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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTENSITY OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND THE MENTAL HEALTH STATUS OF ADOLESCENTS AT MTs.N 5 JOMBANG

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ABSTRACT

The increasing use of social media among adolescents may affect their psychological well-being, including anxiety, stress, and depression. This study aimed to analyze the relationship between social media use intensity and mental health status among adolescents at MTsN 5 Jombang. An analytical correlational study with a cross-sectional design was conducted involving 150 eighth-grade students selected from a population of 239 using cluster random sampling. Data were collected using the Social Media Intensity Scale (SMIS) and the Self-Reporting Questionnaire-20 (SRQ-20). Most respondents (96.6%) had a high mental health status, while 3.4% had a low mental health status. Among respondents classified as non-cases based on social media use intensity (n = 31), 93.5% had a high mental health status, while 6.5% had a low mental health status. Spearman's rank correlation test indicated a statistically significant relationship between social media use intensity and adolescent mental health ($p = 0.001$; $r = 0.443$), with a moderate correlation. Social media use intensity was significantly associated with adolescent mental health status. These findings highlight the importance of parental and school involvement in monitoring adolescents' emotional well-being and promoting healthy social media use.

Keywords: Social media, Intensity, Mental Health, Adolescents

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Introduction

The development of digital technology is currently progressing very rapidly, particularly regarding the use of social media among adolescents. Nowadays, it is difficult to imagine going about daily life without social media (Orben, 2020). Adolescents use it for various purposes, including social networking, research, entertainment, and self-expression. Facilitating communication and the expansion of personal networks are two positive aspects of social media. On the other hand, social media can have negative effects—particularly on the mental health of adolescents—if used excessively (Septiana, 2021).

Adolescents are going through a highly vulnerable stage of emotional and psychological development. During this phase, what they see on social media and in their immediate environment has a more profound impact on them. Excessive use of social media can lead to issues such as anxiety, tension, mood swings, and depression. Furthermore, an adolescent's mental health can be exacerbated by factors like cyberbullying, the tendency to compare oneself to others, and the pressure to be perfect (Iryadi et al., 2024).

The continuously rising prevalence of mental health issues among adolescents is garnering increasing attention throughout Indonesia. Emotional disorders, ranging from moderate to severe, affect a significant number of teenagers. Excessive use of social media—compounded by a lack of self-control and insufficient knowledge on how to use it appropriately—exacerbates these problems (Suswati et al., 2023).

Given this, the purpose of this study is to determine whether there are mental health issues among adolescents—specifically students at MTs.N 5 Jombang—that are associated with heavy social media use.

Methods

Data collection was conducted over a predetermined period without applying any specific interventions to the respondents; the study employed a correlational research design using a cross-sectional method. This approach was used to determine whether a relationship exists between the intensity of social media use and the mental health status of adolescents.

All seven-grade students at MTs.N 5 Jombang constitute the research population, totaling 239 individuals. Cluster random sampling—a sampling method based on the random selection of class groups—was employed to select 150 respondents from this population.

One of the questionnaires used for data collection is the Social Media Intensity Scale (SMIS), which measures the amount of time individuals spend on social media in relation to specific features, the content they access, the frequency of their usage, and the duration of their

sessions. Another instrument is the Self-Report Questionnaire-20 (SRQ-20), which assesses an individual's psychological well-being or mental functioning.

Result and Discussion

The research results indicate that the majority of respondents engage extensively with social media. This suggests that adolescents make significant use of social media in their daily lives. Furthermore, 87.3% of the respondents reported having a health issue.

Statistical analysis using the Spearman's Rho test yields a significance value (ϱ) of 0.000, which is less than the alpha (α) level of 0.05; this indicates that the independent and dependent variables are related to each other.

Consequently, there is an association between the intensity of social media usage and the mental health status of adolescents.

Table 1 Characteristics of Adolescent Respondents by Gender at MTsN 5 Jombang

No	Gender	*f*	%
1	Male	64	42,7
2	Female	86	57,3
Total		150	100

According to Table 3, the gender distribution of the respondents shows that the majority are female—86 individuals (57.3%)—while male respondents account for 64 individuals (42.7%) out of the 150 total respondents.

Table 2 Characteristics of Adolescent Respondents by Age at MTsN 5 Jombang.

No	Age category	*f*	%
1	Teenager (13 years old)	28	18,7
2	Teenager (14 years old)	107	71,3
3	Teenager (15 years old)	15	10,0
Total		150	100

According to Table 4, the age distribution of the respondents shows that the majority 107 individuals (71.3%) are 14 years old, out of a total of 150 respondents.

Table 3 Characteristics of Respondents Based on Grade Level at MTsN 5 Jombang

No	Category Level Class	*f*	%
1	Grade VII A Students	18	12,0 %
2	Grade VII B Students	18	12,0 %
3	Grade VII C Students	17	11,3 %
4	Grade VII D Students	17	11,3 %
5	Grade VII E Students	17	11,3 %
6	Grade VII F Students	17	11,3 %
7	Grade VII G Students	17	11,3 %
Total		150	100 %

According to Table 5, the majority of respondents are from Class VIII-H, accounting for 29 individuals (19.3%) out of a total of 150 respondents.

Table 4 Frequency Distribution of Respondents Based on Intensity of Social Media Use_at MTsN 5 Jombang

No	Intensity of Social Media Usage	*f*	%
1	Low	9	6,0
2	High	141	94,0
Total		150	100

According to Table 4, the distribution of social media usage intensity among the respondents shows that the majority—141 individuals (94.0%)—fall into the high-intensity usage group, out of a total of 150 respondents.

Table 5 Frequency Distribution of Respondents Based on Mental Health Status at MTsN 5 Jombang

No	Mental Health Status	*f*	%
1	Positive Cases	131	87,3
2	Teenager (14 years old)	19	12,7
Total		150	100

According to Table 5, the distribution of mental health status among the respondents shows that the majority—131 individuals (87.3%)—fall into the positive case group, out of a total of 150 respondents.

Table 6 Cross-tabulation and Statistical Test Results Regarding the Relationship Between Social Media Usage Intensity and Mental Health Status Among Adolescents at MTsN 5 Jombang

	Non case	%	Positive	%	∑
Low	3	33,3	6	66,7	9
High	16	11,3	125	88,7	141
Total	19	100,0	131	100.0	150
P value 0.001					

Table 6 presents a cross-tabulation and statistical test regarding the relationship between the intensity of social media use and the mental health status of adolescents at MTsN 5 Jombang; it shows that among 141 respondents with a high level of social media use, nearly all (88.7%)—totaling 125 individuals—fell into the category of having a positive mental health case (i.e., experiencing mental health issues)

Discussion

Intensity of Social Media Use at MTsN 5 Jombang

Table 4 presents the research findings, which reveal that 94.0% of respondents have an intense level of social media usage. This is further supported by the results of the SIPMS survey, which indicate that most people prefer communicating via social media rather than face-to-face. The reliance of adolescents on social media for communication is clearly evident in this situation. In principle, social media has become an integral part of adolescent life due to the rapid

development of digital technology. However, this increase in usage is often not matched by the ability to control it or utilize it in a healthy manner (Suswati et al., 2023).

High levels of social media use are also linked to mental health issues among a greater tendency adolescents. Uncontrolled usage can lead to various psychological effectincluding emotional difficulties, anxiety, and a decline in mental well-being. This suggests that demographic variables—such as the respondents' age, gender, and access to digital devices—play a role in explaining their heavy social media use. Most 14-year-olds are in early adolescence, a stage characterized by a greater tendency to use social media extensively, driven by high levels of curiosity, a significant need for socialization, and a desire to gain attention from their peer group (Ruswandi & Fitriyani, 2023)

Mental Health Status of Adolescents at MTsN 5 Jombang

Table 5 presents the research findings, which show that 87.3% of respondents were classified as having a mental health disorder (cases), while only 12.7% were classified as not experiencing such difficulties. Many respondents reported difficulty sleeping, which is an indication of a mental health disorder. Therefore, the questionnaire results support this diagnosis. In principle, adolescent mental health problems can encompass a wide range of illnesses, ranging from depression and anxiety to mood disorders and much more.

A gradual yet steady increase in social media usage is one contributing factor. When self-control is lacking, even moderate use can escalate into excessive use if the duration and frequency continue to rise (Suswati et al., 2023). Factors such as social media dependency, age, social environment, stress levels, and established social media habits may all play a role.

Since most 14-year-olds are still in the process of developing their emotional regulation skills, it can be said that they are largely in the early stages of adolescence. Emotional distress and mood-related issues can also be triggered by exposure to various types of information, online social interactions, and the tendency to constantly compare oneself to others on social media. The mental well-being of adolescents depends on the adults in their lives who take an active role in monitoring and supporting them—for instance, by setting limits on social media screen time, teaching them how to be responsible digital citizens, and encouraging them to engage in more constructive activities (Putri et al., 2024)

The Relationship Between the Intensity of Social Media Use and the Mental Health Status of Adolescents at MTsN 5 Jombang.

According to a statistical study conducted using Spearman's Rho, there is a relationship between high social media usage and mental health issues among adolescents. The evidence supports this, as the p-value is less than 0.05 (0.001). A moderately positive relationship, with a

correlation coefficient of 0.443, indicates that Excessive social media use is linked to an increased risk of negative effects on the mental health of adolescents. Research has shown a strong connection between adolescents' social media use and their mental health (Ruswandi & Fitriyani, 2023).

These findings provide further evidence that uncontrolled social media use among adolescents is a factor affecting their mental health. Adolescents who have a tendency to constantly check their social media accounts may carry the psychological burden of perpetually comparing themselves to others—whether in terms of appearance or academi success. Anxiety, hopelessness, low self-esteem, sleep difficulties, and a lack of direct social interaction are just a few of the issues that may arise from excessive use. Cyberbullying and the negative impact of peer pressure on adolescent mental health are significant concerns (Iryadi et al., 2024).

Adolescents' social interactions, academic achievement, and ability to focus on their studies may suffer if mental health issues go unaddressed. Furthermore, if left untreated, chronic stress can negatively impact physical health, leading to problems such as sleep disturbances and loss of appetite. Efforts must be made to prevent mental health issues among adolescents by screening for early signs of mental illness and providing education or support to help them make healthy choices when using social media.

Conclusion

The frequent use of social media among adolescents at MTs.N 5 Jombang highlights how integral it has become to their daily lives. The vast majority of responses were classified as positive cases—indicating the presence of mental health issues—while a smaller number were classified as non-cases. This underscores the fact that significant mental health challenges persist among these adolescents. It further demonstrates that the mental health of students at MTs.N 5 Jombang is closely linked to the amount of time they spend on social media. This research reveals a correlation between the intensity of social media usage and the mental health status of these adolescents.

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