Social networks and the impacts of misuse for mental health

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Abstract: This article is the result of bibliographical research on the negative impact of social networks in today's world, especially with regard to mental health. The consequences, described in several reliable sources are physical and mental disorders, being more common: Mood change, anxiety and social isolation. With regard to the most severe cases, depression, suicide attempt, total dependence and lack of contact with reality may occur. It is perceived that the attention of parents or guardians, in the identification of the first manifestations of mood changes, and especially when, if it is used by children and adolescents. In the case of young people and adults, stimulate dialogue, seek help with health professionals, and, to a certain extent, there will be a greater chance of success pointed out in the various national and international sources of research.

Keywords: Social networks. Physical and mental health. Internet.

1. Introduction

The contemporary world is at the height of innovations and discoveries. Much of this advancement is due to technology. Information, news and discoveries are accessible to almost every world population, while human beings have never been more exposed and dependent on what technological advances have offered. Social networks are samples of the important role they play in modern society, mainly focused on social relations between people. (Koehler, 2015).

However, when users are unable to make use of these networks in a balanced way, the impacts can be devastating on physical and mental health. One of the most obvious examples of these impacts caused by social networks today is the exaggerated search by young people for a standard of beauty that is almost impossible to achieve. This has often caused anorexia, bulimia, anxiety disorder, monophobia, virtual bullying, verbal aggressions and misinterpreted messages can

influence changes in habit, discord and even de-structuring of families that are some of the factors that increase rates of depression, among other psychological disorders and numerous health problems. since, if your mind is not well your whole body gets sick. And this has generated numerous discussions around the search for answers and the possible ways to minimize and/or solve the problems arising (Souza and Cunha,2019).

2. Methodology

This is a study with data collection performed from a bibliographic survey. For this survey, articles were retrieved in several databases such as PubMed and Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), websites of health and technology professionals and books published between 2014 and 2021. The inclusion criteria determined for the selection of articles were: texts available in full, articles in Portuguese; master's dissertations and doctoral theses and articles in full that

portrayed the problem in question.

3. Results and Discussion

At the conclusion of the research work, it is perceived that the pandemic scenario caused a great increase in access on social networks, with people interacting, sharing, commenting, or selling their products in the networks, obtaining an expansion in virtual stores, moving the economic sector (Diana, 2021). Accesses strengthened the social relationship

of people, focusing their time on the virtual world, where it also generated new false or true information. Therefore, this practice increased the rate of physical leave, where people end up spending a lot of time, either working or interacting, as a way of spending time or leisure; and physical contact has become increasingly scarce, especially in the younger public (Marques, 2016). Another worrying factor is the auto rate of depressive people (Silva and Vieira, 2019).

3.1 What social networks are and for

As virtual spaces where people or businesses relate through messaging, content sharing, and more. Although there are many, each was created with a purpose and for a specific audience. One of the main objectives of social networks is to promote exchange or contacts between people, which may be friendship, dating, marriage. Other objectives are: exchange and seek knowledge, search for jobs, share photos, videos, experiences (motherhood, travel, recipes), various information (politics, religion, Fashion, sports, etc.), disseminate products and services (courses, lectures and etc.). (Diana, 2021).

Social networks are structures originated inside or outside the virtual world, created for multiple purposes, aiming to unite people and companies with the same interests. Human beings, as well as animals of other species, need to live in groups and, through grouping, can strengthen, protect, communicate, grow and supply other primary needs. In view of these considerations (Koehler,2015) states that:

> "The human being is group and, there would be no other way, we are a species that is born totally dependent on the other to survive. In order to organize ourselves in society, there is a need to define shared rules and values, which is the institutions that, in turn, reproduce in organizations."

Its value and importance are indisputable; however, it is necessary not to lose sight of the that social networks must play the role of aggregating, adding, reducing distances, facilitating; damage because of excessive user use. (Zenha, 2018). highlights:

> "For many individuals, it is not possible to live without being connected to it, the excess of time spent browsing the virtual world results in an overdose of digital

interactivity."

Given so many possibilities, the media can be instruments of valuable scope, however, it is necessary to know how to use them, to the point of not suffering interference on the personal, emotional side, especially with regard to the quality of life of those who make use of them.

3.2 The role of social media today

It can be said that there is the before and after access to technology. It has brought significant and positive changes for people. (Marques, 2021) states that:

> "This world is constantly evolving, as new Social Media are emerging that are adapting to the needs of its audience, revealing new features". p.13

Making use of social networks is a true adventure, but at the same time it is attractive because it is a constantly evolving universe. The way of relating, talking, negotiating has become easy, and less complex contact and relationships. At first, it can be said that social media has overturned barriers that were previously difficult to undo and admitted. Social networks were interpreted by (ComsChool,2018) as tools that:

> "They are part of our lives, they occupy an expressive time of our day, they have become much more than environments of meetings and conversations, but they are channels of entertainment, communication, media, marketing, service and relationship. We are connected beings, digital and social, this is undeniable."

Social networks enable your users to open accounts, create profiles, expose information they find important, through which they will contact people they know or not, and thus idealize or give rise to a virtual contact network that can become something real or not.

3.3 The advantages of social networks

Today, it is perceived the need to make use of technological instruments that are accessible, aiming to favor learning within the classroom (Silva,2019):

> 'Social networks contribute to the production of argumentative texts', and adds: "It is essential to promote a teaching-learning process that leads students to think, to research, to understand themselves as an active subject in the process of cognition, as co-author of knowledge" (p.16).

Educators can use social networks as one of the facilitating tools of learning, leading them to feel part of the entire production process carried out in the classroom. Companies are modernizing, using social networks as tools for disseminating their services and goods.   Social

networks also have tools that can be used for services and business, as defined below:

> "In addition to increasing visibility, social networks are great channels of public relationships. They make it possible to know the real opinion of their customers to build a close relationship." (Santos, 2021).

In the face of technological advances, companies that are not spending on the new market model will eventually be outdated. However, those who seek to benefit from the use and possibilities that the media offer, have already realized that there are new communication channels indispensable to maintain loyalty with the customer. Owned (Red *et al.*, 2014) states:

> "The new technologies have enabled the creation of more interactive media, freeing individuals from the limitations of space and time, making communication more flexible. With just one click, anyone can access specific information and keep in touch with people who are distant."

There is no way not to make comparison with the before and after the arrival of the internet. Before it took time and patience to wait for responses from correspondence or documents, which were often lost or directed to the wrong addresses. Social networks have gradually replaced traditional media. In a matter of seconds, people can interact, solve problems, maintain contacts with their leaders, express themselves, learn, lead life without spending time and money. The internet, and especially social networks, have had a very big impact on people's lives, including behavior, speaking, dressing, and relationships, he concludes. (Santos,2021).

3.4 Disadvantages of social networks

Although social networks have many advantages and benefits for society in the current days, one perceives the concern of parents, educators, health professionals and others, when they encounter problems related to their inappropriate use.   Exposure of private life and information that should not be placed on the network. Children and adolescents are more vulnerable to harassment by people of bad nature.   Prejudiced or swindling people have the possibility to create fake profiles to target their victims. Within this context, (Rosa,2015) states:

> "The community, as a whole, is now represented by the groups in these virtual environments of cyberspace to which individuals have the possibility of belonging, even anonymously."

It is perceived in social networks people using space for different ways, for varied reasons and with different purposes, mainly, aiming to exclude, denigrate and discriminate others. Caution and vigilance are required. People become

dependent to the point where they cannot give up their devices to socialize, play, work, study. Games with violent content, unsuitable even for adults, have caused irreparable damage to children and young people who after spending hours inside a fictional world, cannot differentiate and 'return to real life'.

There's a clear relationship between overuse of social networks, violent games and movie and series apps with the emergence of symptoms of depression, pathological anxiety, social isolation and sleep deprivation. In youth, excessive technology causes the individual to spend most of his time interacting virtually, which affects development and makes him lose other important social experiences (Fenix, 2021).

Some have their lives compromised, 'when practices interfere with work productivity, in living with friends and family and when they replace activities that were once pleasurable'. Second (Brotto, 2021), it adds:

> "This need to be connected to social networks most of the time can bring emotional and physical damage. Anxiety, tachycardia, postural problems and even eating disorders are some physical consequences of the vicious."

Communication, which is one of the fundamental tools for interaction between human beings, is in a fine line when it enters the digital area. In digital communication one loses the connection that involves feelings, sensitivity, attention, empathy. When the human being uses the media to communicate tends to use short sentences and most of the time, the texts are misinterpreted. (Sorj,2020). states:

> "In most cases, exchanges of dissenting opinions on networks do not support more than three or four messages, and often culminate in mutual offenses and/or disruption of dialogue. Thus, we have lost both the ability to listen and to develop arguments reflexively, enriching them thanks to dialogue."

It is observed that the number of people who have had negative experiences through social networks are many. Whether through unnecessary criticism, or by comparisons where an 'established' pattern, a determined 'visual' becomes a collection factor, generating dissatisfaction and a search for something unreachable. (Amaro, 2021). says:

> "Whoever is publishing distorts reality to display what they consider satisfactory. Those who watch the material seek to equate themselves to this parallel life and become increasingly unhappy, since these patterns are unattainable, bringing consequences such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, low self-esteem and difficulty of relationship outside networks. It's a lot of charge to have a perfect life and body, including some may develop eating disorder."

Many users due to excessive use of social networks may

present mental health problems, including anxiety, aggressiveness, insomnia, agitation and etc. As stated, (Teixeira, 2019), which:

> "These technology-dependent subjects are named Norm phobic because the use of technology is now pathological and related to other disorders related to anxiety and depression disorder."

The speech remains increasingly frightening. Dependence on social networks presents causes and symptoms. Many studies have been done, studies conducted, expert's addiction in social networks such as the alcoholic because the absence presents the same withdrawal symptoms. Still within the context (Teixeira, 2019) he points out that: 'Nomophobia is currently considered the disease of the 21st century', and that the nomenclature was created after research conducted on people who presented 'feelings and feelings of anguish and discomfort related to inadequate and excessive coexistence of technologies (cell phone, computer and/or internet)'. Thus, (Lemos, 2019), highlights that social networks among them, Facebook 'transmits a false sense of support. At the same time, those who use them have 'both negative benefits and consequences'.

Scoring the advantages and disadvantages of using social networks is relevant. Because, users need to reevaluate the usefulness and priorities they are putting into their day-to-day lives. According to (Fonseca, 2018), it is necessary to:

> "Judge the need to live with close people (e.g., family, friends, co-workers/university) and not neglect professional/academic activities, promoting an awareness that social networks should not replace the encounter, but be aligned with the interaction and maintenance of social relationships, minimizing the negative impacts on people's physical and psychological health"

The first signs that someone's physical or mental health is compromised is the family. And in most cases, there is treatment and means, to avoid major damage. According to experts, changes in mood, expression of sadness or deep suffering are already indicative that the person presents an inner suffering. Also can be detected, according to the psychologist (Brotto, 2021) some signs, such as: Lack of interest in activities outside of online life; Prolonged use of computers and smartphones; Feeling of anguish whenever the person needs to be disconnected; Impression that a particular experience is not complete until it is posted on the network; in addition, it is common for addicted people to stop doing tasks to spend more time in the media and present withdrawal symptoms when removed from the network.

4. Conclusions

The use of social networks brings numerous benefits, but it is necessary to realize the negative impacts that lack of balance and excessive use can cause physical and mental problems. In a hyper-connected society, the advantages and disadvantages are visible. People who cannot conceive life without their technological devices, consumers eager for items accessible to a click, companies updating their sales techniques to extend their articles to various groups, amount of information that the human cannot process, educators using tools that add to traditional models, access to online events (teleconferencing, surgeries, etc.). Certainly, the contents exposed in this work are not conclusive, nor are the researches done exhausted, on the contrary, new strategies and theories that will add or complement what has been scored so far, in order to achieve more effective results.

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