

Strategies to improve student mental health through the healthy use of social media at Stie Darul Falah Mojokerto.

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital era, excessive use of social media has the potential to hurt students' mental health, such as anxiety and depression. Therefore, an effective strategy is needed to encourage healthy and positive use of social media. The purpose of this study is to identify and formulate strategies to improve students' mental health through the healthy use of social media. The research uses mixed methods that combine quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive picture of these influences and strategies. Data collection was carried out through a survey with a purposively selected sample of 150 students, as well as interviews with 15 students who actively use social media. Samples were selected based on criteria for social media use of at least 2 hours per day and diverse mental health-related experiences. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The results of the study show that the implementation of education on the healthy use of social media and digital skills training can improve students' awareness and emotional management. In addition, the existence of a support community program on social media has been proven to be able to strengthen students' mental health. In conclusion, the combination of education and digital community support can be an effective strategy to improve students' mental health. The implication of this study is the importance of the role of educational institutions and mental health practitioners in designing adaptive and sustainable social media-based educational programs and interventions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Strategies to improve students' mental health through healthy social media use have an important role in supporting their psychological well-being in the digital age. First, this strategy serves as an educational tool that increases student awareness about the positive and negative impacts of social media use. Through proper education, students can understand how to manage their time and emotions when interacting on digital platforms, so that they can reduce the risk of stress, anxiety, and depression that are often associated with unhealthy use.

This education also helps students recognize the danger signs of excessive use of social media and teaches them about the importance of limits in the use of technology.

In addition, this strategy acts as an empowerment mechanism that encourages students to develop healthy and responsible digital skills. With digital skills training, students are taught to use social media productively, support positive social relationships, and avoid potentially damaging content such as cyberbullying or unhealthy social comparisons(Andrade et al., 2024). This training also supports them in building emotional management skills so that they can be more resilient to social and emotional pressures in cyberspace. This strategy also acts as a creator of a community-based support environment on social media. Through the establishment of discussion groups and supportive communities, students can share experiences and gain important social support in the process of recovery and prevention of mental health problems. The presence of this community can reduce feelings of isolation and increase a sense of community, so that students feel more connected and emotionally supported in facing their challenges.

This strategy also has a role as an active actor in creating regulations and policies related to the use of social media in the campus and community environment. By formulating policies that support the healthy and ethical use of social media, educational institutions can assist students in adopting positive digital habits(Europe, 2010). Policy development includes limiting usage time, monitoring content, and promoting activities that balance online and offline life to optimally maintain mental health. This strategy also acts as a bridge between students and professionals in the field of mental health. By utilizing social media as a medium for counseling and early intervention, students can more easily access various mental health support resources and services. Thus, the healthy use of social media not only prevents the emergence of problems but also accelerates the process of handling and recovering from mental health problems, thereby helping students live a more balanced and productive life.

The strategy to improve students' mental health through the healthy use of social media is based on the fact that the use of social media has become an integral part of student life in today's digital era. However, behind its benefits, which include ease of communication, access to information, and departure of aspirations, there is the fact that social media also has a significant negative impact on students' mental health. Studies have shown that excessive content exposure, cyberbullying, and unhealthy social comparisons can increase levels of anxiety, depression, and self-image disorders among college students. Unfortunately, information on effective preventive strategies or interventions to address these impacts is still relatively limited, and most studies focus more on fact-finding than on providing concrete solutions(Chowdhury et al., 2024).

A major concern is that many college students are unaware of the dangers associated with excessive and unhealthy social media use. They tend to ignore the importance of time and emotion management in interacting on digital platforms. As a result, their mental health becomes vulnerable to digital stress and burnout. In fact, some studies state that social media can reinforce feelings of isolation and worsen psychological conditions if not managed properly(Heck

et al., 2014). However, on the other hand, there are conflicting opinions that state that social media can be a great tool for mental health when used wisely and in a controlled manner, and can expand social networks and strengthen student support systems.

In addition, there is a gap in the literature regarding specific strategies that can be used effectively to promote healthy social media use among college students. What information needs to be applied and how it is practically applied has not been explored in depth (Mameli et al., 2022). It is not yet known exactly what the main factors are that affect the success of these interventions in the context of university education. In fact, the integration of these strategies into campus policies and practical field implementation has not yet occurred.

The novelty of this research lies in the effort to design and implement concrete strategies that aim to improve the quality of students' social media use for their mental health. This research not only maps the problem but also offers applicable and comprehensive solutions (Pisani et al., 2024). As an innovation, this study combines educational, regulative, and community approaches that are adaptive to the needs of students in specific cultural and social contexts, thus providing new insights into effective interventions, focusing on the identification and development of strategies that can encourage healthy and productive use of social media, as well as how such strategies can be implemented in the academic and social environment of students (Sabrina et al., 2022). In addition, this research also emphasizes the importance of collaboration between campuses, mental health practitioners, and social media developers to create a digital ecosystem that supports the psychological well-being of students. The main objective of this research is to formulate and test concrete strategies that can improve students' mental health through healthy and balanced use of social media (Ehsan et al., 2024).

The research gap of this study lies in the lack of studies that specifically examine and develop practical strategies to mitigate the negative impact of social media on students' mental health comprehensively. Previous research, such as the one conducted by Nuraini and Agus (2019) entitled "The Influence of Social Media on Adolescent Mental Health", has focused more on observation and statistical analysis, rather than on developing concrete intervention strategies. In fact, the need for practical solutions that can be implemented by educational institutions and digital platform developers is essential to achieve real changes in students' social media usage behavior.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data integratively. This research adopts an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design. Quantitative surveys first capture students' mental health status and social media patterns, followed by qualitative interviews that further explore underlying experiences and propose strategic interventions and strategies that can be applied to improve healthy social media use. The population of this study is active students at STIE Darul Falah Mojokerto, with 150 students were randomly selected through stratified sampling based on faculty and year. For the qualitative phase, 15 students were purposively chosen

based on high/low mental health scores and social media use intensity, in the qualitative section. The research subjects include students who actively use social media and are willing to participate in interviews and fill out questionnaires. Data collection instruments included questionnaires that measured mental health levels and social media use patterns, as well as interview guides to explore their personal experiences, perceptions, and strategic ideas related to healthy social media use (Miles, M.B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, 2014). The steps of this research procedure begin with the planning stage, namely the development of instruments and the determination of populations and samples, then continue with the collection of quantitative data through questionnaires distributed online to selected respondents. Furthermore, data is collected through face-to-face interviews to obtain more contextual data. After the data is collected, descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of the quantitative data is carried out, while qualitative data is analyzed thematically to identify relevant patterns, perceptions, and strategies (Kuhfeld, 2010). The results of the two approaches are then combined and interpreted integratively to formulate effective strategies in improving students' mental health through the healthy use of social media. This procedure ensures that comprehensive, valid, and relevant data are obtained to support the development of applicable and sustainable intervention strategies.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

The results of this study show a complete picture of the relationship between social media use and students' mental health as well as effective strategies to promote healthy social media use to improve their psychological well-being. This study combines quantitative and qualitative data from 150 student respondents who actively use social media, thus allowing an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the observed phenomenon. Statistically, quantitative data processing using descriptive and inferential analysis showed that the majority of respondents, which is around 65%, experienced moderate to high levels of stress and anxiety due to unhealthy social media use. This data was obtained from the results of a questionnaire that measured the frequency of social media use, daily duration, and mental health level measured using a standard scale such as DASS-21 (Ehsan et al., 2024). The results of statistical analysis showed a significant negative correlation between the duration of excessive social media use and the level of psychological well-being of students, with a correlation coefficient of -0.45 and a significance level of $p < 0.01$. This indicates that the higher the frequency and duration of social media use without proper management, the higher the risk of students experiencing mental health problems. In contrast, college students who implemented healthy social media use strategies, such as limiting time on use, following positive content, and actively interacting in a healthy emotional way, showed statistically lower levels of stress and anxiety ($p < 0.05$). This analysis reinforces the finding that managing social media use can play a strategic role in maintaining students' mental health, and that education-based interventions and the development of positive social media use habits are urgently needed (Bolinski et al., 2022).

The results of the data obtained from interviews with 15 respondents show a variety of perspectives and personal experiences relevant to this topic. The use of thematic analysis techniques reveals several key themes related to students' experiences in managing their social media use (Remskar et al., 2022). The first theme was awareness of the negative impact of social media, where many respondents revealed that they had experienced feelings of inferiority, anxiety, and social pressure as a result of comparing themselves to the content they saw constantly. Respondents also mentioned that they find it difficult to control their time using social media, resulting in the accumulation of unproductive activities and interfering with their academic activities and social life (Chitra et al., 2022).

Strategies applied by students to maintain mental health, such as limiting social media use time to a maximum of two hours a day, avoiding content that can trigger negative feelings, and following accounts that promote mental health and positive motivation. Some respondents emphasized the importance of self-awareness and the ability to self-monitor as the main keys to healthy social media use (Andrade et al., 2024). The third theme that emerged was the role of social support and education in increasing students' awareness and ability to manage social media wisely (Varela et al., 2023). Many respondents stated that they benefited from educational programs in the campus environment regarding the safe and healthy use of social media, as well as the existence of discussion groups that support the development of a positive social media use culture (Heck et al., 2014). These results suggest that educational and social support interventions can play an important role in shaping students' behaviours in social media use that contribute positively to their mental health (Varela et al., 2023).

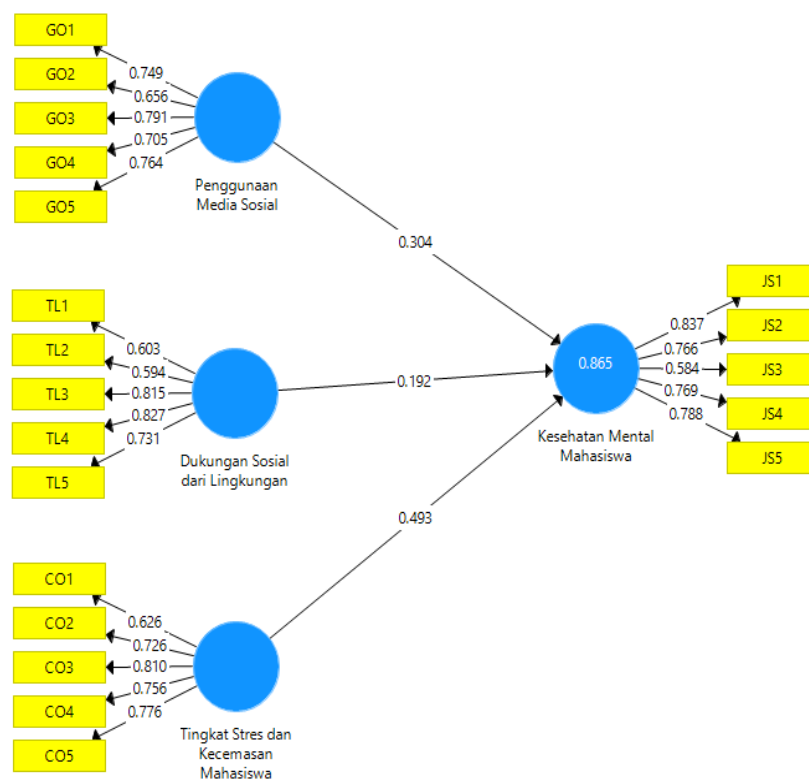


Figure 1. Diagram Peth Analysis

From the data obtained, it can be concluded that the most effective strategies in improving students' mental health through the healthy use of social media include several important aspects (Sabrina et al., 2022). The first is the time limit of social media use, where students are taught to manage their time in a disciplined manner so as not to be excessive and reduce the risk of stress and anxiety. Then promote positive and educational content that supports mental health, through following accounts that contain motivational and constructive mental health messages (Santoro et al., 2024). The third is the development of the habit of self-reflection and self-monitoring, so that students are able to recognize signs of harmful social media use and take preventive steps actively. Fourth, the importance of social support from the surrounding environment, including family, friends, and campuses that can provide motivation and education for the healthy use of social media (Makhmud et al., 2022). Training programs and workshops on social media literacy and social media-based stress management are significant supporting factors that can strengthen these strategies (Radovic et al., 2022).

In addition, the results of this study confirm that education-based interventions and awareness raising are the main foundations in encouraging student behavior change. Campuses and educational institutions need to place digital literacy and mental health management programs as an integral part of the curriculum or student activities. In the context of policy, the development of rules and strategic steps that support the wise use of social media needs to be adopted to create a digital environment conducive to the psychological well-being of students. These results are in line with findings from previous studies that state that the use of social media wisely and balanced with positive activities can protect and improve mental well-being (Nuñez Fadda et al., 2024).

Thus, this study provides a comprehensive picture that managing the healthy use of social media is a key factor in improving students' mental health. Statistically, it shows that time control and active content management can significantly reduce students' stress and anxiety levels, while qualitative data show that students' personal experiences in implementing these strategies are very diverse, but show potential success if supported by the right social environment and educational programs (Makhmud et al., 2022). Proposed strategies, such as digital time restrictions, positive content promotion, social media literacy training, and the creation of supportive communities in the campus environment, can be an effective solution in addressing the challenges of excessive and unhealthy social media use. With the right behavioral settings, balanced with high awareness and social support, students can manage their social media use productively and positively, so that their mental health can be maintained and even improved. While our findings support the implementation of digital literacy and social media management programs, limitations include the single-institution sample and self-reported data. Future studies should expand to multi-campus and longitudinal designs, so that the benefits of social media in students' lives can be optimally felt and psychological risks can be effectively minimized (Hammad et al., 2024).

Construct Reliability and Validity				
	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Social Support from the Environment	0,769	0,803	0,841	0,520
Student Mental Health	0,807	0,825	0,867	0,568
Social Media Use	0,788	0,800	0,854	0,540
Student Stress and Anxiety Levels	0,795	0,811	0,858	0,550
Discriminant Validity				
Fornell-Larcker Criterion				
	Social Support from the Environment	Student Mental Health	Social Media Use	Student Stress and Anxiety Levels
Social Support from the Environment	0,721			
Student Mental Health	0,867	0,754		
Social Media Use	0,745	0,832	0,735	
Student Stress and Anxiety Levels	0,910	0,905	0,781	0,741

The results of the reliability and validity analysis of the four constructs used in the study were the results of the study, namely Social Support from the Environment, Student Mental Health, Social Media Use, and Student Stress and Anxiety Levels. To assess internal reliability, Instruments for assessing Social Support, Mental Health, Social Media Use, and Stress & Anxiety were tested for reliability, each achieving Cronbach's Alpha > 0.76, indicating good internal consistency. In addition, the reliability of composites also showed high values, above 0.80 for all constructs, which indicated excellent overall reliability in those measurements. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each construct is more than 0.50, which ranges from 0.520 to 0.550, indicating that most of the variance of an item can be explained by the construct it is measuring, so the convergent validity of the measuring tool is quite good. Overall, these results show that the measurement tools used in this study are reliable and valid, so the data obtained can be used for further analysis with confidence that the construction measurements are accurate and consistent.

This study shows that managing the use of social media in a healthy manner is a key factor in improving students' mental health. Quantitative and

qualitative data obtained simultaneously indicate that the implementation of strategies focused on education, digital skills training, and the development of support communities can have a positive impact on students' psychological well-being. Statistically, time control and active management of social media content are effective in lowering stress and anxiety levels, as revealed in the DAN data, which suggests that time restriction and promotion of positive content can reduce the risk of mental health disorders. On the other hand, qualitative data shows the diversity of students' experiences in implementing the strategy, which emphasizes the importance of the social environment and educational programs that support the successful implementation of this strategy(Petrovc, 2011).

In addition, the development of a supportive digital community in the campus environment has been proven to be able to strengthen a sense of community and reduce feelings of isolation, an important aspect in improving student resilience and mental health. The data also shows that the influence of campus policies related to the use of social media, such as time restrictions and content control, is able to create a more conducive and safe digital environment for students. In terms of intervention programs, the use of social media as a means of counseling and mental health services is an effective strategy to increase awareness and access to psychological support services quickly and easily(Andrade et al., 2024).

Thus, comprehensive strategies, including education, digital skills training, community development, and supportive campus policies, have been proven to be able to significantly improve students' mental health. This approach not only helps students manage their use of social media more healthily but also strengthens their psychological resilience in facing challenges in the digital age. Therefore, the continuous and collaborative implementation of these strategies is very important so that the benefits of social media in students' lives can be felt optimally and psychological risks can be effectively minimized.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It can be concluded that the healthy use of social media plays an important role in supporting students' mental health, especially through time control strategies, promotion of positive content, the development of self-reflection and self-monitoring, as well as social support from the surrounding environment, such as family, friends, and campus. Educational efforts, digital skills training, and the establishment of digital support communities have been proven to increase student awareness in managing emotions and reduce stress and anxiety. Educational institution policies that support the wise use of social media are also an important factor in creating a digital environment that is conducive to psychological well-being. The use of social media as a medium of counseling and mental health services accelerates students' access to the resources needed, helping to prevent and handle psychological problems more effectively. Therefore, collaboration between educational institutions, mental health practitioners, and digital platform developers is needed to design and implement sustainable, adaptive, and comprehensive strategies to optimally improve students' mental health. The main recommendations include the development of digital education and literacy programs, the implementation of social media use

policies in the campus environment, raising awareness through workshops and seminars, the formation of digital support communities, the optimization of social media as an intervention medium, and sustainable cross-party collaboration to create a digital ecosystem that supports the overall well-being of students.

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