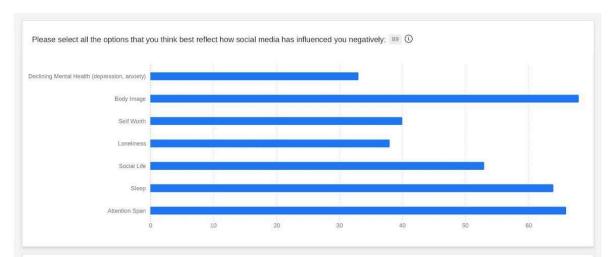


eir impact on your me	ntal health, with 1 bei	ng the most significa	nt and 5 being the le	ast
1	2	3	4	5
25	16	25	15	4
33	33	10	7	2
4	0	8	5	68
7	20	31	26	1
16	16	11	32	10
	1 25 33 4	1 2 25 16 33 33 4 0 7 20	1 2 3 25 16 25 33 33 10 4 0 8 7 20 31	25 16 25 15 33 33 10 7 4 0 8 5 7 20 31 26

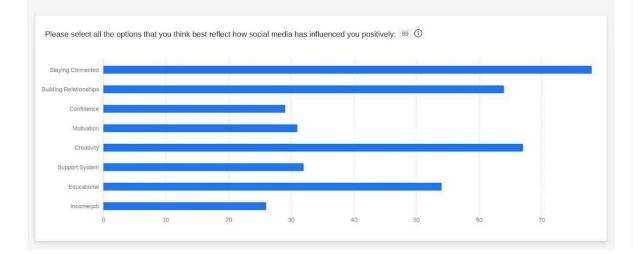


n a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all and 10 being extreme, how much	ao you beneve sosiai media impacio you mentai nedian.	
217 - On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all and 10 being extreme, how much do you believe social media impacts your nental health?	Percentage	Cou
	1%	
2	3%	
3	15%	
4	11%	
5	11%	
5	24%	
7	18%	
3	13%	
	1%	
10	2%	

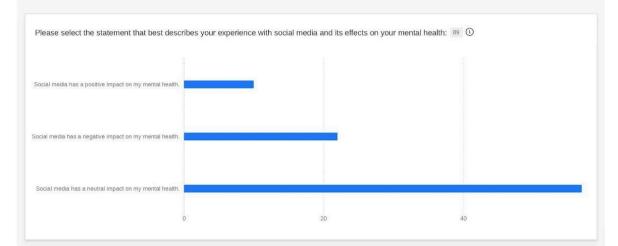
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all and 10 being extreme, how mu	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cour
1	1.00	1.00	1.00	
2	2.00	2.00	2.00	
3	3.00	3.00	3.00	1
4	4.00	4.00	4.00	1
5	5.00	5.00	5.00	1
6	6.00	6.00	6.00	2
7	7.00	7.00	7.00	1
8	8.00	8.00	8.00	1
9	9.00	9.00	9.00	
10	10.00	10.00	10.00	



218 - Please select all the options that you think best reflect how social nedia has influenced you negatively:	Percentage	Coun
Declining Mental Health (depression, anxiety)	37%	3:
Body Image	76%	68
Self Worth	45%	4
oneliness	43%	3
Social Life	60%	50
Sleep	72%	64
Attention Span	74%	6



Q19 - Please select all the options that you think best reflect how social media has influenced you positively:	Percentage	Cou
Staying Connected	88%	8
Building Relationships	72%	d
Confidence	33%	
Motivation	35%	
Creativity	75%	
Support System	36%	
Educational	61%	
Income/job	29%	2



ease select the statement that best describes your experience with social media a	and its effects on your mental health: 89 U	
Q20 - Please select the statement that best describes your experience with social media and its effects on your mental health:	Percentage	Count
Social media has a positive impact on my mental health.	11%	10
Social media has a negative impact on my mental health.	25%	22
Social media has a neutral impact on my mental health.	64%	57

	25 120 120 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12		health: 89 (
Please select the statement that best describes your experience with social	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Cou
Social media has a positive impact on my mental health.	1.00	1.00	1.00	d
Social media has a negative impact on my mental health.	2.00	2.00	2.00	3
Social media has a neutral impact on my mental health.	3.00	3.00	3.00	