

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON REDUCING THE ANXIETY LEVELS OF FOURTH YEAR PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS AT BESTLINK COLLEGE OF THE PHILIPPINES

ABSTRACT

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DISCIPLINE

Mental Health

KEYWORDS

*social media; anxiety
reduction; positive
affirmations; facebook usage;
sleep disruption; information
reliability*

ARTICLE ID

AASGBCPJMRA-B56466

This research investigates the role of social media in alleviating anxiety among fourth-year Psychology students at Bestlink College of the Philippines. With anxiety becoming increasingly common due to academic and personal pressures, it is essential to explore accessible coping mechanisms. As social media continues to serve as a prominent source of information, connection, and entertainment, this study seeks to understand how its content may influence students' anxiety levels. Guided by Nortje's (2020) Social Comparison Theory—which suggests that individuals evaluate themselves by comparing their lives to others—this research examines how social media interactions can shape emotional well-being, either by reducing or exacerbating anxiety. This study adopted a correlational quantitative research design, involving 200 fourth-year Psychology students selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a validated self-constructed questionnaire and the Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) scale. Statistical analyses included frequency, percentage, weighted mean, ranking, Likert's Four-Point Rating Scale, and Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the relationship between social media use and anxiety levels. The results indicated that the majority of social media users were female, aged 21 to 25, and spent over two hours daily on Facebook. A statistically significant negative correlation was observed between social media perception and anxiety levels, with a Pearson r -value of -0.39 and a p -value of 0.00. This suggests that exposure to content such as positive affirmations, anxiety-related information, and humorous videos may help alleviate anxiety among respondents. Nevertheless, participants reported challenges associated with social media use, including disrupted sleep patterns, reduced concentration, and concerns about the credibility of shared information. The study highlights the dual role of social media in influencing student anxiety levels. While exposure to positive affirmations and anxiety-related content can help reduce anxiety, excessive use may negatively affect sleep, concentration, and the quality of shared information, potentially increasing anxiety. Based on these findings, the researchers developed a group guidance activity aimed at addressing these challenges and promoting healthy, purposeful social media use as a tool for managing anxiety.

RECOMMENDED CITATION

Cueva, M. J., Frias, J., Gonzales, E., Ventura, C. M., & Villanueva, J. P. (2025). Influence of Social Media on Reducing the Anxiety Levels of Fourth Year Psychology Students at Bestlink College of the Philippines. *Ascendens Asia Singapore – Bestlink College of the Philippines Journal of Multidisciplinary Research Abstracts*, 7(3), 89.