

The impact of social media on today's society

[Sociology](#), [Identity](#)



The Humans species has evolved technology of communication immensely in the past few decades. Human life has become more efficient and faster in terms of communication. People today are more connected to one another than ever in history. Many different social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat allow users to communicate virtually and are used daily by millions of people around the world. By signing up to different media applications, users have the ability to browse for people globally & share their personal events and express their thoughts. Social media can be very convenient but majority of users do not know or even think about the risk that may apply to it.

Firstly, social media causes people to be distracted from their own lives because they focus their energy on others, by viewing Facebook feeds, Instagram posts, or snapchat videos regularly.

Secondly, some social media users are not authentic and this creates false images of reality. Many individuals aspire to become famous, have many followers, and essentially be an online celebrity. For some people who are not truly authentic to the image they present online, this can be detrimental to their lives. Such behavior over extended periods of time can lead to depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem issues for the user when not given 'likes' or 'subscribes'. Such unrealistic expectations to constantly attain acceptance from others leads to instabilities within the individual.

Lastly, social media separates people from one another and having real life interactions, this can have a negative effect on people's lives. A family can be sitting together at the dinner table and everyone is on their electronic

device tuning into posts, messages, videos. With the wide usage of social media, a new type of bullying, cyberbullying has also been created. Victims of bullying are not even safe outside the school, work, and life environment. Social media sites are certainly corrosive to the real community as it detaches us from the real world and creates an illusionary experience for users.

In our world today, there are countless amounts of social media applications that have enhanced our ways of communication. However, the majority of us especially the millennials do not take advantage of them, instead they are abused and cause distractions. A study shows approximately 76% of students are distracted by social media to a significant worrying degree.

Many focus most of their energies staying updated with friends, celebrities, and athletes rather than focusing and dedicating their time to grow and better themselves, their careers and lives. It has reached to the extent where people communicate with others using technology instead of socialization and spending time with the people who are present. Recent polls show that 76% of females and 54% of males check social media platforms a minimum of 10 times when out with friends. Unfortunately, this demonstrates how deeply social media has negatively affected our connection and interactions with others who are present with us physically while we communicate with others digitally.

Social media is an easy way for one to escape reality and become a surrogate. People have the ability to take their time while communicating, allowing them to create an altered image of themselves. Thousands of users

have perfect social media lives, which in reality is not authentic. Some pretend to be something they are not. Essena O'Neill, an Australian Instagram celebrity said, "The concept of faking a "perfect" life on social media has been around almost as long as social media itself". She blew up the internet for admitting that in her pictures she was never truly happy as she made it seem. This shows that people have been able to establish modified images of themselves since the creation of social media.

On the other hand, many users have virtual friends and followers for a sense of acceptance but in reality, not many are actually true friends. A recent UK study shows 3400 Facebook users between the age of 18 and 65, had an average of 150 friends, of which 4.1 were dependable & 13.6 expressed sympathy during rough personal times. This shows that despite the amount of friends one has on social media, it does not define whether they have supportive figures in reality. Others may use photo editing to enhance the way they look such as the use of filters or Photoshop, or pretend they live a rich luxurious lifestyle.

As human beings, it is in our natural instinct & authenticity to have real face-to-face communications. Social media has contributed to a growth in instant communication online but also a separation in our immediate communities and families. A recent study shows that today approximately only 7% of communication is written or verbally communicated, while a humongous 93% is nonverbal. This is a representation of how technology advancement has dominated our ways of communication comparing to the past. In addition, social media can have a negative effect on many lives.

Cyberbullying, a form of bullying through technology plays a big role in our world today. Mainly youths and vulnerable individuals are targeted, making them mentally & physically unstable. 42% of youths have admitted to being victimized through social media, while 68% of youths agreed to cyberbullying as being a major issue in our world today. Anna Chavez, a writer once said, " Unless and until our society recognizes cyber bullying for what it is, the suffering of thousands of silent victims will continue. Bullies can hide behind a mask of anonymity online and do not need direct physical access to their victims to do unimaginable harm". This exemplifies how it makes it easier for an individual to oppress another due to the fact they remain anonymous.

In conclusion, social media has affected our society today because it creates a distraction from our own lives; we spend more time focusing on online friends rather than our families, real friends and ourselves. It also creates low self-esteem by allowing users to create profiles of fake images of reality, and sadly has significantly decreased our social interactions with others. Social media is certainly corrosive to today's society and has many negative effects to the users.