Academic Paper

Adolescent Anxiety and Social Media: A Psychological Analysis of Youth Behavior in Thailand

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Abstract: The pervasive use of social media has significantly impacted the mental health of adolescents in Thailand, with a noticeable link to heightened anxiety levels. This study explores the psychological effects of social media on Thai youth, focusing on factors such as social comparison, cyberbullying, and addiction. Using psychological theories like Social Comparison Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory, the research highlights how online interactions amplify feelings of inadequacy and fear of missing out (FOMO), contributing to anxiety. The cultural context of Thailand, which emphasizes collectivism and community ties, exacerbates the pressures faced by adolescents navigating traditional expectations alongside modern digital influences. While social media offers avenues for connection and support, its overuse can disrupt mental well-being, underscoring the need for comprehensive strategies to foster healthier online behaviors. This analysis provides valuable insights for educators, mental health professionals, and policymakers to develop interventions aimed at mitigating the adverse effects of social media on adolescent mental health.

Keywords: Adolescent Anxiety, Social Media, Thai Youth, Psychological Impact, Cyberbullying

1. Introduction

The strong presence of social media today has changed how young people interact, especially in Thailand, where these platforms are important for sharing thoughts and connecting with others. With the quick growth of technology, a concerning link between social media use and increasing anxiety among Thai youth has come to light, showing a need for a complete psychological review. This issue extends beyond individual experiences, highlighting broader societal shifts where the pursuit of validation and belonging is frequently accompanied by heightened stress and tension. As young people deal with the challenges of online communication, they face various issues that make existing worries worse, highlighting the need for more detailed study of the psychological and social factors involved. This essay will explore the impact of social media on mental health and its influence on the behavior of young people in Thailand.

To understand adolescent anxiety, it is important to look at what it means today, especially with how society and social media affect it. This kind of anxiety involves too much worry or fear that can interfere with daily life and emotional health in young people. Studies show that the stress from social media can make these feelings worse, leading high school

students to feel like they are always being judged and compared to others. Additionally, social media addiction can add to the problem, as it often causes poor emotional control and weakens relationships (Dhammathattariya et al., 2022). As teens use these platforms, they might feel more anxious due to being always online and the worry of missing out. Therefore, it is vital to understand and address the details of adolescent anxiety, mainly because of the strong impact social media has on young people today (Pham Nguyen Chi Anh et al., 2023).

A big change in how Thai youth communicate is happening, mostly due to the rise of social media. This online environment includes many apps like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, which help connect people quickly and are important for sharing oneself and forming identity. Young people's use of these platforms goes beyond just socializing; it blends into their schoolwork and hobbies, creating a complex mix of technology and social life. However, heavy use of these platforms brings up important issues about mental health, especially concerning anxiety and self-worth. Research shows that spending a lot of time looking at idealized online images can worsen feelings of not measuring up and increase social comparison among teenagers, especially in a collectivist culture that values peer acceptance and community ties (Zabrodskaja et al., 2024). Thus, it is vital to understand how Thai youth use social media to tackle the rising mental health issues in this group.

The strong role of social media in the lives of teenagers is very important, especially regarding its link to anxiety. As teens go through their developing years, the need for social approval and comparison can make feelings of inadequacy and social anxiety worse, possibly leading to greater mental health issues. Knowing this relationship is key to tackling the specific psychological challenges young people face in a highly connected world; the quick responses and constant online presence present in these platforms can lead to increased anxiety. Also, looking at how social media can either help reduce or worsen these feelings will help shape methods to encourage healthier online behavior and mental strength among teenagers. Detailed study of these factors will enable a better understanding of psychological aspects and assist professionals and educators in creating focused support plans for struggling youth.

This essay looks at the complicated link between anxiety in teens and their use of social media, particularly focusing on the mental health issues faced by young people in Thailand in a more digital world. A main goal is to explore how social media factors, like cyberbullying and unfair social comparisons, make anxiety worse for teenagers in Thailand. Additionally, it will examine the ways young people cope with these pressures and consider how well these methods work and where they fall short. By using research studies and theories, this essay aims to give a clearer picture of the situation, highlighting what this means for mental health programs directed at these young individuals. In the end, this analysis hopes to raise awareness among teachers, policymakers, and mental health experts, stressing the need for effective strategies that respond to the special mental health challenges caused by social media in today's Thai society (Liamputtong, 2014).

Anxiety in teenagers in Thailand is made worse by social media, which serves as a trigger and a reflection of social pressures. The endless comparisons on platforms like Facebook and Instagram create a cycle of feeling inadequate and low self-esteem, as young people often judge themselves based on likes and comments instead of their true worth. In this online setting, fear of missing out (FOMO) heightens feelings of loneliness, leading young users to spend more time on social media, which further increases their anxiety. Research shows that how often and in what ways people interact on social media is closely linked to their mental health, pointing to an urgent need for help that tackles these digital issues. Thus, the complex link between social media use and anxiety in adolescents highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to mental health support that includes digital literacy and training in psychological resilience in Thailand's schools (Boyd, 2014).

1. The Psychological Impact of Social Media on Adolescents

The strong impact of social media is like a two-sided coin for teenagers, helping them connect but also increasing anxiety. As youths move through their online spaces, seeing idealized versions of their friends can cause harmful self-comparisons, leading to feelings of not being enough and loneliness. This ongoing pressure to show a perfect online image often creates more anxiety, as teens might think their value depends on likes and comments, causing even more emotional pain from feelings of social rejection or being overlooked. Additionally, the constant access to social media can mess with healthy sleep habits, worsening anxiety and harming thinking skills and emotional control. Therefore, the mental health effects of using social media are significant, calling for a careful look at how it affects the mental well-being of adolescents in the Thai context.

Overview of psychological theories related to social media

The interaction between social media and psychological ideas provides important insights into how teenagers behave in Thailand. Social Comparison Theory suggests that people judge their self-worth by looking at others, and this is worsened by the idealized images seen online. Such comparisons can increase anxiety, especially in teens who feel compelled to meet impossible standards set by social media. Furthermore, the Uses and Gratifications Theory indicates that young people go on social media to fulfill different needs, like making friends and seeking approval, which can lead to a reliance that harms their mental health. The cycle of getting likes and comments can create both positive and negative feedback, making it harder for teens to manage their self-esteem and emotions. Knowing these theories is important for tackling the negative impacts of social media on young people and creating better online spaces in Thailand (Hung Phu Bui et al., 2023).

The role of social comparison in adolescent anxiety

Teenagers are especially at risk for the mental effects of social comparison, which is made worse by how pervasive social media is today. This ongoing exposure creates a situation where anxiety can grow, as young people often judge their worth based on the polished lives of others. Such comparisons can result in feelings of not being good enough and failing, especially when they think their own lives do not match the shine or success seen online. New studies show a clear link between high social comparison and increased anxiety symptoms in teenagers, emphasizing the negative impact of online interactions on mental well-being. Additionally, this situation is even more serious in Thai culture, where group values may make young people focus more on how they are viewed by others rather than their own happiness, increasing anxiety as they handle both peer pressure and social expectations (Zabrodskaja et al., 2024). Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend the complex connection between social comparison and teenage anxiety to create effective interventions.

Effects of cyberbullying on mental health

The high rate of cyberbullying in teenagers is seriously hurting mental health and making issues like anxiety and depression worse. Many studies show that those who are cyberbullied experience deep emotional pain, which results in behaviors like avoiding social situations, having low self-worth, and feeling more anxious. For instance, one study found a strong link between long screen time and signs of depression and anxiety, where cyberbullying made these mental health problems worse, especially in young people facing online harassment (Saleem et al., 2024). Also, the connection between how much social media is used and sleep quality shows how bad cyberbullying can be; victims often have disrupted sleep, which can increase signs of depression (Lee et al., 2023). Because cyberbullying can happen outside of

school, it remains a constant danger, highlighting the need for strong strategies to lessen its effects and support resilience in youth in Thailand.

The influence of social media on self-esteem

Social media platforms have changed how adolescents view self-esteem, especially in areas where social validation is important. Being constantly exposed to the curated lives of peers can result in negative comparisons, which may cause feelings of inadequacy and anxiety. Studies show that the like and comment features create a reward system that users, especially young people, often see as a sign of their value. Because of this, the pressure to keep a perfect online image can harm mental health, mainly when young people think their real lives don't match the idealized images they see online. With society more focused on digital communication, the effects of social media on self-esteem are significant, making it necessary to closely examine how these platforms can affect the mental health of Thai youth both positively and negatively (Hung Phu Bui et al., 2023).

The relationship between social media addiction and anxiety

Studies show that using social media a lot can increase anxiety in teens, especially in Thailand. As young people depend more on online connections, the need to keep up a perfect online image often makes them feel worse about themselves and afraid of missing out (FOMO), which is linked to anxiety issues. Additionally, constant alerts and comparisons create a state of high alert, making teens always look at how their online activity stacks up against their friends (Young et al., 2017). This cycle not only makes it hard for them to build genuine relationships but also leads to withdrawing from real-life interactions, which can make anxiety worse. Thus, it is important to understand how social media addiction affects youth to create strategies that help reduce anxiety and encourage better online habits.

2. Cultural Context of Youth Behavior in Thailand

Understanding youth behavior in Thailand requires looking at cultural context, especially regarding adolescent anxiety and social media use. Thailand's collectivist culture greatly values family and community ties, which influence personal behavior and identity among young people. This social framework leads to a conflict where youth may shift between traditional beliefs and modern social media pressures, potentially increasing feelings of inadequacy and social anxiety. The struggle to meet family expectations while seeking personal expression online causes unique psychological challenges, especially when social media serves as a measure of worth and status. Furthermore, rapid globalization and Western cultural influences have introduced various social norms, complicating the environment for teens as they try to balance these conflicting expectations while looking for acceptance and belonging (Passanisi, 2024). Therefore, a detailed look at these cultural factors is essential for understanding youth behavior in today's Thailand.

Traditional values and their impact on youth behavior

The clash between old values and how young people act is very clear in today's Thailand, where cultural traditions often conflict with new technology. Old norms, which focus on community, family duties, and respect for older individuals, greatly influence how teenagers interact and view themselves. However, as social media becomes more common, it can create a gap between these traditional values and the push for individual expression and freedom that digital platforms encourage. Young people deal with this tension, often leading to higher levels of anxiety and uncertainty as they try to balance their families' expectations with the appeal of modern self-image. This mismatch can cause changes in behavior that may indicate a shift

away from traditional values, creating a situation where mental health problems are worsened by different societal pressures. Therefore, finding a way to blend traditional values with modern influences could be important for promoting healthier behavior and better mental health among youth in this context.

The role of family dynamics in adolescent anxiety

Teenagers face many emotional and social issues, and family dynamics are very important in affecting their mental health. In families where there is a lot of support and open talks, teenagers usually have less anxiety because these things help create a stable emotional setting. On the other hand, families that are filled with conflict, have weak emotional ties, and communicate poorly can increase anxiety, leading to more stress and bad ways to cope. Also, when parents have unrealistic or overly high expectations, it can make teenagers feel even more alone, creating feelings of unworthiness and fear of failing, which can make anxiety worse. Knowing how family interactions work is key to making prevention and intervention plans that deal with adolescent anxiety in a complete way, focusing not just on personal strength but also on the overall health and dynamics of the family (Hodes et al., 2018). This view highlights the necessity for focused support systems that promote healthier family relationships, which will ultimately help teenagers.

Influence of peer pressure in the Thai social media landscape

In modern Thailand, the strong impact of social media is made worse by peer pressure, which greatly affects how teens behave and their mental health. This online world creates a space where young people always compare themselves to others, resulting in more anxiety and self-esteem problems. The urge to fit in with the ideal lives shown on these platforms can push young people to take part in activities that harm their well-being, like risky online behavior and unhealthy ideas about body image. Research shows that the effects of social media use on high school students are complex, showing both good and bad results (Pham Nguyen Chi Anh et al., 2023). Additionally, the growing dependence on social media for approval in schools, especially among future workers, points to a worrying trend where online views are valued more than true self-worth, as discussed in recent education conferences. Therefore, it is essential to understand and tackle the effects of peer pressure in social media to encourage healthier growth for teens in Thailand.

Cultural stigma surrounding mental health issues

The widespread cultural negativity concerning mental health issues makes adolescent anxiety worse, especially in cultures where family reputation and social harmony are highly valued. In Thailand, where mental health is often misunderstood, young people dealing with anxiety frequently feel they must hide their challenges. This hiding not only extends their pain but also makes it less likely they will look for professional help, creating a loop of avoidance and decline. The outcomes are serious; without social support or open conversations, teenagers face loneliness, a key factor that worsens mental health problems. Additionally, the stigma can show up in subtle but harmful ways, reducing peer understanding and fostering a culture of silence around real emotional experiences. Tackling this stigma is crucial; encouraging a setting that raises mental health awareness can help young people to ask for support and have important talks, ultimately reducing the negative impacts of anxiety.

The impact of educational pressures on Thai adolescents

In a setting where education expectations are rising, Thai teenagers are dealing with a more competitive situation, which greatly affects their mental health. The pressure to perform

well in school is often made worse by social norms that link academic success to personal and family success. This constant push creates a competitive atmosphere among students, resulting in feelings of not being good enough and anxiety for those who have a hard time meeting these high expectations. Additionally, social media plays a big role in increasing these pressures; young people are always seeing idealized images of success that can misrepresent reality, leading to ongoing feelings of self-doubt and low self-esteem. As a result, the mix of educational pressures and social media leads to a complicated situation where anxiety flourishes, highlighting the need for changes in educational policies and societal views to reduce the mental health challenges faced by Thai youth (Permana et al., 2024).

3. Social Media as a Tool for Support and Connection

Social media has an important role in teen life, going beyond just being fun; it can be a vital space for support and connections. Recent studies show that social media helps teens feel like they belong by enabling communication and interaction with peers, which can lessen feelings of loneliness often tied to anxiety. Teens with higher self-esteem usually use these platforms to build good school and social relationships, practice healthy coping methods, and show their true selves—factors essential for mental health. At the same time, knowing the psychological details of online interactions shows a more complicated view; although some young people may face mood changes and withdrawal linked to bad usage habits, positive engagement with social media can help reduce these risks. Therefore, when used well, social media is not just a possible trigger for anxiety, but also a strong tool for building social connections and improving emotional strength in adolescents.

Positive aspects of social media for mental health

The world of teenage mental health is more connected with social media, showing a complicated link that might lead to good results. One main advantage is how social networks can create a sense of belonging for high school students, helping them bond with others who have similar issues and experiences. This online communication can boost emotional support and lower feelings of loneliness, which is very important during teenage years filled with social worries and personal growth. Furthermore, these platforms can be a space for self-expression and creativity, letting young people share their thoughts and feelings, which might help lessen anxiety and depression. Studies show that while worries about the negative effects of social media continue, they do not clearly prove a direct link between use and worsening mental health, indicating that there is a significant chance for positive interaction (Siemieniecka et al., 2023). Therefore, when used carefully, social media can be a useful resource for improving mental health in teenagers (Pham Nguyen Chi Anh et al., 2023).

Online communities and their role in reducing anxiety

Dealing with the difficulties of youth anxiety in today's online world shows how important online groups are in lessening feelings of loneliness and stress. These sites help people talk and connect with others facing similar issues, creating a safe place for young individuals to express their thoughts and emotions without worry of being judged. Studies show that social media can be important for sharing feelings, providing both privacy and a sense of community (Pham Nguyen Chi Anh et al., 2023). Additionally, being part of these online spaces often helps users learn how to cope, as they share tips on dealing with anxiety and the stress that comes with being a teen. This shared experience helps lessen the shame around mental health problems and motivates young people to ask for help when necessary. Therefore, online groups are key players in tackling youth anxiety, supporting mental strength, and improving emotional health.

The use of social media for mental health awareness campaigns

The link between social media and awareness of mental health has become very important for tackling anxiety in young people, especially in Thailand. Social media sites can spread information quickly and help young users talk about mental health, which is important for reducing stigma around these issues. Research from both global and local studies shows that high school students want to know more about mental health, and this can be effectively encouraged through online campaigns (Pham Nguyen Chi Anh et al., 2023). Additionally, with high rates of mental health issues among Vietnamese teens caused by things like school pressure and cyberbullying, social media campaigns can offer important help and resources for young people facing similar problems in Thailand (Nguyen Minh Trang et al., 2023). Overall, using social media for mental health awareness helps with education and builds a supportive community, which is vital for improving the mental health of young people.

The role of influencers in promoting healthy behaviors

In the online world, influencers have big power in shaping how teens act, especially in promoting good health habits. They make content that feels relatable to Millennials and Gen Z, who often depend on technology and social media for info and approval. This group, known as digital natives, lives in a space where quick responses and interaction are very important (Nor Ezdianie Omar et al., 2020). Influencers can use this trait by sharing health messages in fun and easy ways. For example, fitness influencers highlight not only physical health but also mental wellness, addressing worries that came up during the COVID-19 pandemic when teens faced more anxiety and feelings of loneliness. By being role models, influencers can encourage young people to pick up better habits by connecting dreams with real actions, which helps in forming well-rounded, healthier lives for young individuals.

Case studies of successful online support initiatives

The success of online support programs in dealing with teen anxiety is shown in various case studies that highlight how digital platforms can help with mental health. For example, programs using social media for peer support have been effective in decreasing feelings of loneliness among young people dealing with cyberbullying, as research points out how critical counseling attitudes are in reducing both victim and bully behaviors (Teh Jayee et al., 2024). Additionally, programs that provide mental health education online have led to a significant increase in teens' awareness of their mental health issues. In Vietnam, for example, the push for joint efforts between schools and families highlights an important method to boost mental health knowledge, which helps build resilience against anxiety and cyberbullying (Nguyen Minh Trang et al., 2023). These effective programs show the need to incorporate digital tools that are easy to access and engaging for teens, creating environments that support better mental health.

4. Strategies for Mitigating Adolescent Anxiety Related to Social Media

To effectively reduce adolescent anxiety linked to social media use, a broad approach is needed. First, teaching digital literacy can help teens critically evaluate online content and tell apart real interactions from shallow ones, which can lessen feelings of inadequacy driven by social media comparisons. Schools and parents should work together to create educational programs that focus on thoughtful social media use, guiding young people to recognize the edited nature of online profiles, which can build resilience against anxiety-triggering scenarios. Additionally, fostering supportive spaces for teens to openly converse about their feelings regarding social media can reduce stigma and promote healthier ways to cope. Peer-led support groups or school counseling programs could be important venues for sharing experiences and

ideas, helping to create a sense of community and understanding among teens (Young et al., 2017). Overall, combining education with supportive networks is crucial in tackling the mental health challenges that social media presents for youth.

Recommendations for parents on monitoring social media use

To reduce bad effects of social media on teens, parents need to keep a close eye on what their kids do online. Talking openly is very important since it creates trust, helping kids feel safe to share their online experiences. By having regular chats, parents can understand what their kids are doing online and how it might affect their feelings. Also, making clear rules about social media use, like setting time limits and guidelines for safe platforms, can support better digital habits. Teaching teens about dangers like cyberbullying and false information will help them to make better choices (Wilgus, 2015). In the end, a good mix of supervision and conversation can increase how involved parents are and help kids build emotional strength while dealing with online challenges.

School-based interventions to address anxiety

Dealing with anxiety in schools needs specific actions that help build emotional strength in teenagers. With the growing number of anxiety cases linked to social media use, schools should focus on programs that teach coping skills along with regular learning. These actions can help lessen the bad effects of too much internet use, which is known to cause anxiety in young people (Nadarajan, 2023). Using cognitive-behavioral techniques in schools can help students better control their feelings and decrease the sense of loneliness that often comes from social media interactions. Additionally, studies show that having more social support can help lessen the bad effects of anxiety (Pham Nguyen Chi Anh et al., 2023). By creating a welcoming environment, schools can support friendships and boost students' emotional health, which can lead to better grades and improved mental health. Working together, teachers, mental health professionals, and parents is important for dealing with youth anxiety in today's digital world.

The importance of digital literacy education

In a digital world that is more connected than ever, the importance of teaching digital skills is very clear. Giving teenagers the tools to use online platforms not only helps them do better in school but also encourages better thinking and making informed choices. As social media influences the way young people connect and perceive themselves, developing a foundational understanding of digital tools is essential to mitigate problems such as cyberbullying and the spread of misinformation. Also, digital skills help young people see and think about how their online activities can affect their mental health, which can lead to more anxiety and social stress (White, 2015). By including digital skills in school programs, educators can help students become responsible online users who contribute to a healthier online space. Therefore, focusing on digital literacy education is vital for personal development and fostering better social interactions in today's online world.

Role of mental health professionals in guiding youth

Dealing with the various problems related to teen mental health, especially due to more social media use, shows how important mental health professionals are. These professionals can offer important advice in understanding the difficult behaviors of young people influenced by online activity. For example, recent studies indicate that adding mental health training to teacher education is crucial for helping teachers spot and deal with issues like anxiety and depression that come from social media (Nguyen Minh Trang et al., 2023). Additionally,

mental health experts can lead workshops that enhance mental health knowledge among teens, helping them see signs of struggle and find support. Since social media can be both helpful and harmful, mental health professionals play a key role in building a support system that involves families and communities. Their participation helps strengthen resilience and better coping methods in young people.

Policy recommendations for social media platforms

To lessen the bad effects of social media on mental health in teens, it is important for platforms to create strong rules that focus on user safety. First, there should be strict age-check processes to make sure that content is suitable for younger users, which can help reduce harmful material that might make anxiety and depression worse. Second, social media companies need to promote accountability by making clear rules for moderating content and stopping misinformation, which can raise anxiety in users (Liamputtong, 2014). Moreover, adding features that support digital well-being, like reminders for taking breaks and better privacy settings, could help teens use social media in a healthier way. Together, these suggested policies would help make social media a safer place, which could lessen the mental stress on young people dealing with a complicated online world.

5. Conclusion

The complicated link between teen anxiety and social media use in Thailand shows a serious need for better intervention plans. As digital technology keeps changing, its effect on young people's behavior is getting more obvious, worsening existing mental health problems and causing new types of psychological issues. The results shown in this study highlight that while social media can help build connections and offer support, it frequently creates situations that lead to comparison and cyberbullying, which increases anxiety in teens. Therefore, those involved - like parents, teachers, and mental health workers - should focus on making safe online spaces and teaching digital skills to young people. By building resilience and giving teens the right tools to deal with the challenges of social media, we can lessen the negative psychological effects and improve their overall mental health. In summary, a comprehensive approach is important to effectively tackle the complexities of this issue, ensuring that the mental health of future generations is protected.

A detailed look at the relationship between youth anxiety and social media use among Thai young people reveals important findings that highlight the complicated issues involved. First, more time spent on social media is closely linked with higher anxiety levels, showing an important connection between online activities and worsening mental health. Specifically, young people feel more inadequate, experience a fear of missing out (FOMO), and engage in social comparisons, which are made worse by how social media presents information. The findings also suggest that the kind of social media platform plays a significant role, with visually-oriented platforms typically causing higher levels of anxiety than those centered on text-based interactions. Finally, efforts to improve digital literacy and encourage healthier online habits might help reduce the negative effects of social media, pointing to a significant area for future research and policymaking.

Figuring out how adolescent anxiety relates to social media use needs a varied research method that looks at both the mental and social sides of youth actions. Future studies should focus on long-term research that follows social media use over time and how it relates to anxiety levels in young people in Thailand. This will help clarify causal links, not just connections, tackling concerns from earlier studies, such as the major effects of social networking sites on young people's emotional health. Also, studies comparing cultural differences in social media use and its effects on mental health in various areas could help

understand unique aspects important to Thailand, adding to global knowledge on this important issue. In the end, these thorough research efforts will help create targeted programs that encourage healthier social media use among young people and reduce anxiety-related problems.

While social media gives teens a way to connect and find support, it is important to have a balanced view to reduce possible challenges. Too much use can be harmful, like internet addiction that is a big issue for young people, affecting their mental health and schoolwork. For example, a study involving college students showed that 15.3% had serious internet addiction, with factors like procrastination and depression playing a role in this issue. Additionally, the common effects of social networks on high school students in Vietnam show a pressing need to understand both the good and bad sides of these platforms. By teaching digital skills and positive coping methods, parents and teachers can help young people develop better online habits, allowing them to use social media as a helpful means for communication and self-expression instead of causing stress and distraction.

Due to rising worries about adolescent anxiety tied to social media, it is necessary for all parties, such as teachers, mental health experts, and lawmakers, to take action to tackle this issue. Because social media is everywhere, teachers need to include digital literacy in their lessons to help students manage online interactions with a critical and caring mindset. In addition, mental health professionals should create specific strategies that tackle how social media makes young people feel more alone and less worthy. Lawmakers also need to create rules that control online content and encourage safer environments to make sure that social media companies care more about users than just making money. All these efforts can help lessen the negative effects of social media, leading to better mental health for young people. It is very important for everyone involved to work together to build a strong support system that helps adolescents and tackles the main reasons for their anxiety in today's digital world.

Youth mental health in Thailand is influenced by culture, technology, and system issues. The younger generation faces digital environments with social comparison and cyberbullying, which increases anxiety and depression risks. This situation requires a response from society and the government. It's important to add mental health education to school programs, so students learn coping skills and how to get help. Also, outreach initiatives should create supportive spaces for discussing mental health openly, helping reduce the stigma around seeking assistance. As Thailand approaches major social changes, focusing on youth mental health through teamwork among families, educators, and policymakers is vital. These actions could change the future of adolescent mental health, promoting resilience in a fast-changing world.

Originality & Body of Knowledge

Originality: This paper provides a novel psychological exploration of the connection between adolescent anxiety and social media use in Thailand, offering a culturally specific perspective on this global issue. Unlike prior research that primarily examines social media's effects in Western contexts, this study uniquely addresses how Thailand's collectivist culture amplifies the mental health challenges faced by adolescents. The research integrates psychological theories such as Social Comparison Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory to analyze the factors contributing to anxiety, including social comparison, cyberbullying, and social media addiction. The paper's originality lies in its focus on the dual impact of social media as both a source of connection and a trigger for anxiety within Thailand's unique cultural and social framework.

Body of Knowledge: This study significantly advances the understanding of adolescent mental health by analyzing the psychological effects of social media within the Thai cultural

Journal of Exploration in Interdisciplinary Methodologies (JEIM)
ISSN: 3057-0085 (Online) • Vol 1 • No 6 (December, 2024)

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context. It highlights the interplay between traditional values, such as family expectations and communal harmony, and modern digital pressures like fear of missing out (FOMO) and online validation. The paper also contributes to the growing body of research on the impact of social media on self-esteem, peer pressure, and cyberbullying, offering targeted insights into how these issues manifest among Thai youth. Furthermore, the research provides actionable recommendations for educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals, including digital literacy education, family engagement, and school-based interventions. By addressing these complex dynamics, the study offers a comprehensive framework for mitigating the adverse effects of social media on adolescent mental health in Thailand, making it a valuable resource for interdisciplinary applications.

Declarations

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethical treatment of experimental subjects (animals & human): The research was conducted in compliance with the principles of the Helsinki Declaration regarding human subjects, so formal ethical approval was not required.

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Journal of Exploration in Interdisciplinary Methodologies (JEIM)
ISSN: 3057-0085 (Online) • Vol 1 • No 6 (December, 2024)

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