

## ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON ADOLESCENTS' LEVELS OF EMPATHY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Sitti Hafsa<sup>\*1</sup>

Email : [hafsahkerja@gmail.com](mailto:hafsahkerja@gmail.com)

### Abstract

Social media has become an integral part of adolescents' daily lives in the digital age. Whilst offering various benefits, the use of social media also raises questions regarding its impact on social and emotional development, particularly levels of empathy. This study aims to analyse the influence of social media use on adolescents' empathy levels by examining various aspects, including social interaction, the influence of content, and gender differences. Through data collection via surveys and case studies, this research demonstrates that social media use can have both positive and negative effects on adolescents' empathy levels, depending on how and in what context it is used. The findings of this study are expected to provide insights for parents, educators, and policymakers in understanding the social dynamics of adolescents in the digital age.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Empathy, Adolescents, Digital Age, Social Psychology

### Introduction

In today's digital age, the use of social media has become an integral part of daily life, particularly amongst teenagers. According to data released by We Are Social and Hootsuite (2023), more than 4.5 billion people worldwide use social media, with teenage users being one of the most active groups. Social media offers a platform for interacting, sharing information, and building relationships, but it also raises questions about its impact on social and emotional development, particularly levels of empathy among teenagers.

Empathy, defined as the ability to understand and feel what others are experiencing, is a vital social skill in building healthy relationships. Research conducted by Konrath, O'Brien, and Hsing (2011) indicates that levels of empathy among teenagers have declined over the past decade, a trend potentially influenced by various factors, including the use of social media. With the rise in virtual interactions, there are concerns that teenagers may be losing the ability to empathise directly, which could contribute to social issues such as bullying and isolation.

A study by Twenge et al. (2018) found that excessive use of social media can lead to increased anxiety and depression among adolescents, which in turn can affect their ability to empathise. This suggests that whilst social media can be a tool for enhancing connectivity, there are significant risks associated with its impact on mental health and social skills. It is therefore important to conduct an in-depth analysis of the influence of social media use on adolescents' levels of empathy in order to identify steps that can be taken to promote healthier and more empathetic interactions in the digital world.

---

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author

Email Address : [hafsahkerja@gmail.com](mailto:hafsahkerja@gmail.com)