Mind Your Vibe: Navigating Mental Health & Social Media in the Digital Age for Muhammadiyah Youth Movement

Istiqomah
Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo, Indonesia

DOI : https://doi.org/10.61796/jscs.v3i1.409

Sections Info	ABSTRACT
	Objective: This community service activity aims to raise awareness among teenagers in Sidoarjo about mental health and the impact of social media on their well-being. Method: The method used involves Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and workshops, providing participants with a space to discuss the effects of social media on mental health, ways to manage digital stress, and building self-confidence. Additionally, practical strategies such as mindfulness and communication skills were introduced to help teenagers cope with digital pressures. Evaluation was conducted through participant feedback and group discussions to measure improvements in understanding mental health and media literacy. Results: The results showed a significant improvement in participants' understanding of how to manage stress arising from social media and maintain a balance between the digital world and real life. Novelty: The novelty of this program lies in its ability to integrate discussions on mental health with practical tools for managing social media pressures, providing a safe space for teenagers to address the challenges they face in the digital age and learn to navigate their interactions in the online world in a healthier way.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a stage of development that is full of major challenges in an individual's life, both physically, psychologically, and socially [1], [2]. At this age, adolescents begin to form their identity, formulate life goals, and experience significant physical changes [3]. This development is often accompanied by intense emotional changes, including feelings of anxiety, stress, and confusion related to the social roles they face [4]. One factor that plays a major role in influencing adolescent mental health is their social environment, which is increasingly influenced by advances in technology and social media [5].

Social media has become part of everyday life, especially for the younger generation. According to the Pew Research Center, nearly 95% of teenagers aged 13 to 17 actively use the internet, with more than 70% of them accessing social media every day [6]. Behind its benefits, which allow teens to connect with friends, family, and the outside world, social media also poses significant challenges, especially in terms of its impact on teens' mental health [3], [7]. Many studies show that social media can affect an individual's self-perception and emotional well-being, especially among teens [8], [9].

For example, Smith et al. revealed that adolescents who frequently compare themselves to others on social media tend to have higher levels of anxiety [10]. They feel pressured by unrealistic beauty standards, seemingly perfect lifestyles, and achievements displayed by other social media users [8]. This then creates feelings of low self-confidence and dissatisfaction with themselves [4]. Jenkins also found that excessive social media

use can cause teens to feel isolated, even though they appear to be connected to many people online [11], [12].

The negative impact of social media on adolescent mental health does not stop at social comparison. Most adolescents also feel pressured by social expectations arising from what they see on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook [13]. This phenomenon can trigger stress, anxiety, depression, and in some cases, even contribute to eating disorders or addictive behavior [14]. On the other hand, although social media provides opportunities to build communities and share experiences, many adolescents feel that they must constantly appear perfect in front of the digital public, which ultimately creates unavoidable emotional tension [7], [15].

Adolescents are a group that is highly vulnerable to mental disorders. According to the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2020, more than 30% of adolescents experience severe anxiety problems, while more than 20% experience symptoms of depression that interfere with their daily activities. Few adolescents actually receive adequate support to cope with these feelings, given the social stigma associated with mental health issues. Many adolescents are reluctant to seek help or talk about their mental health issues because they worry about being perceived as weak or different from their peers.

The importance of mental health among adolescents is gaining attention from many parties, especially because of its significant influence on their personal and social development. Poor mental health can affect various aspects of adolescents' lives, including interpersonal relationships, academic achievement, and their readiness to face the world of work and adult life. Therefore, education about the importance of maintaining mental health, as well as how to manage stress and anxiety, must begin early.

The Aisyiyah Regional Leadership Cadre Development Council, as an organization concerned with the empowerment of women and children, feels called to get involved in efforts to address this issue. Aisyiyah is committed to supporting young people so that they can grow into independent, moral, and emotionally intelligent individuals. One way to support adolescent mental health development is by organizing educational activities that raise mental health issues in the context of social media, as well as providing a safe platform for them to share experiences, learn, and find solutions to the problems they face.

In this case, community service in the form of Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and workshops aims to provide a space for teenagers to share their experiences related to social media use and its impact on their mental health. This activity is also designed to provide an understanding of how to manage stress and anxiety and to provide practical skills in using social media wisely. In addition, this activity will also help teenagers hone their communication skills, increase their self-confidence, and develop their ability to work together in groups.

Through this activity, it is hoped that teenagers will better understand the importance of maintaining mental health and be more prudent in using social media. The

balance between real life and the virtual world is an aspect that needs to be emphasized so that teenagers can grow into individuals who are healthy both physically and mentally.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study was a qualitative method with a community service approach. The activities carried out were focus group discussions (FGD) and workshops that focused on understanding mental health and the impact of social media. These activities were carried out in Sidoarjo, involving 100 teenagers and young adults aged 19 to 24 years from various educational backgrounds. The steps taken in implementing these activities included: Activity Preparation: Preparing materials related to mental health and social media.   Implementation of FGD and Workshop: Participants were divided into several groups to discuss their experiences related to mental health and social media, as well as to provide practical solutions for managing stress and anxiety. Data Collection: Data was obtained through direct observation and documentation of the results of discussions and feedback from participants who took part in the activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measuring the understanding of Youth FGD participants

Before the material on Navigating Mental Health & Social Media in the Digital Age was presented, participants were asked to answer several pre-test and post-test questions to measure their initial understanding of the impact of social media on mental health. They then repeated the same questions in the post-test to evaluate their increased understanding after the material was presented by the resource person as material for the group discussion forum.

Figure 1. Pre-test – Post-test participants.

Several participants in the picture appear to be focused on their devices, indicating that data collection using technology, such as mobile phones or other digital devices, has been implemented to improve efficiency and interactivity in the activity. With participants sitting quietly and focused, the room atmosphere appears organized and conducive to conducting an initial evaluation, which includes measuring participants'

understanding of the topics to be discussed further. Each participant received 25 questions with the following results, as illustrated in the graph.
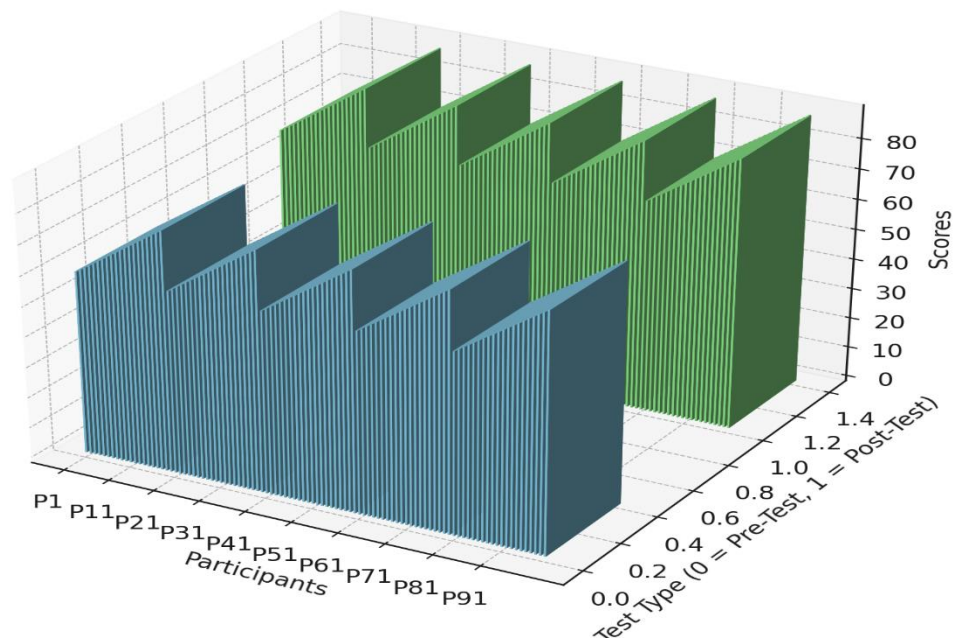

Figure 2. Pre-test – Post-test participants.

From the results of the pre-test and post-test given to 100 participants, there was a significant increase in their understanding of mental health and the impact of social media on their well-being. In the pre-test, most participants tended to have a basic understanding of mental health and social media, but there were still some gaps in their understanding of important concepts such as "mindfulness," the negative impact of social comparison on social media, and strategies for maintaining mental health in the digital world.

For example, questions such as "What are the main negative effects of social media on mental health?" and "What is meant by social comparison on social media?" show that many participants chose answers that were not entirely accurate on the pre-test. However, after participating in the activity, participants showed improvement in answering correctly and more accurately.

The average pre-test score of participants was 69.5, while the average post-test score increased to 79.5. This shows a positive change that reflects an increase in participants' understanding of the topics discussed in the activity, particularly in stress management, the impact of social media, and the application of mental health principles in everyday life.

Brainstorming effect in Navigating Mental Health & Social Media in the Digital Age

Participants were given material related to social media interaction as preparation before conducting the FGD. They were also given an understanding of techniques for managing stress caused by social media, such as mindfulness techniques, which help them to be more aware of their feelings and reduce anxiety caused by digital addiction. Participants also learned better communication skills, both in interacting with their

friends in the real world and in the virtual world. These techniques have been proven effective in helping participants become wiser in managing their interactions on social media.

Figure 3. The presenter provides a spark.

In addition, this activity introduced other practical strategies for maintaining a balance between the digital world and real life. Several participants said that they now better understand the importance of healthy time management on social media, for example by setting limits on app usage or being more selective in choosing content to consume. This improvement shows that participants have not only become more aware of the dangers of social media to mental health, but have also begun to implement concrete steps to reduce its negative impact.

In addition, one of the striking things was the participants' lack of understanding of "digital detox" before participating in the activity. In the pre-test, most participants chose incorrect answers regarding what digital detox means. However, after the workshop session discussing how to do digital detox to maintain mental health, participants showed better understanding and some of them reported that they started reducing their screen time after the activity. This shows that this activity not only increased their knowledge, but also had a positive impact on their behavior.

The mindfulness techniques introduced in the workshop also received considerable attention from participants. Most teenagers admitted that they felt calmer and were able to manage their anxiety better after practicing mindfulness techniques. They realized that the anxiety they felt, especially that arising from social media, could be managed in a healthier way through awareness and focused breathing. This indicates that participants not only gained theoretical knowledge, but also practical skills that can be applied in their daily lives.

In this case, managing stress triggered by social media becomes very important. Many participants revealed that they often feel stressed after comparing themselves to others on social media. They feel pressured to always appear perfect and avoid negative feelings such as anxiety or inadequacy. Through group discussions, they began to realize that most of the content they see on social media only shows the positive side of other

people's lives, while the reality of life is not always as beautiful as it appears in the virtual world. This awareness helped them to be more prudent in using social media.

It is important to note that the use of social media can have a positive impact on mental health, such as enabling teenagers to seek support and share experiences. Several participants stated that they found it easier to share stories and seek support from friends who had similar experiences. This discussion opened their minds to positive ways of using social media, not only for entertainment, but also as a tool for building communities that support mental well-being.

However, it cannot be denied that the negative impact of social media on mental health is very real. According to the post-test results, almost all participants admitted that they felt anxious or inferior after seeing other people's posts that seemed more perfect. This shows that even though social media offers many benefits, its negative impacts, such as social anxiety and low self-esteem, cannot be ignored. Therefore, it is important for teenagers to learn how to manage their time on social media and choose content that can have a positive impact on their mental health.

In addition, the phenomenon of cyberbullying was also a major focus of discussion. Many participants reported that they had experienced or witnessed bullying behavior in the virtual world. After attending a workshop on how to overcome the negative effects of cyberbullying, participants began to understand the importance of managing their account privacy and reporting bullying behavior. This discussion provided them with practical skills on how to protect themselves in the virtual world and how to protect themselves from harmful interactions.

The results of the evaluation conducted through feedback and group discussions showed that participants felt more confident and had better skills in dealing with the pressures caused by social media. They reported that they found it easier to identify sources of anxiety related to social media and felt better prepared to deal with them in a healthier way. This improvement was not only evident in their understanding of the importance of mental health, but also in their improved social and communication skills.

Figure 4. Participants express their opinions about social media.

Overall, this activity successfully provided deeper insight into how social media affects the mental health of adolescents and gave them practical tools to manage these negative impacts. The adolescents who participated in this activity not only gained new knowledge, but also felt more skilled in dealing with the challenges that arise in the digital world. These results show that this kind of community service has a positive impact that can help adolescents develop into individuals who are mentally and emotionally healthier.

Discussion and presentation: confirmation of cultural interaction in social media

After participants received the sparking material, they held a discussion, the results of which were then presented. Here, participants were able to share their experiences and opinions related to the topics discussed. This process illustrates how participants can apply the knowledge they gained during the activity. Overall, the atmosphere was well organized and showed that participants were ready to actively participate in the discussion.

Figure 5. Participants discussing selected topics

This conducive discussion atmosphere reflects the principles of good communication in FGDs, namely openness, mutual listening, and appreciation for every contribution made. The discussion ran smoothly, creating space for constructive exchange of ideas, which is a key characteristic of a productive group discussion. The discussion addressed the impact of social media on mental health, both positive and negative. Several participants shared their experiences of how social media can affect mood, with some feeling more connected, while others felt isolated. Then, the social comparisons that often occur on social media were also a major concern, with many participants feeling anxious or inadequate after seeing the seemingly perfect lives of others. This increases psychological pressure, especially among the younger generation who are vulnerable to unrealistic standards of beauty and lifestyle.

From the results of the group discussions, most participants showed an increased understanding of the negative impacts that social media can have, such as stress, anxiety, and feelings of low self-esteem. Many of them realized that the social comparisons that

often occur on social media contribute to lower self-esteem and social anxiety. Some participants also revealed that they felt isolated despite having many friends in the virtual world, which proves the gap between digital relationships and more meaningful relationships in real life.

One of the main findings from the group discussion was how teenagers often feel pressured by unrealistic standards portrayed on social media. The issue of social comparison on social media became one of the points of in-depth discussion. Before the activity, many participants at were not fully aware that social media can exacerbate anxiety and lower self-esteem. However, after receiving an explanation of how social comparison can affect feelings and mental well-being, they began to realize the importance of maintaining boundaries and balance in the digital world.

The uniqueness of this program is that it not only provides insight into mental health and social media, but also teaches participants to recognize and manage their feelings. This activity creates a space for teenagers to share experiences, provide support, and develop social skills that can help them overcome challenges in the digital world. In this context, the program not only educates but also empowers teenagers to be more discerning in facing an increasingly complex digital world.

At the end of the discussion process, each group was asked to appoint a representative to give a presentation on the topic they had chosen and discussed. The purpose of this presentation was to give participants the opportunity to account for the results of their discussions and clearly explain both the problems they had identified and the solutions that could be applied to address these issues.

Figure 6. Presentations by participant representatives in each group

By presenting the results of the discussion, participants are expected not only to be able to express their opinions clearly, but also to gain a deeper understanding of the issues discussed, and to be able to relate the proposed solutions to relevant real-life experiences. This process also challenges participants to communicate effectively, organize their ideas systematically, and sharpen their critical thinking skills in

responding to various questions or feedback from other participants. This presentation is also an important step in exploring various perspectives, broadening insights, and encouraging further collaboration among participants in finding the best solutions.

Overall, this activity has proven effective in helping teenagers manage digital stress and understand the importance of maintaining mental health amid the powerful influence of social media. By raising their awareness of the negative impacts of social media and providing practical tools such as mindfulness techniques and digital detox, this program has made a significant contribution to the mental well-being of teenagers. Similar activities in the future can continue to educate and empower teenagers to live healthier mentally in the digital world.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : The community service activity aimed at improving teenagers' understanding of mental health and the impact of social media successfully achieved its objectives, with participants demonstrating a better understanding of maintaining mental health and using social media wisely. In addition, this activity also developed communication skills and the ability to work together in groups, which had a positive impact in facing psychosocial challenges in the digital age. This program succeeded in increasing adolescents' understanding of the importance of mental health and the wise use of social media, as well as developing communication and collaboration skills. **Implication :** This program can be a model for other community service activities that focus on empowering adolescents to overcome psychosocial challenges, especially in the digital age. **Limitation :** This activity had time constraints and only involved a small number of adolescents, so the results may not be fully representative of the entire population. **Future Research :** Further research could explore the long-term impact of this activity on adolescents' mental well-being and their interaction with social media, using broader and longer-term methods to gain deeper insights.

REFERENCES

[1] A. Smith, *Adolescent Mental Health in the Digital Age*, Routledge, 2019.

[2] M. Zucker and H. Larson, "The Digital Age: A New Frontier for Adolescent Psychology," *Journal of Psychology and Digital Media*, vol. 44, no. 5, pp. 334-340, 2020.

[3] L. Brown and R. Larson, "The Impact of Social Media on Mental Health in Adolescents," *Journal of Adolescent Health*, vol. 45, no. 3, pp. 112-119, 2020.

[4] L. Liu and A. Harris, "Social Media Use and Mental Health in Teenagers: A Longitudinal Study," *Journal of Adolescent Psychology*, vol. 30, no. 4, pp. 456-469, 2021.

[5] K. R. Johnson, *Understanding Social Media's Influence on Youth Behavior*, Oxford University Press, 2021.

[6] J. D. Brown and D. A. Smith, "The Digital Divide: Access to Social Media and its Impact on Adolescent Development," *Youth Studies Quarterly*, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 102-113, 2020.

[7] P. Orban and G. McKenna, *Managing Digital Well-being in the Modern World*, Springer, 2020.

[8] G. Seidman, "Social Media and Self-Esteem: The Influence of Social Comparison," *Journal of Social Media Studies*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 245-255, 2018.

[9] C. S. Carver and M. F. Scheier, "Self-regulation and Mental Health: The Role of Digital Media," *Behavioral Medicine*, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 51-58, 2018.

[10] J. Smith, L. Miller, and T. Chang, "The Link Between Social Media Use and Anxiety in Adolescents," *Journal of Digital Psychology*, vol. 22, no. 4, pp. 220-230, 2021.

[11] H. Jenkins, "Youth and Media: A Critical Overview of Digital Youth Culture," *Media Studies*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 45-59, 2020.

[12] K. J. Gergen, "The Challenge of Social Media: Perspectives on Psychological Well-being," *Psychological Studies*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 25-32, 2019.

[13] S. A. McLeod, "Social Learning Theory and Media Influence," *Educational Psychology*, vol. 51, no. 2, pp. 143-156, 2020.

[14] R. Morris and A. Blake, "Mindfulness and Mental Health in Adolescents: A Review of Current Interventions," *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 1-9, 2021.

[15] L. Nakamura, "Race, Gender, and Media in the Digital Age," *Digital Culture*, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 225-233, 2020.

*Istiqomah (Corresponding Author)
Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo, Indonesia
Email: istiqomah@umsida.ac.id