**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN ADOLESCENCE**

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of the study is to examine the impact of social media on personality development of adolescents and to identify social media factors that influence personality development. A qualitative approach has been adopted in order fully explore the subject matter without any constraints. Data was collected using only peer reviewed Journal Articles and articles from book sections. The grounded theory method was used to reach the conclusion. The findings show that use of social media is extreme in adolescents as they use not only for socializing, but also for communication, entertainment, and all the other activities. The four main social media factors that influence personality development include (i) Culture of Popularity, (ii) Unreal Standards of Appearance, (iii) Approval Seeking Behaviour, and (iv) Prevalence of Depression and Anxiety. The research has two main limitations. The first limitation is that the study does not make use of primary data in forms of interviews or observation but it was made sure that only primary sources are used. Secondly, the use of qualitative approach which increases researcher bias. The findings of this study can be used to minimize the negative effects of social media on the personality development of adolescents through educational and intervention plans. The findings show that social media has an adverse effect on the personality development of adolescents. The study specifically identifies the four personality factors that are altered by the excessive use of social media. These findings can be used to develop interventions to minimize this negative impact on adolescents.

**Keywords:** Adolescence, Culture of popularity, Emotions, Fake appearance and Anxiety.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Internet and other forms of media are now deeply integrated in our daily lives and adolescents are deeply connected with this new media as they were born in a time when technology is at its peak and available for all to use. A study was conducted in the developed countries and it was found that adolescents spent most of their time using new media as compared to any other activity, second only to sleeping. New media is an important part of the daily lives of adolescents and they constantly connect their offline lives with online presence and make use of multiple sources (smartphones, laptops, ipad, etc.) to stay in touch with their social networks, especially facebook and twitter. Constant communication is the main motivation behind obsession with new media. Adolescents are constantly using new media for homework, socialization, and entertainment. Thus, it can be said that they are under heavy influence of social media.
1.1 ADOLESCENTS: SOCIAL AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT :-
An important development factor during adolescents is that children become more self-conscious and become increasingly concerned about who they are. They are old enough to understand the concept of society and placing themselves in the society while maintaining their individuality at the same time. They also go through significant bodily changes which lead to the development of self-concept. Thus, self-esteem is an important concern in people of this age because they not see themselves fit for the society or may find incongruence in their real self and ideal self.

According to Erik Erikson’s Stages of Development, during adolescence, teens may face much psychological discomfort as they go through “identity crisis”. He proposes that during this stage, teens’ battle between identity and identity confusion as they struggle to identify personality characteristics that are unique to them. Failing to develop a suitable identity can cause much distress and also have a negative impact on their social functioning in later years. The main characteristics of Adolescent years include:

1.1.1 IDENTITY SHOW OFF:
The individuals successfully develop their identity and show personality features like high motivation, self-esteem, and achievement. Teenagers are under the influence of social media, they get influenced by the post and people online and they try to copy them and show off.

1.1.2 FORECLOSURE:
These types of individuals are usually conformists and authoritarian. They are commanding and demanding.

1.1.3 DIFFUSION:
Individuals falling in this category have low self-esteem. Their identity is weak and diffused. They are also easily pushed in to doing things as they don’t feel strongly about anything. They are under confident people and very introvert.

RESEARCH METHOD:-
Qualitative research is “any kind of research that produces findings not arrive at by means of statistical procedure or other means of quantification”. It is one of the oldest methods of conducting a scientific research and its main focus on explaining a given social phenomenon in detail.

According to Patton and Cochrane, “qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspects of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data”. In simple words, qualitative research is used when the data is such that it cannot be interpreted numerically and requires descriptive understanding and explanation of a given concept. The method is often used when human variables like behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, etc. are measured which cannot be quantitatively analysed.

Grounded theory (GT) is a systematic methodology in the social sciences involving the construction of theory through the analysis of data. Grounded theory is a research
methodology which operates almost in a reverse fashion from social science research in
the positivist tradition. Unlike positivist research, a study using grounded theory is
likely to begin with a question, or even just with the collection of qualitative data. As
researchers review the data collected, repeated ideas, concepts or elements become
apparent, and are tagged with codes, which have been extracted from the data. As more
data are collected, and as data are re-reviewed, codes can be grouped into concepts, and
then into categories. These categories may become the basis for new theory. Thus,
grounded theory is quite different from the traditional model of research, where the
researcher chooses an existing theoretical framework, and only then collects data to
show how the theory does or does not apply to the phenomenon under study.

1.1 INTERVIEWS:
It is one of the most common methods of data collection in qualitative research as it
allows the researcher to get first-hand information about the topic. It is the conversation
where random questions are asked and answers are obtained. Interviews may be semi-
structured or in-depth and may be conducted face-to-face, online, or through telephone.
Secondary data can be obtained from interviews printed in newspapers, magazines or
even on youtube or TV.

1.2 FOCUS GROUPS AND GROUP DISCUSSION:-
If the study is being conducted on a given focus group, a number of participants can be
interviewed in groups through group discussions. A focus group is a form of
qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their opinions,
perceptions believes and attitudes towards a product, service, idea or
advertisement. These sessions are interactive and participants are allowed to oppose or
support a given topic and present their personal views. However, it must be made sure
that participants that are shy also participate in the discussion so that no one is left out.

1.3 OBSERVATION:
This method is used when data is collected when behaviour in natural environment is
required. For instance, when interviewed, people may say something that they wouldn’t
do in real life just to seek social approval or because they don’t want to seem “socially
irresponsible”. However, when observed in natural life, the behaviour is completely
authentic. The data may be collected using a video recorder or placing the researcher in
the natural environment and taking notes of events as they unfold.

DATA ANALYSIS:-
Data analysis is the process of classifying raw data in a way that is makes sense and
answers the research question. In qualitative research, an important part of data analysis
is to interpret the information collected from different sources and giving it meaning.
For the present research, data was collected using peer-reviewed journal articles and
articles from books. The grounded theory approach is used since the theory is
developed from the data collected making it an inductive approach. Moreover, the
subject matter is such that is requires subjective interpretation of the data collected.
FINDINGS:
The aim of the research was to examine the impact of social media on personality development of adolescents. Adolescence is the age of rapid growth both in terms of physicality and intellectuality. Both girls and boys develop physical features that give them a sense of identity. Moreover, at an intellectual level, teens begin to wonder who they really are and where do they belong. The third type of development, which takes place in this age, is the building of social relationships. Because adolescence is such a delicate stage, individuals are easily influenced by others and may go out of their way to impress others.

SOCIAL MEDIA FACTORS AFFECTING ADOLESCENT PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Fig:- Social media factors affecting adolescent personality development and its relation to four independent variables

THE FACTORS WHICH HAVE AN IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Today’s busy generation and no time to reflect on its own self. They get carried away by whatever they see on the internet. They don’t give it a thought about the quality of the change or the impact the change will have on them. They just want to follow the trends at any cost. Due to this they are losing their own charm and they are acquiring an unreal self, that is intolerant, very sensitive, arrogant and this is also leading to the cultural downfall.

There are certain main factors that impacts on the adolescent behaviour.

FACTOR1: PROMOTING OF SEEKING BEHAVIOUR:
It must be noted that the main reason behind social networking sites is usually to extend the actual self out to the world and reach out to the society and not to promote anonymity. Another factor hidden behind this vast use and obsession with social networking is to seek approval of others and gain popularity. Many users of social media are obsessed with constant updating and sharing in order to gain more likes and
FACTOR2: INCREASING DEPRESSING AND ANXIETY:-
It has been found that increasing use of social media also leads to depression, anxiety, and stress in adolescents. A number of studies have found a correlation between heavy use of FACEBOOK, TWITTER, INSTAGRAM and emotional distress. The Facebook and the other such sites help the teenager to hide his or her identity and fool their own self by posting photoshoped pictures and fake visited places. They can write anything without showing their original self. Once the original self is discovered then there is lot of disappointment which leads to sadness and remose. Which results in depression and anxiety.

FACTOR3: UNREAL STANDARDS FOR APPEARANCE:-
The concept of social media popularity is well understood by anyone who uses social networking sites and thus, to gain popularity, people may go out of their way to impress others. Adolescents are increasingly becoming materialists and fake on their social networking site. For instance, they want to develop an image online the image may be beautiful, thoughtful, rich, etc which can attract the public and like to the profile of the owner. The adolescence try to find the best profile picture, write the cool quotes which describes a fake personality.

FACTOR4: CULTURE OF POPULARITY:-
Social networking sites have been a popular Internet trend for the past many years. People are constantly in touch with their friends through social media and it is the dominant form of communication. One major part of social networking sites is of profiles. Individuals spend much time creating profiles that are “cool” to maintain a certain social standard. The teen are ready to post any kinds of pictures to gain popularity. Their day ends with the amount of likes and comments. It’s the most important thing in their life. There are teens who have committed suicides on the same reasons.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS:-
The main limitation of the research is that it only makes use of secondary data and archival research to reach conclusions. It is thus suggested that use of primary data is made in any future research conducted on the subject matter. However, efforts were made to keep the research subjective by making use of primary researches only and deriving conclusions from the data collected without any extended explanation. Other aspects could not be studied in details.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS:-
The four factors identified in the research that influence personality development in adolescents have many practical implications. Since the research proves that using social network sites is having a negative impact on the personality development of the adolescents, efforts should be made to minimize these consequences. Each factor mentioned can be further studied in detail to understand how the negative impact of social media can be reduced. For instance, efforts can be made to educate parents and school authorities about how social networking is leading to the culture of “popularity” based on materialism and giving way to unreal standards of appearance.
teachers can then begin moral education of children from an early age to help them realize that appearance is not everything as there other aspects of personality, intelligence, and good nature of a person, which should be used, judge a person. Similarly, adolescents should be encouraged to spend more time outdoors in recreational activities to promote a healthy development. The feelings of loneliness arise in adolescents who spend several hours on social networking sites waiting for someone to communicate with them and brooding over the active lives of others. Efforts can be made on a national level to reduce the prevalence of depression and anxiety among youngsters. Furthermore, efforts can be made to identify a healthy way of using new media and introducing educational programs regarding responsible use of new media.

**CONCLUSION:-**

Based on the review of the literature presented above and the findings, it can be concluded that social media is having a significant impact on the personality development of adolescents. The new media is creating a great gap between the real self of the adolescent and the created imaginary self by them. They are getting influenced by all the attractive things and moulding their personalities accordingly. They are getting under the influence of depression and anxiety because the only person they talk to is the internet. They should go outdoor and interact with real people and get information from the horses mouth. They should be with family, take their suggestions for improvement and problem solving rather than getting carried away by the social media. They should create their strong personalities rather than copying the figures on social media.

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