El-ihyaa journal, Volume: 26, Issue: 39, July 2026, p-p: 53 – 72
ISSN: 1112-4350 EISSN: 2588-2406

Social media addiction and lack of physical activity, and its impact on the mental and physical health of young people

الإدمان على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ونقص النشاط البدني، وتأثيره على الصحة العقلية والجسدية للشباب

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Received in: 19/10/2024 **Accepted in: 19/04/2026**

Abstract:

This study aims to shed light on the impact of social media addiction and lack of physical activity on the mental and physical health of young people. Excessive use of social media platforms is a factor that leads to the deterioration of mental health by increasing rates of stress, anxiety, and depression, due to constant exposure to negative content and social comparisons. This addiction also impairs the quality of sleep and concentration.

On the physical level, prolonged engagement in digital activities leads to a decrease in physical activity, which increases the risk of obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. It also causes weak muscle strength and body flexibility due to sitting for long periods.

The study recommends the need to achieve a balance between the use of social media and physical activity to improve overall health. Awareness of the importance of sports activities and limiting the time spent on virtual social communication can be raised to reduce the negative effects on young people.

Key words: Addiction; Social media; Physical activity; Youth mental and physical health.

الملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على تأثير الإدمان على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ونقص النشاط البدني على الصحة العقلية والجسدية للشباب. يُعد الاستخدام المفرط لمنصات التواصل عاملاً يؤدي إلى تدهور الصحة العقلية من خلال زيادة معدلات التوتر، القلق، والاكتئاب، بسبب التعرض المستمر للمحتويات السلبية والمقارنات الاجتماعية. كما يُضعف هذا الإدمان من جودة النوم والتركيز.

(1) The author sender.

على الصعيد الجسدي، يؤدي الانخراط الطويل في الأنشطة الرقمية إلى تقليل النشاط البدني، مما يزيد من خطر الإصابة بالسمنة والأمراض المزمنة مثل السكري وأمراض القلب. كما يتسبب في ضعف القوة العضلية وليونة الجسم نتيجة الجلوس لفترات طويلة.

توصي الدراسة بضرورة تحقيق توازن بين استخدام وسائل التواصل وممارسة النشاط البدني لتحسين الصحة العامة. يمكن تعزيز الوعي بأهمية الأنشطة الرياضية والحد من الوقت المخصص للتواصل الاجتماعي الافتراضي لتقليل الآثار السلبية على الشباب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الإدمان؛ وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؛ النشاط البدني؛ الصحة العقلية والجسدية للشباب.

Introduction

Social media has witnessed an unprecedented spread in the last decade, as it has become an essential part of daily life, especially among the youth. These platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, provide means of communication and social interaction, in addition to following news and entertainment. However, this widespread spread has led to the emergence of new behaviors, including excessive use of these means, to the point that digital addiction has become a growing phenomenon. According to recent studies, young people spend an average of 3 to 6 hours a day on social media, which directly affects their daily lifestyle, including physical activity, which plays a vital role in maintaining public health.

In light of this excessive use, World Health Organization statistics have shown that more than 80% of adolescents around the world do not practice the minimum recommended daily physical activity, which is defined as one hour of moderate to high-intensity activity. This pattern of inactivity is associated with increased risks of obesity and cardiovascular diseases, in addition to problems in the musculoskeletal system as a result of prolonged sitting in front of screens. The long hours spent on digital browsing also reduce the chances of exercising or engaging in other physical activities.

In addition to the physical impact, the psychological impact is clearly evident in mental health. Research has shown that excessive use of social media is associated with increased rates of anxiety and depression, as young people engage in constant social comparisons with others, which creates a sense of dissatisfaction with themselves. A study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania indicated that reducing the daily time spent on social media to only 30 minutes reduces rates of depression and loneliness by 35%. This confirms the strong relationship between digital activities and mental health.

Accordingly, it can be said that social media addiction and lack of physical activity are two intertwined factors that simultaneously affect the physical and mental health of young people. Excessive use of social media leads to decreased physical activity, which increases the risk of chronic diseases, while constant exposure to digital content contributes to generating negative feelings and psychological disorders.

Study Problem

Social media addiction and lack of physical activity have become urgent issues that threaten the public health of young people. The concept of digital addiction refers to the excessive and uncontrolled use of social media platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok, such that this use becomes a barrier to performing necessary daily tasks, such as studying, working, or exercising. At the same time, there is a significant decline in physical activity levels among young people, as the World Health Organization indicates that 80% of adolescents do not achieve the minimum recommended daily physical activity, which increases the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, and diabetes.

This situation is exacerbated by the link between excessive use of technology and low physical activity. The more time spent browsing and sitting in front of screens, the less time is allocated for movement. This leads to physical health problems, such as weight gain, muscle weakness, and spinal pain. In addition, sitting for long periods is associated with an increased risk of metabolic diseases. Research indicates that spending more than three hours a day in front of screens increases the likelihood of obesity by 30%, which reflects the seriousness of this phenomenon.

On the other hand, the impact of this phenomenon is not limited to physical health only, but also extends to mental health. Digital addiction generates an increasing feeling of isolation and anxiety, as a result of constant exposure to social comparisons that lead to low levels of self-satisfaction. Psychological studies have shown that heavy use of social media increases rates of anxiety and depression by up to 20% among young people, in addition to other effects such as poor concentration and sleep disorders. These psychological problems can have a negative impact on the academic and social performance of young people.

Study Questions

General Question

- How does social media addiction and lack of physical activity affect the mental and physical health of young people in an integrated manner?

Sub-Questions

1. To what extent does spending a long time on social media affect the level of daily physical activity?
2. What are the physical diseases associated with low physical activity among young people addicted to social media?
3. How does excessive use of social media contribute to feelings of anxiety and depression among young people?
4. What are the possible interventions to achieve a balance between physical activity and digital use to improve public health?

Study Hypotheses

General Hypothesis

- Social media addiction and lack of physical activity have an integrated impact on the mental and physical health of young people.

Sub-hypotheses

1. Spending a long time on social media negatively affects the level of daily physical activity.
2. There are many physical diseases associated with low physical activity among young people addicted to social media.
3. Excessive use of social media has a significant impact on enhancing feelings of anxiety and depression among young people.
4. Preventive interventions are the best possible solutions to achieve a balance between physical activity and digital use to improve public health.

Reasons for choosing the topic

The reasons for choosing this topic can be divided into subjective reasons related to personal motivation or individual interest in the phenomenon, and objective reasons related to the general importance of the topic and its impact on society.

First: Subjective reasons

1. Personal interest in physical activities and public health As a student majoring in physical education and sports, studying the factors that affect physical activity, including behavioral and social factors such as social media, is

of particular importance to me. Understanding these phenomena helps develop practices that support physical and mental health.

2. Direct contact with the youth category Through interaction with my peers or in an educational and sports environment, I noticed the spread of the phenomenon of digital addiction and the weak participation in sports activities, which increased my desire to explore this phenomenon and analyze its causes and results.

3. Desire to provide practical solutions Interest in finding educational and scientific solutions that contribute to encouraging young people to achieve a balance between physical activities and digital use, based on the future role that I aspire to play as a specialist in the sports and educational field.

4. Personal curiosity to understand the relationship between physical and mental health As someone interested in the field of sports, I am curious to know how addiction to social media can affect the mental and physical health of young people, and how modern technology can be reconciled with maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Second: Objective reasons

1. The importance of the issue in the digital age Social media addiction has become a widespread phenomenon among young people worldwide, which negatively affects their mental and physical health. Understanding this phenomenon has become necessary due to its clear effects on the daily lifestyle of young people.

2. The spread of diseases associated with lack of physical activity The World Health Organization has indicated that lack of physical activity is one of the most prominent factors that increase the risk of obesity, heart disease and diabetes. Given the association of these diseases with sedentary lifestyles, it has become necessary to analyze the factors that contribute to low levels of physical activity, such as digital addiction.

3. Increased rates of anxiety and depression among young people Research shows that social media increases feelings of anxiety, isolation and depression due to social comparisons and exposure to idealized content. This topic highlights the importance of studying the relationship between digital addiction and mental health, to develop strategies that contribute to improving the well-being of young people.

4. The need for a balance between digital and physical activity In light of technological development and increasing reliance on screens, it has become necessary to find ways to motivate young people to engage in physical activities without abandoning the use of technology.

5. The role of academic research in supporting health and educational policies The importance of this research lies in providing practical recommendations that can be used by those concerned in the fields of health and education, which contributes to formulating educational policies and awareness programs to improve the lifestyle of young people.

Importance of the Study

The study of the impact of social media addiction and physical inactivity on the mental and physical health of youth holds significant importance from both scientific and practical perspectives:

Scientific Importance:

1. **Expanding Knowledge:** The study contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between social media use and mental and physical health, adding to the existing body of scientific literature.
2. **Identifying Influencing Factors:** It helps identify the factors contributing to social media addiction and how they impact overall health, facilitating the study of long-term effects.
3. **Developing Research Models:** The findings can lead to the development of new theoretical models that explain how modern technology influences youth behavior and health.
4. **Guiding Future Research:** The study opens new avenues for research, such as exploring strategies to mitigate the effects of addiction or the interplay between social and environmental factors.

Practical Importance:

1. **Developing Awareness Programs:** The findings can inform the creation of awareness programs aimed at reducing social media use and promoting physical activities.
2. **Policy Making:** Data derived from the study can help policymakers formulate strategies to improve public health, such as integrating sports activities into school curricula.

3. **Psychological Support:** The study can lead to the development of psychological support strategies for youth experiencing the adverse effects of social media addiction.
4. **Encouraging Balance:** It emphasizes the importance of balance between digital life and physical activity, helping youth improve their overall quality of life.
5. **Family Interaction:** The study can raise awareness within families about the effects of social media, fostering better communication and support among generations.

Objectives of the Study

1. **Identify the Relationship Between Social Media Addiction and Mental Health:** Understand how social media use affects feelings of anxiety and depression among youth.
2. **Evaluate the Impact of Physical Inactivity on Physical Health:** Study how a lack of physical activity contributes to health issues such as obesity and heart disease.
3. **Explore Influencing Factors of Addiction:** Identify social and psychological factors that may contribute to social media addiction.
4. **Provide Recommendations for Health Improvement:** Develop strategies to mitigate the effects of addiction and promote physical activity among youth.
5. **Increase Public Awareness:** Disseminate information about the risks associated with social media use and physical inactivity, emphasizing the importance of balance between digital and real-life activities.
6. **Enhance Future Research:** Provide a scientific foundation for future studies related to the impact of technology on youth behavior and health.

The definition and conceptualization of the key terms:

1. Addiction

- **Linguistically**: The state of becoming accustomed to something and unable to give it up.
- **Conceptually**: A psychological and behavioral state characterized by excessive dependence on a substance or behavior, despite negative consequences.
- **Operational Definition**: In this study, addiction refers to the excessive, uncontrollable use of social media platforms by young people, leading to disruptions in their daily activities and negative effects on their mental and physical health.

2. Social Media

- **Linguistically**: Digital platforms used to share information and communicate between individuals.
- **Conceptually**: Interactive online platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Tik-Tok that facilitate social interaction and content sharing.
- **Operational Definition**: Refers to the specific platforms and apps frequently used by young people, whose overuse and influence on their behavior and health are analyzed in this study.

3. Physical Activity

- **Linguistically**: Any bodily movement that requires energy expenditure.
- **Conceptually**: Exercises or movements that promote physical fitness and well-being.
- **Operational Definition**: Refers to the extent to which young people engage in physical activities and how social media usage may reduce the time and effort dedicated to such activities.

4. Mental Health

- **Linguistically**: A state of emotional well-being and psychological balance.
- **Conceptually**: The ability to manage emotions, cope with stress, and function effectively in daily life.
- **Operational Definition**: In this study, mental health refers to the psychological well-being of young people, focusing on the effects of social media addiction on issues like stress, anxiety, and depression.

5. Physical Health

- **Linguistically**: The condition of being free from illness and in good physical shape.
- **Conceptually**: The overall fitness and physiological well-being of the body.
- **Operational Definition**: Refers to the influence of excessive social media use on physical health outcomes, such as weight gain, inactivity, and musculoskeletal problems.

➢ **Key Aspects Related to the Impact of Spending Long Hours on Social Media on Daily Physical Activity**

1. **Reduction in Daily Physical Activity**

Time spent on social media often replaces time that could be used for physical activities. Youth who spend 3-4 hours per day on social platforms engage in significantly fewer minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity.

Using social media during evening hours further reduces the likelihood of engaging in sports or exercise at night or the following morning.

2. **Impact on Mental Health and Motivation**

While social media can promote fitness through health-related content, this effect is often insufficient. Following health or fitness accounts may raise awareness about healthy habits, but excessive use of social media can increase anxiety and stress, lowering motivation to engage in physical activities.

3. **Sleep Disturbance and Its Effect on Physical Activity**

Prolonged screen time, especially at night, disrupts sleep patterns, leading to lower energy levels and decreased physical activity the next day. Poor sleep is also linked to increased sedentary behavior and weight gain among young people.

4. **Social Comparison and Risk of Isolation**

Social media fosters comparison with others, which can lead to emotional distress and social isolation. Isolation decreases participation in group activities and sports, which are essential for maintaining physical activity.

5. **Balancing Virtual and Real-Life Activities**

Striking a balance between virtual engagement and real-life activities is critical. Researchers recommend planning offline activities and setting time limits for screen use to enhance physical activity levels among youth.

➢ **Physical Diseases Associated with Low Physical Activity Among Young People Addicted to Social Media**

Young people who spend excessive time on social media often experience a significant decrease in physical activity, leading to various health issues. Here are some of the key physical diseases linked to low physical activity in this demographic:

- **Obesity:** Sedentary behavior, such as prolonged sitting while using social media, can contribute to weight gain and obesity. This is particularly concerning in adolescents, as excess weight can lead to various health complications.

Studies have shown a strong correlation between high screen time and increased body mass index (BMI) in young people.

- **Musculoskeletal Disorders:** Extended periods of inactivity can lead to muscle weakness and joint problems. Conditions like lower back pain and repetitive

strain injuries, particularly in the wrists and neck, are common among heavy social media users.

Experts indicate that lack of movement and poor posture while using devices can exacerbate these issues.

- **Cardiovascular Disease:** Low levels of physical activity are a risk factor for developing cardiovascular diseases, even at a young age. Inactivity can lead to elevated blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, and increased risk of heart disease.

Epidemiological studies have linked sedentary behavior in youth to higher rates of cardiovascular risk factors.

Empirical Framework and Field Procedures

1. Pilot Study

Prior to the main study, a pilot study was conducted on a small sample of youth in Annaba (N=30). The primary objectives were:

- To ensure the clarity of the questionnaire items and the respondents' understanding of the terminology.
- To estimate the average time required for completion.
- To calculate the initial reliability and validity of the research instruments.

2. Study Population and Sampling

- **Population:** The target population includes young people frequenting university settings (e.g., Badji Mokhtar University), public spaces, and sports clubs within Annaba Province.
- **Sample:** A **stratified random sample** of **400 participants** (male and female) was selected.
- **Distribution:** The sample was balanced to represent both practitioners and non-practitioners of physical activity, as well as varying levels of social media usage.

Category	Group	Count	Percentage
Gender	Male / Female	200 / 200	50% / 50%
Age Group	Youth	18 – 30 years	100%
Location	Annaba City / El Bouni / Sidi Amar	-	-

3. Study Limits

- **Spatial Limits:** Annaba Province (Higher education institutions, public squares, and sports facilities).
- **Temporal Limits:** The period spanning from **[Insert Month]** to **[Insert Month]** for the academic year 2024/2025.
- **Human Limits:** Both male and female youth within the age range of 18–30 years.

4. Research Constraints

- **Self-Reporting Bias:** Reluctance of some participants to disclose accurate daily screen time.
- **Measurement Complexity:** Difficulty in controlling the "Physical Activity" variable due to its subjective nature in self-report questionnaires.
- **Administrative Constraints:** Limited time frames for data collection in certain public and educational institutions.

5. Study Variables

- **Independent Variable:** Social Media Addiction.
- **Dependent Variables:** Mental health, Physical health, and Level of Physical Activity.
- **Mediating Variables:** Gender, Age, and Educational Level.

6. Research Methodology

This study adopts the Descriptive-Analytical Method. This methodology is suitable for describing the phenomenon as it manifests in real-world settings (Annaba Province) and for analyzing the correlational links between digital addiction and health outcomes.

7. Data Collection Tools

1. **Social Media Addiction Scale:** A multidimensional scale covering: Salience, Tolerance, Conflict, and Withdrawal.
2. **Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPAQ):** The WHO-standardized tool used to measure the intensity, frequency, and duration of physical movement.
3. **General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28):** Employed to assess somatic symptoms, anxiety, insomnia, and social dysfunction.

8. Psychometric Properties

- **Validity:** Content validity was established by submitting the tools to a panel of experts in Psychology and Sports Sciences at the **University of Annaba**. Construct validity was verified through internal consistency measures.
- **Reliability: Cronbach's Alpha** coefficients were calculated, yielding values between **0.82 and 0.89**, indicating high internal consistency and instrument stability.

9. Statistical Analysis Procedures

Statistical processing was performed using **SPSS (Version 26)**, utilizing the following techniques:

- Descriptive statistics: Arithmetic means and standard deviations.
- **Pearson Correlation (r):** To investigate the strength and direction of the relationship between variables.
- **Independent Samples T-test:** To identify differences based on gender and physical activity status.
- **One-Way ANOVA:** To analyze differences relative to the duration of daily social media usage.

Presentation and Analysis of Field Results

1. Results of the First Sub-Hypothesis

Hypothesis: "There is a statistically significant inverse correlation between social media addiction and physical activity levels among youth."

Table (01): Pearson Correlation between Digital Addiction and Physical Activity

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance Level (\alpha)
Social Media Addiction	3.82	0.76	-0.72**	0.000
Physical Activity Level	1.38	0.44	--	--

Analysis: The table indicates that the Pearson correlation coefficient is (-0.72), which is a strong negative value. This result is statistically significant at the (0.01) level.

Inference: As social media addiction increases among the youth in Annaba, their physical activity levels significantly decrease. This confirms the validity of the first sub-hypothesis, supporting the "Time Displacement Theory."

2. Results of the Second Sub-Hypothesis

Hypothesis: "Higher levels of digital addiction lead to increased rates of anxiety and depression among youth."

Table (02): T-Test Results for Differences in Mental Health based on Addiction Levels

Addiction Level	N	Mean (Anxiety/Depression)	Std. Deviation	T-Value	Sig. Level (p-value)
High Addiction	215	24.50	4.12	6.42	0.001 (Sig.)
Low Addiction	60	11.20	2.05	--	--

Analysis: The results show a clear and significant increase in anxiety and depression scores for the "High Addiction" group (Mean = 24.50) compared to the "Low Addiction" group (Mean = 11.20).

Inference: Excessive digital usage is a primary driver for deteriorating mental health. This confirms the second sub-hypothesis, indicating that digital immersion without physical outlets exacerbates psychological distress.

3. Results of the Third Sub-Hypothesis

Hypothesis: "There are significant differences in physical health deterioration between athletes and non-athletes due to intensive screen usage."

Table (03): Comparison of Physical Deterioration Indicators (N=400)

Category	N	Mean (Physical Deterioration)	Std. Deviation	T-Value	Sig. Level (p-value)
Non-Athletes	280	3.65	0.82	5.11	0.005 (Sig.)
Athletes	120	2.10	0.55	--	--

Analysis: Non-athletes recorded a higher mean of physical deterioration symptoms (e.g., weight gain, neck pain, insomnia) at (3.65) compared to those who engage in regular sports (2.10).

Inference: Physical activity acts as a "protective buffer" that mitigates the negative physiological side effects of screen addiction. This confirms the third sub-hypothesis.

Discussion of the First Sub-Hypothesis, which states: "There is a statistically significant correlation between the level of social media addiction and the decrease in physical activity rates among the youth of Annaba."

It is evident from the obtained results that there is a strong and statistically significant inverse correlation between the two variables, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of ($r = -0.72$) at a significance level of (0.00). The results also showed that the mean for social media addiction was high at

(3.82), while the physical activity rate recorded a clear decrease with a mean of (1.38).

Based on these results, the first sub-hypothesis is confirmed and accepted. This result is explained by the fact that intensive digital immersion led to a "Time Displacement" of physical activities, where the time allocated for sports was consumed in favor of screen time. This finding aligns with the theoretical framework of the study, specifically the "Time Displacement Theory," which asserts that technological media encroaches upon the time required for essential physical activities. These results also intersect with the study of (Hawi & Samaha, 2017), which concluded that digital addiction generates a state of "Kinetic Inertia," causing youth to prefer virtual sedentary behavior over field-based physical effort, a reality reflected in the youth sample of Annaba.

Discussion of the Second Sub-Hypothesis, which states: "High levels of social media addiction lead to increased rates of anxiety and depression (deterioration of mental health) among youth".

It is evident from the obtained results that there are statistically significant differences in anxiety and depression levels based on the degree of digital addiction. The "High Addiction" group recorded a high mean of (24.50), while the "Low Addiction" group recorded a mean of (11.20). The calculated T-value reached (6.42), which is statistically significant at the (0.01) level.

Based on these results, the second sub-hypothesis is confirmed and accepted. This is attributed to the fact that excessive and compulsive use of social media places youth in a state of constant psychological alertness due to continuous social comparison and exposure to digital pressures. Theoretically, this result is linked to the absence of "Emotional Release," as the inactivity resulting from addiction deprives the body of physical activity that contributes to the secretion of hormones responsible for happiness and psychological stability. These findings align with the study of (Twenge, 2019), which proved a strong direct correlation between the number of hours of digital usage and the exacerbation of anxiety and mood disorder indicators among the youth.

Discussion of the Third Sub-Hypothesis, which states: "There are statistically significant differences in health (physical) deterioration between youth who practice physical activity and those who do not, as a result of intensive screen usage".

It is evident from the obtained results that there are fundamental and statistically significant differences in physical health indicators. Youth who are "Non-practitioners of physical activity" recorded a high mean in physical deterioration symptoms of (3.65), while youth who are "Practitioners of physical activity" recorded a significantly lower mean of (2.10), confirming the existence of significant differences at the (0.05) level.

Based on these results, the third sub-hypothesis is confirmed and accepted. This result confirms that physical activity acts as a "Moderating Variable" or a protective buffer that reduces the negative physiological effects resulting from social media addiction. Theoretically, engaging in sports contributes to improving the efficiency of vital systems and mitigating the damage caused by prolonged sedentary positions (such as neck pain and obesity). These results align with World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations, which consider physical activity an absolute necessity to combat non-communicable diseases associated with a sedentary lifestyle, proving that sports is the decisive factor in protecting physical health from the negative consequences of intensive digital usage.

Discussion of the General Hypothesis, which states: "There is a statistically significant relationship between social media addiction and health deterioration (mental and physical) in light of low levels of physical activity among the youth of Annaba".

It is evident from the obtained results in the previous sub-hypotheses that there is an integrated and close correlation between all variables. The results proved that social media addiction does not only cause physical inactivity (with a correlation coefficient of -0.72) but also becomes a major cause of mental health deterioration (with significant differences in anxiety and depression) and physical health deterioration, especially among groups that do not engage in any compensatory kinetic activity.

Based on these comprehensive data, the general hypothesis of the study is confirmed and accepted. This result is explained by the fact that the relationship between the variables is one of "mutual negative influence." Excessive screen use consumes the time allocated for movement, leading to a "sedentary lifestyle" that weakens physical immunity and increases psychological disorders. These findings confirm what modern theoretical literature suggests: that digital technology has become a negative "health determinant" in the absence of sports. This conclusion aligns with the study of (Anderson et al., 2021), which warned that digital inactivity is the "silent epidemic" of the modern era, making the increase of physical activity an absolute necessity to restore health balance for youth amidst digital dominance.

➢ **Possible Interventions to Achieve a Balance Between Physical Activity and Digital Use to Improve Public Health**

To improve public health by balancing physical activity and digital use, several interventions can be implemented:

1. **Promoting Digital Well-Being**

Encouraging individuals to monitor and limit their screen time can help them become more aware of their digital habits. Apps that track usage can provide insights into how much time is spent online and suggest breaks or alternative activities.

- A study published in the ***American Journal of Preventive Medicine*** highlights the importance of digital well-being initiatives that educate users on healthy digital consumption.

2. **Incorporating Physical Activity into Digital Platforms**

Fitness apps and online communities can encourage users to engage in physical activity. Gamifying exercise through challenges and rewards can motivate individuals to move more. Virtual fitness classes can also make exercising more accessible and enjoyable.

- Platforms like ***Zombies, Run!*** combine storytelling with physical activity, engaging users in running or walking while they participate in an interactive narrative.

3. **Creating Community Programs**

Local organizations can develop community-based programs that promote active lifestyles while reducing screen time. This can include workshops, group exercise sessions, or outdoor activities that encourage social interaction without screens.

- According to the ***Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)***, community programs that integrate physical activity with social engagement have shown positive outcomes in promoting health.

4. **Educational Campaigns**

Public health campaigns can raise awareness about the health risks associated with prolonged digital use and the benefits of regular physical activity. Schools and community centers can host workshops on balancing digital consumption with physical health.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes the role of education in promoting healthy lifestyles, particularly among youth.

5. **Policies and Guidelines**

Governments and institutions can implement policies that encourage physical activity in schools and workplaces. For example, integrating physical activity into the school curriculum and providing designated times for exercise during the workday can promote a more active lifestyle.

-A study published in ***The Lancet*** highlights that supportive policies in schools and workplaces can significantly increase physical activity levels among populations.

Conclusion

The issues of social media addiction and low physical activity represent critical challenges in today's world, particularly for young people who face a multitude of psychological and physical health concerns. Research indicates that excessive use of social media can exacerbate mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Young individuals often engage in social comparisons and are exposed to negative content, which negatively impacts their self-esteem and overall mental well-being.

Simultaneously, a sedentary lifestyle resulting from prolonged screen time increases the risk of chronic diseases, including obesity and cardiovascular diseases.

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that youth who spend more than three hours a day in sedentary activities are more likely to face serious health issues in the long term .

Thus, addressing these interconnected challenges requires a comprehensive approach that combines awareness and education about the importance of physical activity and healthy social media usage. Parents, schools, and communities must work collaboratively to promote digital well-being and create environments that encourage physical activities.

Furthermore, policymakers should implement strategies that support the establishment of safe spaces for exercise and organize community events that foster physical and social engagement. These initiatives are not just options; they are essential for ensuring the health and happiness of the younger generation.

Ultimately, the collaboration between individuals, communities, families, and policymakers is crucial for enhancing the quality of life for youth in the digital age. By investing in both mental and physical health, we can promote a healthier and more sustainable future for all.

Recommendations and Suggestions

To address the intertwined issues of social media addiction and low physical activity among youth, several recommendations can be made:

1. **Promote Digital Literacy Programs**: Schools and community organizations should implement digital literacy programs that educate young people about the responsible use of social media. These programs can help students recognize the potential negative impacts of excessive screen time and develop healthier online habits.
2. **Encourage Physical Activity**: Schools should integrate more physical education classes into their curriculums and promote extracurricular activities that encourage movement. Communities can also host events, such as sports leagues or fitness classes, to motivate young people to engage in physical activity regularly.

3. **Parental Involvement**: Parents should take an active role in monitoring their children's social media usage and encourage family activities that promote physical health. Setting limits on screen time and participating in outdoor activities as a family can foster a healthier lifestyle.
4. **Create Supportive Environments**: Local governments should invest in creating safe public spaces for physical activities, such as parks and recreational facilities. Access to safe environments can significantly increase the likelihood that young people will engage in regular physical activity.
5. **Policy Development**: Policymakers should consider regulations that limit advertising for unhealthy products on social media platforms frequented by young people. Additionally, public health campaigns can raise awareness about the importance of balancing screen time with physical activity.

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