

## EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS: FREE FROM THE SHACKLES OF OVERCOMING SOCIAL MEDIA DISTRACTIONS

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**Abstract:** Social media has become an inseparable part of the lives of teenagers as well as children during their growth period. The habit of playing online games and diving into the world of social media makes this generation, especially Gen Z and Alpha, too complacent in their comfort zone in using social media excessively. This of course becomes a new problem in the world of teenagers and children, especially in my discussion this time in their education. Excessive use of social media can interfere with their learning process and social development. My discussion this time aims to identify effective educational strategies to overcome social media interference in teenagers. Through literature review and interviews with students, teachers and parents as reinforcement in contributing to solving this problem, this study found that the lack of awareness of the negative impacts of social media, lack of skills in time management, difficulty focusing while in the learning process or when doing simple tasks in everyday life, for example children and adolescents are too used to holding their gadgets in any situation, when they eat, travel, even to go to the bathroom, children and adolescents are too dependent on their gadgets, as if they lose direction and have no purpose in doing activities if they do not touch to simply inspect their gadgets, social pressure is the main factor that causes disruption to the daily lives of children and adolescents. Based on these findings, in this case I propose an educational model that combines project-based learning, digital skills training, and parental support. This model is expected to help adolescents develop healthy social media usage habits and improve their academic performance. Therefore, awareness is needed from each individual.

**Keywords:** children and adolescent education, excessive distraction, social media, parental attention.

### Introduction

Imagine, a teenager who should be doing schoolwork is busy surfing on social media. Or, a small child who prefers playing online games rather than playing outside the house, also when doing homework, he unknowingly opens social media and then realizes that he forgot what he originally wanted to do. This phenomenon is no longer a strange thing in the digital era like today. Excessive use of social media by children and teenagers is indeed a serious problem that we need to face together. In this presentation, I will discuss the various factors that cause children and teenagers to become addicted to social media, as well as its negative impacts on their development. In addition, if possible, I will also look for some tips and strategies that can be applied by parents, teachers, and educators to help children and teenagers use social media wisely and productively.

Although in fact this problem does not only arise among teenagers, we sometimes find parents and the elderly experiencing this kind of incident. Then this condition occurs due to the many factors that have occurred within the scope of the community. The main cause of the problem due to social media distractions is the design of the application, the year always changes as well as the era that is required to always advance, applications on social media are designed in such a way. Social media applications make users addicted to continuous notifications, interesting content and reward systems such as likes and comments. Then also often heard the term FOMO (fear of missing out) fear of missing information or interesting experiences makes people constantly check social media. Lack of self-control bad habits in using social media are difficult to change if there is no awareness and effort to limit use. Then the surrounding environment, usually friends and family sometimes become a big factor in influencing oneself, so it is very difficult not to be influenced.

### **Literature Review**

Social media can be interpreted as a communication tool that uses online media whose users can easily share, create, and participate in its content. According to (Putri, Nurwati, & S., 2016). Then also according to Van Dijk, social media is also a place where the media focuses on the existence of its users (Nasrullah, 2015). Social media is a term often used to refer to new forms of media that involve interactive participation (Manning, 2014). With the advent of digital and mobile technology, large-scale interaction has become easier for individuals than ever before; and thus, the new media era was born where interactivity is placed at the center of new media functions. One individual can now talk to many people, and instant feedback becomes a possibility. Where citizens and consumers once had a limited and somewhat muted voice, they can now share their opinions with many people (Manning, 2014) However, the lifestyle patterns of individuals expressed through interests, opinions, and activities according to (Dewi & Samuel, 2015). Mowen & Minor (2002) define lifestyle as the way a person allocates time and spends money. Then according to Kotler & Keller (2012), lifestyle is a person's attitude towards the results of interactions and their reactions to the world. Of course, the lifestyle of one individual with another individual must be different, because lifestyle is something dynamic. There are two factors that influence lifestyle, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal lifestyle factors can be influenced by attitudes, experiences and observations, personality, self-concept, motives and perceptions. While external lifestyle factors can be influenced by reference groups, family, and social class (Nugraheni, 2003). The basic assumption of the Uses and Gratification theory is that people are actively involved in media use and interact with communication media by building a grouping of usage profiles and theoretically related satisfaction (Luo, 2002). The theory explains why consumers use certain media and what the function of the media is for them (Katerattanakul, 2002). Uses and Gratification Theory is a theory that explains which media people will choose to meet their needs.

### **Method**

In my observations so far using a quantitative approach with a survey research design to identify the extent to which distractions caused by social media affect the social and academic lives of adolescents. The research population is adolescents aged 15 to 18 years who actively use social media. My research sample is my surroundings and myself. Taken using technology purposive sampling, where participants were selected based on certain

criteria, namely those who actively use social media for at least two hours a day. the research instrument used was a questionnaire specifically designed to measure the level of distraction caused by social media, which includes aspects of attention, social interaction, and its impact on academic achievement. The questionnaire consists of two main parts: first, demographic questions regarding age, gender, and frequency of social media use; second, questions related to distractions experienced while using social media, such as disruptions in learning focus, disruptions in social relationships, and multitasking habits caused by social media. the collected data will be analyzed descriptively using statistical software to determine the frequency and intensity of distractions in adolescents. Furthermore, correlation analysis will be conducted to see the relationship between the duration of social media use and the level of perceived distraction. In addition, regression analysis will also be used to assess the extent to which the variable of social media use affects the level of distraction to adolescents' social and academic activities. this study is expected to provide a clearer picture of the influence of social media use on the quality of social and academic life of adolescents, as well as provide recommendations for parents and educators in managing the use of social media in adolescents

### **Results and Discussion**

So even though it has many bad influences, we still always have a solution to the use of social media. Because it has become an integral part of the daily lives of children and adolescents. Although it provides many benefits, such as fast access to information, extensive social networks, and platforms for self-expression, social media also has negative impacts that cannot be ignored. Social media disorders, such as addiction, cyberbullying, and unhealthy social comparisons, pose a serious threat to the psychological and emotional development of the younger generation. Therefore, education that can free children and adolescents from the shackles of these disorders is very important to ensure they grow into healthy, balanced, and critical individuals. The Importance of Balanced Digital Education, education for children and adolescents in dealing with social media is not only about teaching them to use digital devices wisely, but also teaching them how to build a healthy relationship with technology. One approach that can be applied is through digital literacy education. Digital literacy is not only about the technical ability to use social media devices or platforms, but also about how to critically assess the information found and how to manage online time wisely.

Children and adolescents need to be taught not to be easily trapped in the social pressures that are often fostered by social media. In cyberspace, there are often unrealistic standards of beauty, wealth, and success, which can affect their self-confidence. With proper education, they can learn to sort out information and realize that what is seen on social media is often only a small part of the real reality. The Importance of Parental Role and Supervision, in addition to formal education, the role of parents is very important in helping children and adolescents to overcome the disturbances caused by social media. Parents need to communicate openly with their children about the use of social media and the negative impacts it may cause. Healthy supervision and discussions about time limits in using social media are preventive steps that can be taken. However, parents must also set a good example in the use of social media. If parents spend too much time in cyberspace, children may imitate the behavior. Therefore, creating a balance between offline and online time in family life is very important. Building Mental Resilience in Facing Social Media, In addition,

education that emphasizes the importance of mental resilience is also very necessary. Mental resilience is the ability to remain stable and positive in the face of social pressure or information coming from social media. Teaching children and teens not to be overly influenced by negative comments or unrealistic standards online can help them stay focused on healthy self-development. Through good psychological approaches, such as building healthy self-esteem, they can learn to accept themselves as they are, without feeling the need to compare themselves excessively to others. Strengthening character and instilling positive values from an early age can enrich the quality of life. Envy of teenagers and keep them away from the negative impacts of social media.

Solutions to the Negative Impacts of Social Media to help children and teenagers free themselves from the shackles of social media distractions, the following steps can be applied

1. **Screen Time Limitation.** Setting time limits on using digital devices can help children and teenagers not get caught up in social media addiction. By having structured time, they can focus on other more productive activities, such as studying, exercising, or socializing directly.

2. **Teaching Critical Information.** Social media is often a means of spreading information that is not always true. Therefore, it is important to teach children and teenagers to always verify sources of information and not to be easily influenced by news or trends that have not been proven to be true.

3. **Promotion of Offline Activities.** Offering healthier alternative activities outside of cyberspace, such as sports, art, or useful social activities, can reduce their dependence on social media.

4. **Building a Supportive Community** Children and teenagers who feel supported by friends, family, and their surroundings tend to be better able to manage social media distractions. By creating a positive community, they can share experiences and support each other.

## **Conclusion**

Educating children and adolescents who are free from the shackles of social media distractions is not only the responsibility of schools, but also of parents and society. Through a comprehensive approach—by teaching digital literacy, building mental resilience, and creating a supportive environment—we can help the younger generation to use social media wisely, maintain their mental health, and develop into resilient individuals in facing the challenges of the times. Thus, social media can be a useful tool, not a burden, if used wisely and within healthy limits. Education for children and adolescents needs to emphasize the importance of self-understanding, discipline, and time management so that they can be free from the shackles of social media distractions. By providing accurate information about the negative impacts of social media and encouraging them to think critically, children and adolescents can be wiser in using technology. The role of parents, educators, and society is very important in creating an environment that supports the development of healthy character and social skills. In this way, children and adolescents can optimize their potential without getting caught up in social media addiction that is detrimental to their development.

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