

**THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF ADOLESCENTS' USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA****Sevara Ikromovna Urunova**

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**INTRODUCTION**

In today's information-oriented society, social media has become an integral part of our daily lives. Adolescents, in particular, are among the most active users of these technologies. Adolescence is a sensitive stage in human development marked by significant psychological and social formation. During this period, adolescents strive to understand the world around them, find their place in it, and develop a unique identity. Thus, social media plays a major role in this process.

The Internet is an indispensable part of modern life and is considered the most widespread global network that provides access to clear and relevant information across all fields. It enables us to understand concepts that were previously vague or difficult to grasp. There is no doubt that the demand for internet access continues to grow daily.

As a global network, the Internet provides various conveniences through services in the form of text, images, audio, video, and more. At the same time, it is also true that it inadvertently draws people—especially adolescents—into a virtual world.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Experts believe that one of the positive aspects of the Internet is its ability to help individuals quickly and conveniently access the information necessary for academic, professional, and other areas of activity. It also significantly helps in saving time. However, excessive or unintentional exposure to irrelevant content may negatively affect an individual's cognitive abilities, such as thinking, analysis, critical reflection, and memory.

In today's globalized world, social networks hold a central place in the lives of young people, particularly adolescents. According to the 2023 report by the Youth Affairs Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan, more than 80% of adolescents aged 13 to 15 use social media for at least one hour daily [1]. These platforms play an important role in shaping their self-awareness, communication skills, emotional well-being, and social interactions. At the same time, experts emphasize that these tools have both positive and negative effects on psychological development [2].

Adolescents' use of the Internet and digital technologies has several positive aspects, including:

1. **Expansion of Communication:** Social media allows adolescents to make friends and interact with others regardless of geographical boundaries. This plays a crucial role in developing their social skills.
2. **Self-expression and Creativity:** Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube provide adolescents the opportunity to freely express their creativity, opinions, and interests. This contributes to increased self-confidence and personal development.
3. **Educational Opportunities:** Many social platforms offer educational content such as online lessons, motivational videos, and language learning groups. These encourage students to pursue additional learning.

This article aims to study the impact of social media on adolescents' psychological development, particularly focusing on its effects on self-esteem, social isolation, mental health, and communication skills.

Uzbekistan's modern information system requires the development of effective management mechanisms for accessing, storing, using, and disseminating information in the interests of public

benefit and progress. Within this framework, it is important to promote a culture of ensuring national security in the information sphere and to apply the following approaches:

1. Sociological Approach – Analyzing the impact of information flows on public consciousness and thinking, and ensuring social stability by studying public opinion across various social groups.
2. Statistical Approach – Identifying sources of conflict in multiethnic and multi-religious societies and developing analytical solutions to prevent them.
3. Political Conflictology and Psychology – Evaluating the psychological influence of subversive ideas and continuously monitoring the political and psychological environment to prevent harmful outcomes.
4. Logical-Systemic and Functional Analysis – Scientifically studying information policies and psychological influence, and deeply analyzing how information flows affect public opinion.
5. Priority of National Ideology – Ensuring that every citizen has ideological immunity during the process of information consumption, thereby prioritizing national ideas and values.

### **METHODS**

The research was conducted between May and June 2024 in 10 schools located in Tashkent, Samarkand, and Fergana regions. A total of 500 adolescents aged 13 to 17 participated in the survey. The questionnaire included the following sections:

- Frequency and purpose of social media use (hours per day, reasons for use)
- Psychological well-being (assessed using the DASS-21 test) [3]
- Self-esteem levels (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) [4]
- Feelings of loneliness (UCLA Loneliness Scale) [5]

Data were analyzed using SPSS software. Pearson correlation and regression analysis methods were applied.

### **RESULTS**

According to the survey results:

- On average, adolescents spend 3.8 hours per day on social media.
- A negative correlation was found between high social media usage (5 or more hours per day) and low self-esteem ( $r = -0.42$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as higher depression levels ( $r = 0.47$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).
- Passive use of social media (such as only scrolling) is associated with decreased self-esteem and increased feelings of loneliness.
- In contrast, positive interactive communication (maintaining real-life friendships online) increases levels of perceived social support.

### **DISCUSSION**

The results indicate that social media has an ambivalent (dual) impact on adolescent psychological development. On one hand, it allows adolescents to compare themselves to others, which can lead to reduced self-esteem [6]. This is especially true on visually-based platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, where comparisons with seemingly “ideal” peers can negatively affect mental health [7].

On the other hand, when used positively and actively—for example, to maintain real-life friendships or explore personal interests—social media can enhance social adaptability and psychological resilience [8].

### **CONCLUSION**

Social media has become an inseparable part of adolescents’ lives. Its influence on psychological development is directly linked to how it is used. Passive and excessive use may lead to negative psychological outcomes, while active and meaningful engagement can foster self-awareness and

social skill development. Therefore, it is essential for parents and educators to guide adolescents toward digital literacy and healthy online habits.

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