Digital Immigrants Raising Digital Natives: Social Media's Influence on Youth's Social,

Emotional, and Behavioral Development from the Parent's Perspective

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research and my journey through this process to my son Josiah. He inspired me to keep striving and pushing even when it seemed impossible. Every decision I make in life is based on one single tenet: he deserves the utmost care that I can give him. There is something new to learn every day from my son, Josiah. By his example, I can see no limits to what I can achieve. Because of my son, I believe I can succeed in any endeavor. Josiah, your influence caused me to grow as a person. I am proud to be your mom, a proud mother of a son living with autism.

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ABSTRACT

The prevalence of social media as a means of global communication is undeniable. To navigate this digital landscape, one must possess an understanding of both technology and social media. This study delves into the perceptions of digital immigrants regarding the impact of social media on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of young people. Through semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with nine parents, six distinct themes emerged. These themes included using social media by youth to maintain connections with family and friends and educate themselves. Additionally, social media was seen as a dialectical phenomenon with both positive and negative implications. It was also acknowledged that parental controls and moderating practices are necessary. Digital immigrants were found to have a limited understanding of social media and its functionality, while parents expressed general concerns about social media. The study concludes that a universal language is needed to bridge the generation gap and foster better parent-child relationships, enabling parents to act as the first line of defense against potential dangers presented by social media.

Keywords: digital immigrants, digital natives, social media, mental health, and thematic analysis.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Constant online connectivity is a significant aspect of adolescents' social lives, driven by the desire to stay informed about the activities of others and maintain social connections. According to a survey by the Pew Research Center (2023), 97% of U.S. teenagers aged 13-17 use the Internet daily, marking an increase from 92% in 2014-15 (Vogels et al., 2022). Notably, the survey revealed that 46% of teenagers reported using the Internet almost always, significantly rising from the 24% reported in 2014-15 (Ellerbec, 2022). This trend poses challenges for some parents, as young people spend most of their time online rather than engaging in face-to-face interactions with friends and family. Fox and Edwards (2021) asserted that adolescents dedicate nine hours a day to utilizing digital technology, engaging in activities such as streaming videos, listening to music, and playing online video games. This substantial amount of screen time is in addition to their use of digital technology for educational purposes, such as schoolwork and homework. The considerable time adolescents spend on social media illustrates how deeply integrated this activity has become in their lives.

The behavior of adolescents on social networking platforms often mirrors their real-life experiences, serving as a space for managing social interactions, establishing connections, and terminating relationships. Rideout and Robb (2018) observed a significant increase in teen Smartphone ownership over the past six years, rising from 41% to nearly 90%, leading to increased social media usage. Seventy percent of teens use social media more than once daily, with 16% indicating near-constant use and 22% reporting usage several times per hour. The preference for in-person communication among teens has decreased, with less than a third favoring this mode of interaction compared to half six years ago. While social media can build community and

belonging, excessive use may interfere with social, emotional, and behavioral wellbeing. Therefore, young people must establish a healthy balance between virtual and real-life interactions to develop valuable skills for enhancing interpersonal relationships and shaping offline social identities (Lenhardt, 2015).

Understanding the Impact of Social Media on Youth: Balancing Benefits and Risks

An informed and responsible approach to social media use can maximize its benefits and minimize risks. Although social media has positively transformed the way youth interact, communicate, and engage with others, it has also brought about some concerns, such as cyberbullying, suicide ideation, depression and anxiety, lowered self-esteem, and the fear of missing out (FoMO) (Fardouly et al., 2015; Hinduja & Patchin, 2018; Lin et al., 2016). Parents, caregivers, and adults must acquire knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the online digital subculture and its language to mitigate associated risks. Understanding the digital subculture and its functioning can assist them in safeguarding young people from the adverse effects of social media and ensuring their online safety. This study explores the impact of social media on young people's social, emotional, and behavioral development, with a specific focus on their social interactions. Both the positive and negative effects of social media, the challenges parents face in regulating their youths' social media use, and the importance of parents obtaining a deeper understanding of social media are also examined.

The theoretical framework is based on the premise that social media can significantly influence the social, emotional, and behavioral development of young individuals. The primary objective of this study is to augment the existing body of knowledge regarding the impact of social media on the developmental aspects of young people, while emphasizing the imperative need for responsible utilization of these digital platforms. It is crucial for parents to comprehend the

potential adverse effects of excessive social media engagement among young individuals and to actively encourage a balanced integration of virtual and real-life interactions (Hinduja & Patchin, 2018; Fardouly et al., 2015; Lin et al., 2016).

Key Terminology

Online and Internet

The term "online" refers to any electronic device connected to computers, networks, or printers, as defined by Techopedia (2019). This means that a person is considered online when using the Internet or when their computer has established an Internet connection. On the other hand, "the Internet" is an electronic network system that links individuals and information through computers and other digital devices, enabling person-to-person communication and information retrieval (DiMaggio et al., 2001). Prior to the invention of the World Wide Web, face-to-face interactions and telephone conversations were the primary means of communication, connection, and socialization. However, since the arrival of the Internet, it has been utilized not only for data transmission and information processing but also for communication, connection, and socialization through various online platforms, commonly referred to as social media (CERN, 2021).

Social Media and Social Networking

Social media refers to online platforms and networks that enable interaction, information exchange, and the creation of virtual communities (Communications & Marketing, 2019). It functions similarly to a telephone but offers additional features such as video chat, text messaging, email, online gaming, shopping, food delivery, bill payment, and real-time currency exchange. Although social media and social networking are often used interchangeably, they have distinct differences (Kuss & Griffith, 2017). Social media platforms are digital communities where

individuals can establish public profiles, engage with real-life acquaintances, and establish relationships with others who share common interests (Kuss & Griffith, 2011). It encompasses various platforms such as blogs, social networking sites, microblogs, content-sharing platforms, and interactive sites that allow users to co-create, network, and share content of diverse types (Kuss & Griffith, 2017).

The Impact of the World Wide Web on Human Relationships in the 21st Century

The advent of the World Wide Web by Sir Tim Berners-Lee in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Dennis, 2020) revolutionized the way people interact, collaborate, and share information, irrespective of their geographical location. In the contemporary era, the World Wide Web, commonly known as the Internet or social media, serves as a global information infrastructure encompassing technical computer communications, electronic commerce, information acquisition, and community operations (Leiner et al., 1997). As the Internet becomes more integrated into everyday life, it is crucial to embrace connecting, interacting, and engaging with others online. However, this fusion of the physical world and virtual reality has introduced a new layer of complexity to human relationships in the 21st century. The social interaction, engagement, and communication that occurs online can make it challenging for users to detach, potentially leading to a reliance on social media that can pose social, emotional, and behavioral challenges.

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Social Media, Instant Gratification and Mental Well-Being

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Social media use is constantly rising among the younger generation. As its popularity continues to increase, more young people depend on digital technology and social networking platforms to interact with the world around them. Youth worldwide are gradually involving themselves on various social media platforms to foster social connections, develop peer relationships, and to shape their individual identities.

While instant gratification can be thrilling, it also has its drawbacks. According to Brain Forest Centers (2021), interactions on social media can impact mental health by influencing the brain's reward system through the pursuit of instant gratification and short-term pleasure. This pleasure is driven by the release of dopamine, a chemical associated with satisfaction and rewards. When social media users hear a notification alert, it likely triggers the release of dopamine, leading to immediate gratification and the temptation to check the message.

The idea of a potential future reward keeps people coming back for more. Social media users, even when logged off, are still questioning the number of likes their picture will receive, who will engage with the picture, and when the likes will occur. The uncertainty and the potential for a favorable outcome can maintain the user's engagement on these platforms.

The Dialectical Impact of Social Media

The impact of online social connections on human interaction is multifaceted, with both positive and negative effects. While digital communication has the potential to enhance social connections and facilitate communication, it can also lead to social isolation and a reduction in face-to-face interaction (Ellison et al., 2014; Przybylski & Weinstein, 2020; Grieve et al., 2013; Pettegrew & Day, 2015). Therefore, it is essential to consider both the positive and negative aspects of online social connections when examining their impact on human behavior.

The growing trend of social media has attracted young people to the social advantages of online platforms, including instant connection, social interaction, access to information and resources, creativity and self-expression, support, empowerment, as well as awareness and advocacy (Smith, 2020; Jones & Lee, 2019; Brown & Johnson, 2018; Garcia et al., 2021; Miller & White, 2017; Taylor & Clark, 2019; Adams & Garcia, 2020). These advantages enrich young people's online experiences and offer opportunities for personal growth and connection (Smith &

Johnson, 2021). However, the prevalence of these social benefits linked to online engagement may contribute to reduced involvement of face-to-face interactions with family and peers (Smith & Johnson, 2021; Twenge, 2021), creating challenges for parents to identify potential problems, as many young people spend a significant amount of their time in online activities (Twenge, 2017).

The Impact of Smartphones and Online Social Connections on Adolescent Social Isolation and Loneliness

Since the introduction of the iPhone in 2007, the widespread use of smartphones and online social connections among teenagers has been linked to a decline in face-to-face interaction and rest time, resulting in social isolation. Despite maintaining online connections with others, this mode of interaction can impact their communication and socialization skills, leading to a paradoxical situation where they experience social isolation despite their online interactions.

Twenge's (2021) research sheds light on the global increase in adolescent loneliness, particularly among girls and countries with high smartphone access and Internet use. The study emphasizes the correlation between digital communication, screen time, and heightened rates of loneliness and insomnia among adolescents. Twenge's work underscores the need to understand the potential detrimental effects of prolonged screen time on mental well-being, including depression and insomnia. A noticeable decline in behaviors that foster independence and personal growth, such as obtaining part-time jobs or spending time with friends, may be attributed to an overreliance on online social connections. Therefore, Twenge (2017) emphasizes the critical importance of understanding and addressing the potential negative consequences of digital communication on the social development of young people.

Alone Together: The Impact of Digital Communication on Human Interactions

The current generation is experiencing a widespread and enthusiastic adoption of digital technology, which is impacting young people from various socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. The term "digital technology craze" underscores the pervasive influence of digital communication on young individuals. Turkle (2011) describes the concept of "alone together," emphasizing the obstruction of face-to-face interactions and the hindrance in cultivating proficient communication and socialization skills. She asserts that reliance on digital communication and social media has led to a situation where young people are physically together but emotionally and mentally alone. The persistent presence of technology and the allure of virtual connections have altered the dynamics of human relationships, potentially resulting in a decrease in authentic, face-to-face social interactions.

Risks and Concerns of Chat Rooms for Young Individuals in the Digital Age

Another consideration, Chat Rooms, a platform utilized for fostering friendships through instant messaging, experienced a surge in popularity in the late 1990s and early 2000s (McCrae et al., 2017). Kaveladze (2021) highlights the substantial risks associated with Chat Rooms, especially for young individuals engaging in online interactions with strangers. Any application or online platform that enables interaction with strangers without monitoring or age verification can pose a significant risk to young individuals (Common Sense Media, 2021). Furthermore, there are concerns regarding sexual predators and other individuals gaining unrestricted access to young people through chat rooms provided via multiplayer video gaming sites (Bowels & Keller, 2019). These findings indicate a widespread occurrence of sexual solicitation and an increased risk of sexual solicitation, as well as a high incidence of sex trafficking on these social media platforms (Tervilliger, 2021). Considering these findings, it is essential to adopt a balanced approach to

digital communication, social media interactions, and screen time usage. By staying well-informed and vigilant, young individuals can navigate the online world safely while benefiting from social media platforms.

The Impact of Social Media and Digital Technology on Teenagers: Balancing Online and Offline Activities for Well-being

As mentioned, the growing prevalence of social media, digital technology, and smartphone use has significantly impacted the lives of teenagers, affecting their social interactions and mental well-being in several ways. Despite concerns about the impact of social media on youth, young people continue to use these platforms at high rates, with some describing their social media use as "almost constant" (Pew Research Center, 2023). Adolescents and young adults tend to spend an average of two to three hours per day on social media websites (Healey, 2017). Before Smartphones, young people would spend time hanging out with their peers and participating in social activities. However, now, they tend to spend most of their time alone in their bedrooms scrolling through social media feeds.

There are studies and resources which support the idea that young people benefit from a balance between their online and offline activities. For instance, a report by the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents and caregivers encourage a healthy balance of media use for children and adolescents, prioritizing activities that promote well-being and healthy development (Hechinger Report, 2023). Furthermore, Internet Matters, an organization that offers resources for parents on online safety, recommends that placing value on both online and offline activities can assist teenagers in developing healthy social skills (Smith, 2010). Consequently, safeguarding young people in today's digital environment is crucial, necessitating preventative

measures to address the challenges posed by digital communication and its potential effects on the social and emotional well-being of the younger population.

The Digital Generations: Immigrants and Natives

It is crucial to examine social media through a generational lens as a cultural phenomenon. This provides insight into the dynamics at work in the relationship between parents and children and shows how social media use impacts them. The study delineates between two generational groups: digital immigrants (born before 1980) and digital natives (born after 1980), categorizing parents as digital immigrants and their children as digital natives (Prensky, 2001). Although not all individuals fit into these categories defined by Prensky (2001), this study focuses on digital immigrants who may be more susceptible due to their limited knowledge of digital language and skills.

Generational Perspectives on Social Media Use

Moran (2016) asserts that digital natives have markedly different learning needs from digital immigrants and fundamentally perceive information in a distinct manner. Prensky (2001) further explained that digital natives are accustomed to quickly receiving information. They are inclined to multitask and engage in parallel processing, which refers to their ability to handle multiple tasks or processes simultaneously. This trait is commonly linked to individuals from the digital generation. Moreover, they are expected to favor graphics over text and are usually socially skilled, fluent in the digital languages of computers, video games, and the Internet. It is assumed that those born into this digital culture are proficient in the language of computers and are regarded as technology experts.

Prensky's theory suggests that digital immigrants and digital natives were not created equally as they learn differently and speak entirely different languages. Individuals who did not

grow up with technology (digital immigrants) may have different learning styles and communication preferences compared to those who have grown up with technology (digital natives). One of the most challenging things for parents is to communicate using an outdated language from the pre-digital age while monitoring a generation whose language is entirely different. Therefore, it is likely that parents will be unable to protect their children from online dangers if they lack the same language skills as their digital native children (Prensky, 2001).

Digital Immigrants and Digital Natives Communication Dynamics

Digital Immigrants draw on diverse sources beyond the Internet, reflecting their adaptation to the changing technological landscape and their ability to navigate digital and traditional information channels (Zur & Walker, 2011). Digital Immigrants were socialized to communicate primarily using written or spoken words, while Digital Natives frequently use visual media for communication. Prensky (2001) emphasizes the need for effective communication in both generations. In contrast, Greenfield (2014) argues that digital technology adversely affects personality, identity, and relationships. She posits that digital immigrants place higher value on face-to-face interaction and sometimes criticize young people for disregarding traditional social norms when focusing on mobile devices. Conversely, digital natives see this as older people's fear of change (McCrae et al., 2017).

The differences in digital language skills and social culture may lead to social disconnection between digital immigrants (parents) and digital natives (children), making it challenging for digital immigrants to parent digital natives, given the essential role of technology in the younger generation's interaction, communication, and socialization. This dynamic creates a gap in understanding their children's digital behaviors, communication, language preferences, and social-emotional needs. Bridging this gap is crucial to improve the parent-child relationship and

foster a bond that allows parents to effectively safeguard their digital native youth. Proactive engagement, such as co-generative parenting practices, open communication, and ongoing education, may be valuable for digital immigrants to effectively navigate the complexities of parenting digital natives in the digital age.

Statement of the Problem

The widespread use of social media has significantly impacted people's daily routines and activities, leading to ongoing changes in the way individuals work, learn, play, and interact with the world. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated the social issues associated with social media, making its use both necessary and justifiable. During the quarantine period, parents focused on managing and supervising their children's online activities, as the Internet became the primary source for social interaction, education, staying informed, and entertainment (OfCom, 2020). With the increased use of the Internet, parents (digital immigrants) were considered a primary factor in moderating their youth's (digital natives') social media use. However, issues became prevalent as the sudden need to adapt to this new phenomenon arose.

The challenges faced by some parents (digital immigrants) in managing their youth's (digital natives') use of social media include relying on their youth (digital natives) to educate them about the functionality of social media and keep them informed about the ever-changing digital culture. This can leave them feeling vulnerable and dependent upon their youth (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020; O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). The language differential and knowledge gap between digital immigrants and digital natives pose conflicts related to belief systems and personal values regarding digital natives' interaction on social media (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020). Moreover, the lack of knowledge and awareness pertaining to social media and its functionality

could diminish any protective measures that digital immigrants might implement, leaving digital natives unprotected and unsupervised in a multifaceted digital environment.

This study, "Digital Immigrants Raising Digital Natives: Social Media's Influence on Youth's Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Development from the Parent's Perspective" investigates whether digital literacy and understanding of the online environment by parents (digital immigrants) can serve as a protective factor for young people (digital natives) who may face social, emotional, or behavioral challenges while navigating the digital world. Specifically, it seeks to explore how parents' knowledge, awareness, and understanding of the digital world can help mitigate the risks associated with online activities and promote the social, emotional, and behavioral well-being of their children. Additionally, the study aims to assess the impact of parents' digital literacy skills, communication technology skills, and their ability to manage and supervise their children's social media use as essential protective factors. This research is crucial as it underscores the importance of understanding protective factors that can safeguard young people in the digital world and emphasizes the significance of parental involvement in creating a safe online environment for their children while promoting healthy social, emotional, and behavioral development.

Research Focus

Understanding social media and its functions provides valuable insight into how to educate parents and provide them with the tools necessary to serve as the first line of defense in mitigating social media's influence on youth's development, such as their social, emotional, and behavioral development. Parents who are unfamiliar with social media or the language of the digital age are more likely to underestimate the impact social media can have on a young person's general social, emotional, and behavioral development. From a practitioner's perspective, it is crucial to help

parents understand this issue since they are the ideal individuals suited for resolving it. This study seeks to examine how parents, who are digital immigrants, perceive the impact that social media has on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of their children who are digital natives.

Theoretical Framework

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a micro-level theory that suggests that people interact and respond to objects based on the meaning they assign to them (Blumer, 1986; Chen et al., 2020). The central theme of symbolic interactionism is that symbols convey meaning to humans, and such symbols, therefore, are the basis of all communication (Aksan et al., 2009). Three basic principles frame symbolic interactionism: meaning, language, and thinking. Human behavior is driven by meaning, and language provides meaning to humans through symbols. They are based on the notion that social interactions are responsible for the development of oneself. Symbolic interaction holds that meaning arises from interactions between individuals. Interpretation occurs during social interaction. Through this interpretation, individuals create meaning that guides their behavior (Blumer, 1986). Social media symbolizes connection, interaction, and communication among adolescents. It is a symbol of joining together with others and connecting with people. According to Spies et al. (2014), social media allows adolescents to present themselves to the world and develop a sense of self. Adolescents search for their identity through their associations with their online social media culture. Adolescents begin to build their identities based on the beliefs and perceptions others hold about them. Given this notion, part of parenting requires that parents know the meaning and value that youth place on their social media accounts and what connecting, communicating, and interacting via digital technology represents for their youth.

As a foundational tool for grounding this research, symbolic interactionism asserts the value of social media as an emblematic communication and interpersonal interfacing tool. Interacting and communicating with digital native youth requires parents to use meaningful language that makes sense to the young person since the meaning digital native youth attach to these spaces is different from that of their digital immigrant parents. Symbolic interactionism, theoretically situated in this way, not only helps to bridge these gaps but also may also provide insight into how to develop ways to deconstruct meaning as these two groups think about and interact with social media. Providing such support will enable digital native youth to articulate better the meanings they ascribe to social media spaces, equip digital immigrants with a new lexicon related to these spaces, and foster a paradigm in communication that makes parenting easier.

Social Capital Theory

Social capital is the idea that engaging or participating in social groups will affect individuals, groups, families, and communities positively (Portes, 1998). One type of social capital that happens amongst parents in communities is bonding or forming social support. Social capital comprises the support that parents and families give to each other during stressful times in their lives. As communities draw closer together, they form shared expectations or achieve a shared belief system, such as beliefs on parenting (Wang et al., 2004). Parent community identities can be shaped generationally since they form around a range of cultural beliefs about gender, marriage, education, etc. As parenting is often a communal undertaking, digital immigrants or those born before 1980 typically fall into the Generation X category, whereas their children can be either Millennials or Generation Z (Barraso et al., 2020). It is important to note how technological advancements impact child-rearing in this generational divide.

According to Bourdieu (1984), parents operate within their social field using available resources or capital. Conversely, Putnam (1995) defined social capital as networks such as friendships, norms, and trust building, and he noted that such behaviors are established through bonding in social networks. The three types of capital that Bourdieu (1986) used to define how parents manage daily parenting practices are:

1. Economic capital: material possessions parents have, and any institutionalized rights and claims parents have to that material.

2. Social capital: all the social obligations, connections, and relationships the parents have within their social network.

3. Cultural capital: media skills, qualifications, and competencies that the parents use to establish their cultural authority (Nikken & Opree, 2018).

Parenting within this digital technology culture and learning the nuances impacting the world and economy today can be challenging for digital immigrants (parents), especially for those within the Gen X social context, primarily if there is limited knowledge and familiarity with the related constructs (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020). In accruing social capital, digital immigrants (parents) had vastly different experiences than their digital natives (youth). How digital immigrants made friends, formed bonds with school communities, and developed their ideas about work were shaped primarily in non-tech ways.

Using social media as a currency may be a limiting factor in parenting situations where their digital native has developed social and cultural capital online. In acknowledging these differences, this research is better attuned to how disparate a family's social context can be, given how each member's social-cultural capital develops. Under symbolic interactionism, using social capital theory to explain this research helps clarify the significance each participant ascribes and

uses in communication, impacting the perception of and challenges with social media in parenting relationships. Bourdieu's theory of social-cultural capital helps explain parents' challenges when managing their youth's social media use (Nikken & Opree, 2018). His theory emphasized that due to the systemic differentiation in parents' social, cultural, and economic capital, parents will have different perspectives and concerns regarding their parenting approach and the way they moderate their youth's social media use (Nikken & Opree, 2018).

Social Constructivism

Social constructivism is an extension of symbolic interactionism because it proposes that reality is what humans cognitively construct it to be (Amineh & Asi, 2015). For this research, social constructivism is the glue that holds symbolic interactionism (social media has meaning and impacts those who interact with it) and social capital theory (how people develop interactional currency is generational and helps them foster relationships) together. Social constructivism theory focuses on the way people learn. According to the constructivist paradigm, people form an understanding and knowledge of the world through intrinsic and culturally based learning experiences. Social constructs, then, are developed as people interact with others during their learning experiences (Amineh & Asi, 2015). Social media is a world full of diverse learning encounters, and these encounters invite the formation of varying social constructs. Moreover, social media platforms present new opportunities and innovative ways of learning, growing, and assimilating people from various cultures and social groups.

Through the lens of social-cultural constructivism, it is possible to argue that some young people may embrace social media and consider it a way of life. It is evident how they develop group cohesion, a shared language, and learning experiences. It also is evident in how they socialize, interact with one another, and share their lived experiences. Therefore, social media

cultures exist because young people can communicate, learn, and grow together through these symbolic experiences (Redmond, 2015). For this reason, removing social media may not be the answer.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework
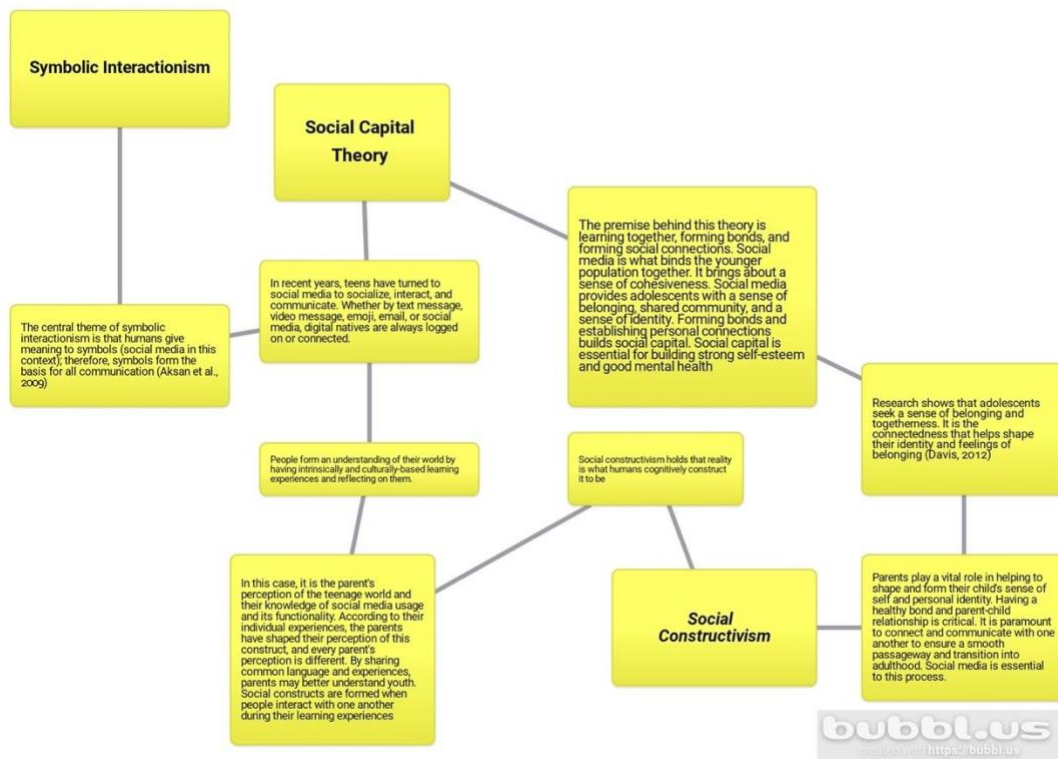
Figure one illustrates the three theories behind this study and explains how they are interconnected to form the framework of this study. According to symbolic interactionism, humans act on things based on the meaning those things hold for them (Blumer, 1986). Recently, teens have turned to social media to socialize, interact, and communicate. Whether by text message, video message, emoji, email, or social media, digital natives always are logged on or connected to the Internet.

Social media binds the younger population and brings about a sense of cohesiveness. Social media provides adolescents with a sense of belonging, shared community, and identity. It also

forms bonds and establishes personal connections that build social capital (Putnam, 1995). Social capital is critical for developing self-esteem and building strong mental health. Davis (2012) asserts that adolescents actively pursue a sense of belonging and togetherness, and this connectedness significantly influences the formation of their identity and feelings of belonging. Parents play a vital role in shaping and forming their children's sense of self and identity. A healthy relationship between parents and children is one of the most critical aspects of this development.

When using social media, it is crucial to communicate and connect to ensure youths' safety and protection. This process can be facilitated using social media, and parents must believe this construct to be effective. According to social constructivism, reality is what humans cognitively construct it to be. In this case, it pertains to the parents' perception of the teenager's world and their understanding of social media usage and functionality. Parents have formed their perspectives of what this construct is because of their own experiences, and every parent's perception differs. When parents speak the same language as their youth and share similar experiences, the youth may understand them better. It is through interacting with one another that these constructs are formed (Amineh & Asi, 2015).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter builds upon the previous one, which explored the emergence of social media, its impact on youth, the digital generation, online gaming. and its relevance during the COVID-19 pandemic. This chapter's focus is to examine how social media influences the social, emotional, and behavioral development of young people, as well as parents' perceptions of their children's social media use. To provide a comprehensive understanding, this chapter begins by defining key terminology and then delves into topics such as adolescents' constant online presence and their motivations for using social media.

The literature review explores both the positive and negative influences of social media on youth, including the phenomenon of "fear of missing out" (FoMO). The second part of this chapter discusses parents' perspectives on parental involvement, control, and knowledge of social media platforms, and their concerns about their children's safety on these networks. Additionally, the challenges that parents face in navigating their children's social media use are discussed. Finally, the chapter concludes by highlighting gaps in the existing literature.

Always Log On

In today's world, people lead a more empowered lifestyle, and social media has changed the way we live. Social networking is not just about our actions; it reflects our identity and how we connect with others. According to Kuss & Griffith (2017), social networking is now seen as a way of existing and forming relationships. Digital natives have grown up in a world that relies on technology, making it difficult to imagine life without logging on. The concept of maintaining connectivity has been characterized as an "always-on" lifestyle (Boyd, 2012). According to Boyd (2012), it is no longer a binary choice of being on or off; rather, it involves existing in a world where being networked to people and information wherever and whenever needed is simply taken

for granted. The implications of being logged on have two critical aspects. Firstly, it has become a part of the social norm. Secondly, there is a requirement to engage in online social networking to avoid missing current events, stay up to date with what is happening, and connect with others socially (Kuss & Griffith, 2017).

The modern-day individual seeks friendships in a world defined by social isolation and estrangement (Applebaum & Pomerantsev, 2021). According to Hawkley & Cacioppo (2010), loneliness is defined as a distressing feeling that accompanies the perception that one's social needs are not being met by the quantity or the quality of one's social relationships. Similarly, Taylor et al. (2023) refers to loneliness as a subjective state where an individual is unhappy with the quality or quantity of their social connections, whereas social isolation is an objective condition characterized by a lack of interaction with others and disengagement from social groups and activities. While loneliness and social isolation are often mistakenly considered to be the same in public discussions and media, previous research has demonstrated that they are separate psychosocial constructs that are weakly to moderately related to each other (Taylor, 2020; Taylor et al., 2023).

In this context, loneliness is synonymous with perceived social isolation and not objective social isolation. As a substitute for participating in real-life activities and engagements, social media users may drift anonymously into digital spaces where they rarely meet the people with whom they socialize online (Applebaum & Pomerantsev, 2021). The need for social connection and cohesion is essential, and it is how social capital is obtained. The social benefits of connecting online have caused youth across the globe to rely so heavily on media and technology that they are unable to interact and engage with others without a connection to the internet. This phenomenon is still being investigated to this day.

The Dialectical Nature of Social Media

Social media presents a dialectical phenomenon, like a double-edged sword (Williams, 2020) as it encompasses both positive and negative aspects in its usage. Powell et al. (2013) suggested that individuals with low self-esteem, low self-worth, and poor socialization skills are more susceptible to the effects of social media. They often lack the necessary self-confidence and social skills required to interact with others effectively. Because of their limited ability to regulate emotions and susceptibility to peer pressure, young people are exposed to certain risks when using and exploring social media (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Additionally, extensive use of social media has been linked to depression, loneliness, alcohol use, and delinquent behaviors (Coyne et al., 2013). Zhao & Zhou (2020) contended that increased social media use is connected to deteriorating mental health.

According to the American Psychological Association (2019), the percentage of young Americans experiencing various mental health problems has increased over the past decade. The *State of Mental Health in America* report shows that 47.1 million people (about twice the population of New York) live with mental health conditions nationwide. That is a 1.5 million increase from the previous year's report (Reinert et al., 2021). Keles et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of comprehending the impact of social media on the well-being of young people to understand the rise in mental health issues. Rahman (2018) studied the effect of social media use among adolescents and identified themes such as self-worth, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. Powell et al. (2013) argue that social media use can impact one's ability to exhibit skills like socializing and communicating with others, regulating, and managing emotions like depression and anxiety, and developing a healthy sense of self-worth, self-value, and self-esteem. As social media use increases, problematic behaviors will likely begin to manifest. Poor communication skills, reduced

socialization and interaction skills, and poor emotional regulation skills are marked by these problem behaviors (Powell et al., 2013)

Many revere using social media because of the positive benefits it can produce. According to research conducted by Coyne et al. (2013), social media use has been known to strengthen friendships and increase their emotional well-being. However, other studies indicated that elevated levels of social networking can be problematic and addictive. We Are social media (WeRSM) in 2016 reported that the top ten reasons why people use social media are: to know what friends are doing, to remain current on news and events, to evaluate leisure time, to search for entertaining and funny content, share ideas, videos, pictures, and information with others, and to meet new people. While some problematic behaviors are associated with high usage, what compels people to utilize social media is the positive benefits resulting from their interaction and connections online.

Positive Influences

Building Social Relationships and Community Bonds

When it comes to positive aspects, social media serves as an ideal platform for building social relationships. It allows individuals to share pictures, videos, and individual experiences on various social networking sites. Social media makes it easy to connect with people and reconnect with old friends, regardless of geographical distance. As social media use increases, so does social capital (Best et al., 2014). Research by Utz & Muscanell (2015) on social capital confirmed that people benefit from their engagement in social media. Strong connections provide emotional support or bonding capital, while weak ties offer different perspectives and non-repetitive information, known as bridging capital (Utz & Muscanell, 2015).

The more an individual engages, the more bonding and community-like associations are formed. Bonding, or social support, is a type of social capital in which individuals can rely on one another to manage the stress of everyday life. Like the communities in which we live and are socialized, social media communities develop a close bond together. They also form shared expectations and belief systems (Wang et al., 2004). As with any community, once it begins to grow, and people trust one another, the community members will rely on each other to reciprocate support, and they will not expect anything in return. There is an implicit understanding that giving to the community and supporting its development will be beneficial for everyone eventually.

Opportunities for Social Connections

Life online can provide adolescents with valuable opportunities to engage in discussions about their mental health. Online communities offer a platform for teens to express themselves and connect with others anonymously, particularly when discussing sensitive topics such as mental illness (Williams, 2020). Keles et al. (2020) also acknowledged that social networking can offer young people positive opportunities to establish and maintain social connections, share interests, provide support, and acquire knowledge. Additionally, Keles et al. (2020) emphasized that individuals with limited social support are more likely to experience mental health issues such as depression and anxiety compared to those with consistent support from family, friends, and neighbors.

Negative Influence

Risks, Consequences, and Moderation Strategies

Powell et al. (2013) suggested that frequent and increased use of social media can disrupt daily life, resulting in negative behavioral outcomes. Additionally, Wei and Zhang (2008) asserted that instant interactions and immediate gratification have generated feelings of insecurity and

unhappiness among youth. They noted that many adolescents have become disillusioned and disengaged due to the replacement of human interaction and connection with handheld electronics. Sedgwick et al. (2019) highlighted the association between social media use and problematic behavior, including self-esteem issues, depression, anxiety, bullying behaviors, and even suicidal ideation. They emphasized that the nature of competition has changed, leading to a range of mental health challenges among young people.

The longing to be constantly present online and the instant gratification it provides have their downsides. Van-Der-Aa et al. (2009) examined the links between an adolescent's daily internet use and low well-being, such as low self-esteem, loneliness, and a depressed mood. The study's findings revealed a direct correlation between daily internet usage and low well-being. Additionally, the research identified a strong association between daily internet usage and compulsive internet use in introverted adolescents (Van-Der-Aa et al., 2009). From a symbolic interactionism perspective, this negative implication may stem from the value and significance that adolescents attach to their social media persona and presence.

Adolescents may not yet have the maturity and ability to implement self-moderation when using social media. Hunt et al. (2018) conducted an experimental study with 143 college undergraduates to explore the potential causal role of social media in worsening well-being. Their findings strongly indicate that limiting social media use to around 30 minutes per day could significantly improve well-being. It is important to educate parents and younger adolescents about this strategy, as the benefits of moderating social media use appear to outweigh the risks.

Negative Social Capital, Fear of Missing Out, and Emotional Well-being

A lack of social capital can lead to feelings of social isolation from the dominant group. Negative associations with social media are emerging in research, encompassing cyberbullying,

social anxiety, depression, and access to developmentally inappropriate content (Uhls & Subrahmanya, 2017). There is an unspoken pressure to conform or be like the perceived dominant group. Consequences arise when one is unable to assimilate. With adolescents' unlimited access to their peers via mobile devices, accessing social media can impact adolescents' physical health, social behaviors at home and school, and overall emotional well-being (Uhls & Subrahmanya, 2017).

In an interview, Patricia Cavazos-Rehg, Ph.D., expressed concerns about the impact of social media on young people, highlighting the potential for exposure to harmful content and engaging in time-consuming, distracting activities online that can lower emotional well-being. This includes excessive engagement, avoidant coping strategies, and compulsive checking. In the same interview, Vicki Harrison noted that adolescents are susceptible to risk-taking, impulse control, fluctuating self-esteem, and peer pressure during a crucial time in their neurodevelopment (Williams, 2020).

Social media has been linked to or has been responsible for the suicides of young people. Moreover, depression and anxiety have increased in young people, with some evidence suggesting a connection to social media use (Biddel et al., 2008; Keles et al., 2019). Despite its positive benefits, social media use can also lead to depression and addiction. The pressure to keep up with others and the ability to glimpse into another person's life can lead to feelings of despair, contributing to the fear of missing out (FoMO) experienced by many young internet users (Mammoser, 2018).

Buglass et al. (2017) and Przybylski et al. (2013) conducted research indicating that excessive engagement in social networking is driven by a concept known as FoMO, or fear of missing out. FoMO is characterized by the fear that others are enjoying great experiences from

which one is absent. It has been identified as a factor that explains the continued use of social media (Barry et al., 2017). Przybylski et al. (2013) defined FoMO as "the desire to stay continually connected with what others are doing" (p. 1841). Additionally, Beyens et al. (2016) asserted that FoMO is associated with increased Facebook use and feelings of unpopularity or isolation.

In a study by Burnell et al. (2019) examining the correlation between passive browsing of social networking sites and depressive symptoms and self-perception, it was found that passive use is related to these outcomes through social comparison and FoMO. The results indicated that passive use of social networking sites positively predicted social comparison, and was positively related to FoMO, which in turn positively predicted depressive symptoms and negatively predicted global self-worth, self-perceived physical appearance, and self-perceived social acceptance. The fear of missing out is a relatively new concept in adolescent research, but it is a significant factor in understanding adolescents' use of social media.

Parents' Perspectives

According to Erickson et al. (2016), while some parents perceive social media as an integral part of their children's lives, others express concerns about their youths' online activities. Barry et al. (2017) argues that understanding parental perspectives and knowledge of their adolescent's social media use, as well as the reported connections between parents and adolescents on social media, may be crucial for advancing the understanding of the influence social media has on a young person's social, emotional, and behavioral development. It is not clear how parents perceive youth social media use and online activity, such as checking status, texting, gaming, and video chat messaging, and the effect that it can have on youth mental health and psychosocial well-being. However, what has been noted is the role that parenting style and moderating social media use have on youth's overall well-being (Barry et al., 2017). Exploring parents' perceptions of

adolescents' social media use can provide valuable insights into the potential influence of social media on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of adolescents, raising significant concerns for parents and potentially leading to emotional distress among their children (Symons et al., 2017).

Parental Connectedness

According to Burke (2012), research conducted by Facebook, one of the prominent social media platforms of the 21st century, suggests that adolescents are slightly more inclined to connect with their parents on social media than the other way around. Although much of their online interaction with their parents is positive, there is limited research available to support the outcomes of social networking between adolescents and parents. In contrast, Klein (2012) argues that adolescents and parents who connect on social media could potentially lead to negative outcomes.

On the other hand, Coyne et al. (2014) propose that parents and adolescents who establish connections on social media can foster feelings of connection and togetherness. Such connections enable parents to gain a better understanding of their children's world by providing insights into their social lives, school friends, and personal preferences. Their quantitative study on adolescents aged 12 to 17 highlights the impact of parental monitoring and supervision on youth activity on social media. The study suggests that increased parental contact with their children on social media is associated with better adjustment among children, including lower emotional problems and delinquency rates. The findings indicate that when parents are present on social networking sites, they may become more aware of their children's negative associations.

Thus, social networking with youth on social media should be viewed as a tool that allows parents to feel connected to their children and engage in meaningful interactions. The researchers recommend further exploration in this area, particularly investigating the possibility that increased

connection may lead to more frequent social networking between parents and adolescents. This data is crucial for understanding whether connecting with youth on social media can mitigate risk factors and foster positive interactions. To determine the impact of connecting with youth on social media from the parent's perspective, it is essential to consider their viewpoints in the present study.

Parental Challenges on Limitations

Len-Rios et al. (2016) asserted that parents must face the challenge of effectively monitoring youth's social media use as social media becomes more complex. The challenges include dealing with the potential lack of technical skill and accessibility to technology and contending smartphones and tablets in youth's bedrooms rather than shared family spaces. A study conducted by Len-Rios et al. (2016) assessed whether parental limits on social media use were related to actual social media use by adolescents in sixth to eighth grades who have social media accounts. The results of this study suggested that despite parental limitations on adolescents' use of social media, these limits may encourage their use of other forms of media like radio and television. The study found that parental restrictions on youth's social media use are not associated with reduced social media use compared to adolescents whose parents do not impose as many restrictions on their use of social media.

Parents and youth demonstrate different perspectives regarding youth's social media use. Boyd (2015) reported that adolescents regard social media as a positive addition to their lives, highlighting the benefits of social connection, social support, and the power to express themselves freely. In contrast, parents maintain a more negative perspective of social media, considering the potential for toxic influences on youth. Erickson et al. (2016) emphasized that adolescent development's natural progression may contribute to the different perspectives that parents and adolescents hold regarding the use of social media. Adolescents seek freedom of expression on

social media. In contrast, parents attempt to maintain a balance between respecting their youth's independence with their desire to protect their child from problematic behaviors that occur while on social media.

Social Media Use and Functionality

In a study conducted by Biernesser et al. (2020), the perspectives of parents and youths regarding social media use in adolescents with depression were examined. The research also explored parents' perceptions and experiences in monitoring their adolescents' social media activities. The findings revealed a notable divergence between parents and children in their views on social media as a platform for authentic self-expression among adolescents. Parents tended to dismiss their children's posts as insignificant and disruptive. Additionally, parents reported employing various strategies to monitor their children's social media use and ensure their safety, such as accessing their children's passwords, inquiring about their online activities, and implementing restrictions on technology access.

Another qualitative study conducted by Schmeichel, Hughes, & Kutner (2019) explored parents' perspectives on the impact of social media on their children's development. The study identified several themes related to parents' concerns and observations regarding their children's social media use, emphasizing the need for further research and parental education on the effects of social media on children's development.

Furthermore, Livingstone et al. (2017) examined parents' perceptions of the risks and benefits associated with their children's internet and social media use. The study revealed that parents were aware of both the positive and negative aspects of social media use. They emphasized the importance of parental mediation and guidance to ensure safe and responsible online behavior. These studies highlight the complex dynamics between parents, youths, and social media,

underscoring the necessity for additional research and parental support in navigating the digital landscape effectively.

Concern for Adolescent Safety

While some parents consider the internet to be beneficial and valuable for educational purposes, they also worry about the risks associated with their children's online activities (Erickson et al., 2016). Some parents believe that their children use technology excessively, access harmful and inappropriate content online, and do not understand the implications of their inappropriate communication while social networking. These issues raise many concerns for parents and result in emotional distress among their children (Symons et al., 2017). Midamba and Moreno (2017) examined parental concerns about their children's use of technology to communicate with others and the potential repercussions of their online posts. Additionally, parents have expressed a feeling of powerlessness due to their limited knowledge or resources to protect their children from cyberbullying.

Barry et al. (2017) argued that parental monitoring and strong parent-child connections may foster more adaptive social media use among young people. Conversely, a lack of parental connectedness and adolescent social media use may lead to mental health issues. Baumrind (1987) reported that adolescents seek autonomy and independence during adolescence, which requires them to distance themselves from their parents. During this separation period, adolescents experiment and take more risks, adding more challenges for parents who are responsible for ensuring their safety and well-being and establishing appropriate boundaries to help them transition into adulthood. Erickson et al. (2016) conducted a qualitative study to examine the tension between parental concerns for adolescents' online safety and teenagers' desire to regulate

their online experiences independently. An analysis of 12 parent-teen pairs revealed five distinct challenges:

- Increased teen autonomy and decreased parental control resulting from teens' direct and unmediated access to virtual spaces.

- The shift in power to teens who are often more knowledgeable about online rooms and technology.

- The use of physical boundaries by parents to control virtual spaces.

- An increase in indirect boundary control strategies such as covert monitoring.

- The blurring of lines in virtual spaces between parents, teens, and teens' friends.

Adolescents feel violated when their parents monitor their every move. A vital component of adolescents' growth and development is the process of individuation and autonomy. When adolescents feel their privacy and boundaries have been violated, risky behaviors are more likely to occur. Observing this behavior, parents tend to assume that their children's involvement in risky behaviors is unrelated to their monitoring. This results in a vicious cycle that can negatively affect the relationship between parent and child (Erickson et al., 2016; Finkenauer et al., 2002). During parent-child relationships, this pattern of behavior is quite common, which could place adolescents at risk.

Parental Challenges

Young people are navigating social networking sites and engaging in social media use most of the day. It is often difficult to assess what is a safe and fulfilling use versus excessive overuse of social media. It seems youth have endorsed the cultural norm of consistently logging on for various reasons. They construct virtual spaces to aid their need to belong due to limited independence options because their parents were concerned for their safety (Boyd, 2014). Being

online is safer than roaming the streets, and parents often assume that using technology in the home is normal and healthy. As stated by Kuss & Griffith (2017), the "use of digital media is the culture of the household and kids are growing up that way more and more" (pg. 5).

Managing and moderating social media use becomes a challenge when asking the youth for information on social media platforms. This lack of knowledge and awareness decreases protective factors, leaving young people unprotected and unsupervised in a complicated digital world. Without education, clarity, and understanding of this growing digital society, how can one adequately moderate and protect those youths who may be at risk? Youth tend to be more knowledgeable about navigating social media and social networking sites than their parents (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020). As a result, parents may feel inadequate or experience emotional distress when attempting to mediate their youth's social media use. These emotional responses can be triggered by feelings of inadequacy, frustration, or anxiety related to their children's online activities (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2020). Parents often grapple with this dilemma and struggle with conflicting ideas and beliefs about youth engaging on social media platforms.

Kapitzke (2000) used the concept of cultural capital to examine the disparity in knowledge and competence in media and technology between teachers and students. The same study can be generalized to parents and their children. Digital cultural capital can be understood as a parent's cultural competence in digital technology skills and the effective mediation of their children's social media use (Yuen et al., 2018). Understanding social media culture and intervening in youth's social media can be challenging when there is a noticeable difference in digital language speaking skills between parents and children. Studies show that digital inequity is generated and reproduced in the younger generation when parents fail to regulate and guide their children's social media use (Yuen et al., 2018). However, the digital inequity between parents and children can be balanced

out by participating in shared experiences and learning to speak a universal language necessary for bonding and relationship building.

Parents cannot avoid this coming of age. They must understand this new worldview to transition effectively, appreciate their youth's immersion into a digital society, and protect themselves from the dangers that persist as their children begin to grow, socialize, and develop in a world influenced by social media and digital technology. Social-cultural constructivists believe that knowledge is socially constructed and heavily influenced by society and the culture to which it is connected. Thus, parents can learn from one another, and they can learn from their children. Change begins with understanding the parents' social, cultural, and economic capital and their access to resources that meet them where they are. All elements need to be considered to gain a holistic view of parents' access to resources, digital literacy skills, and understanding of social media culture and its impact on their child's social, emotional, and behavioral development.

Gaps in the Literature

The COVID-19 pandemic brought forth new challenges and complexities within social media. Throughout the quarantine period, social media has emerged as a vital tool for social connection, learning, and entertainment. Parents now bear the responsibility of finding a balance and regulating their teenagers' social media usage, as it has become the primary avenue for social engagement (OfCom, 2018), extending beyond the pandemic and confinement. While social media can serve as a healthy substitute for traditional forms of social interaction and provide relief from the constraints of staying at home, it is important to recognize that a balanced approach, with moderating factors, is essential for promoting healthy and safe online use.

Several themes identified in the literature encompass motivations for using social media, parental connectedness, concerns for adolescent safety, privacy and boundary setting, parental

monitoring, and perspectives on the functionality of social media. However, there is a lack of discussion in scholarly literature regarding whether program developers, policymakers, and government officials should act regarding content moderation.

Given that young people are exposed to a vast amount of information across different social networking sites, it is crucial to recognize that the responsibility of monitoring content should not solely rest on parents (Starker, 1989). It would be beneficial if social media and content developers were mandated to provide filters and blockers when creating content that allows people to post and share on social media platforms. Furthermore, it is worth exploring whether over-engaging on social media websites results from limited government regulation restricting access to objectionable or inappropriate content material that flows across all social networking sites.

Chapter 3: Research Method and Data Analysis

This study aims to comprehend how individuals construct their reality on social media based on their knowledge of the world and their experiences and how they contemplate these experiences in the context of youth development. It investigates the perspectives of digital immigrants (i.e., parents) raising digital natives (i.e., youth) regarding the influence of social media on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of young people.

While existing studies provide valuable insights into parents' perceptions of youth social media use, further research is essential to gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between social media use and its impact on youth well-being. The objective of this study is to contribute to this ongoing discourse by examining the impact of social media on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth from the viewpoint of digital immigrants. This chapter outlines the research design, data collection, and data analysis methods employed in this study.

Research Design

To gain a better understanding of how parents perceive the influence of social media on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth, the following research questions have been formulated:

- How do parents view their child's social media use?

- What are parents' experiences of their child's social media use, socially, emotionally, and behaviorally (positive and negative experiences)?

- How knowledgeable are parents when it comes to using social media and understanding its functionality?

Sample

The study utilized a purposive sampling method, whereby participants were selected based on specific criteria to ensure their eligibility for participation. The target population of this study comprises digital immigrants, specifically parents born before 1980, who are raising children between the ages of 12 and 19 years and who engage in consistent social media use.

Participants

After getting approval from the Institutional Review Board, data was collected for the study over six months. Initially, ten participants provided consent and demographic information. However, one participant withdrew from the study for personal reasons prior to the interview, resulting in a final sample, $N = 9$.

During the recruitment process, all participants received a detailed explanation of the study and its expectations. Participants were informed that no incentives would be provided for their participation and that they had the option to withdraw at any time. To be considered eligible for participation, each participant needed access to the Internet through electronic devices such as cellphones, tablets, desktops, or laptops, and had to meet the specific criteria outlined for this study. To ensure successful online data collection, each participant was required to have a working and reliable computer, an active Internet connection, and proficiency in using video technology.

The study utilized a snowball sampling technique for participant recruitment, leveraging social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram. A promotional flyer was posted on these platforms to generate interest in the study. Interested individuals who met the inclusion criteria were requested to provide their email address. Once the criteria were confirmed, the researcher sent an electronic consent form (see Appendix A) using DocuSign for participants' signature. Upon receipt of the signed consent forms, participants were directed to a Google form

containing additional study information and a demographics survey. This form was designed to collect participants' email addresses, schedule interview dates and times, and obtain identifying information. After completing the demographic survey, participants received an email with a scheduling link to schedule their one-hour semi-structured interview. Follow-up emails were sent to participants who had not submitted their demographic survey before their scheduled interview.

It is important to note that data saturation was achieved by the ninth interview, indicating that additional data collection would not yield new insights or relevant information related to the research question. Therefore, the data collected from the nine interviews were deemed sufficient, making additional data collection unnecessary. The participants provided comprehensive information and insights that adequately addressed the research question, and their perspectives remained consistent with regards to their perceptions of youth social media usage and its impact on social, emotional, and behavioral development. The participants in this study tended to approach the impact of social media on youth development from the perspective of digital immigrants who grew up before the widespread adoption of social media.

Consent and Ethical Considerations

Prior to their involvement in the study, all participants were provided with comprehensive information about the research and were informed that they could request a copy of the report for further insights into the findings. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, as they reviewed and signed a consent form that outlined the study's purpose and participation requirements. A copy of the consent form can be found in Appendix A. To ensure the privacy of participants, any personally identifiable information was removed, and participants were referred to by numerical identifiers only. All information shared during the survey was treated as confidential.

During the interview process, specific guidelines were implemented to create a comfortable and relaxed environment for participants. These guidelines included avoiding compound questions and technical jargon, allowing ample time for participants to express their responses fully. Additionally, the researcher asked clarifying questions, when necessary, maintained focus throughout the interview, and minimized any potential distractions.

<div align="center">**Data Collection**</div>

Setting

The semi-structured interviews were conducted through the Zoom video conferencing platform, which provided a secure and convenient option for remote data collection. This decision was made considering the COVID-19 pandemic, aiming to minimize the risk of exposure associated with in-person meetings. The use of video technology allowed the interviewer to observe the participants' body language, posture, and emotional responses in real-time. The researcher asked clarifying questions to ensure the accuracy of the information shared by the participant. Both audio and video were utilized for transcription purposes to ensure data accuracy. The HIPAA-compliant video platform safeguarded any personal information shared during the recordings. In case of technical difficulties, alternative data collection methods such as telephone interviews, in-person meetings in a private setting, or online open-ended questionnaires were available as contingency plans.

Procedure

To initiate the data collection process, participants were sent a welcome email along with a calendar containing available interview times and dates. Throughout the interviews, the researcher maintained a reflective journal to document their reactions, assumptions, and biases. The interviews were transcribed manually, with Zoom used to record the audio. Otter, an audio,

and transcription program was also available as a secondary recording option in case of any technical difficulties with Zoom.

The interviews had an average duration of approximately 30 minutes, excluding introductions and discussions. During each interview, the researcher took notes to capture additional impressions. For instance, in the interview with Participant 2, the importance of considering a child's age, maturity level, and understanding of social media nuances when monitoring their usage was highlighted. Participant 2 shared insights on how they educated their daughter about responsible social media use and good judgment, as well as the various apps, time limits, and device restrictions they employed to monitor her interactions. As their daughter grew older, they gradually granted her more autonomy.

To ensure the accuracy of respondents' responses, a participant-checking process was implemented. The researcher reached out for further clarification when necessary. Participants were given the option to review the transcript to verify the accuracy of their statements, and only one participant requested the actual transcript for data review.

Transcription

The researcher began the process with line-by-line transcription of the interview, allowing the storyline to develop organically. Prior to writing up the findings, the researcher familiarized oneself with the data. Additionally, the researcher organized the data systematically and took annotated notes while the information was fresh in their mind. To ensure comprehensive coverage, the researcher watched the recorded videos multiple times and listened to the audio recordings in their entirety. This repetition aimed to capture any missed relevant information from the interviews.

Coding and Memoing

Upon manual transcription, highlighting, annotation, and coding of the interview data, the transcriptions were converted into a PDF file and imported into NVivo 12, a qualitative data analysis software released in March 2018, for efficient organization. NVivo was employed to create a codebook for storing codes and files to categorize first level and second-level codes based on recurring patterns in participants' statements. First-level codes represent the initial categorization of data, while second-level codes involve the grouping of related first-level codes to identify broader themes or patterns within the data. This method offered valuable insights and shed light on new knowledge that had not been previously explored. For example, the classification of data in the software unveiled how participants' perception of social media impacted their management of their children's use of these platforms. The arrangement of data into categories in NVivo 12 facilitated a comprehensive interpretation of the data. Furthermore, NVivo was used to generate data visualization charts, which further helped interpret the data.

Trustworthiness

Throughout the study, great emphasis was placed on documenting the complexities of the research and addressing any themes that may not have been immediately clear. To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, an audit trail was maintained, and detailed reflections were documented through annotated notes and memos. These records will enable future researchers to verify the study's findings and ensure its credibility.

During debriefing sessions, the researcher engaged participants in discussions to explore alternative ways of thinking and challenge any assumptions that may have been made. For example, one initial assumption was that parents must contend with the challenges posed by the new digital social culture. However, some participants in this study shared how they have come to

accept that their time has passed and that it is now their turn to understand this new culture. Additionally, many of the participants view social media as an integral part of their generation and want their children to grow up and be a part of this culture while ensuring their safety.

These strategies helped to validate the findings and ensure that they accurately reflected the participants' perspectives. By employing various techniques to ensure the trustworthiness of the study, such as member checking and peer debriefing, I was able to establish the credibility of the research process and its findings.

Maintaining Confidentiality

To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the information collected through the online data collection process, appropriate measures have been taken. The data has been stored on a password-protected external hard drive and in a safe lockbox. Handwritten materials have been stored in a locked file cabinet. All data will be maintained in accordance with the requirements of the IRB for no less than three years.

To further protect the anonymity of the participants, pseudonyms were used throughout the study and will be used in any subsequent presentations or publications. Recordings and transcripts are confidential, and only the researcher has access to them. These measures serve to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of the participants and their information.

<div align="center">

Thematic Analysis

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Understanding parents' lived experiences can provide valuable insight in helping prevent mental health crises among youth. To interpret and understand the data, the researchers used thematic analysis (TA), a method that identifies patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). TA organizes and describes data in explicit and rich detail, allowing for various aspects of the topic to be analyzed and interpreted. This approach enables researchers to identify

patterns, relationships, and meanings within the data, providing a systematic and rigorous method for generating insights.

Semantic Approach

The data in this study were analyzed using a semantic approach to thematic analysis, which focuses on the explicit meaning of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic framework were employed to examine the data in this study.

Familiarization with the data: Transcriptions were manually completed, and video recordings and audiotapes served as backups to capture any missed information. The transcripts were reviewed for clarity and emerging patterns. Multiple reviews of the recordings produced new insights and themes. All collected data, including audio recordings, video footage, and handwritten transcripts, were analyzed to ensure an accurate representation of the data.

Coding development: After the transcription process, the researcher coded the data by examining the content expressed by the participants in the focus groups. Statements and sentences were identified, highlighted, and organized into categories. Concept mapping and annotations created during the transcription process were used to categorize ideas. First-level codes were assigned based on immediate thoughts while reading the transcribed data.

Theme identification: The initial codes were systematically organized based on their relevance to potential themes. This process led to the identification of eight thematic categories, which formed the foundation for further analysis and interpretation of the data. These thematic categories played a crucial role in structuring and understanding the data, offering insights into the participants' awareness of the dialectical function of social media use and their understanding of digital culture.

Reviewing themes: The researcher conducted a comprehensive analysis of the codes within each category by reviewing the data multiple times, developing interpretations, and refining the data by combining similar codes or reassigning codes to different categories when necessary.

Definition and naming of themes: Using the first-level codes, the researcher developed and clarified themes to ensure they aligned with the data and provided valuable insights into the research topic. This process involved assigning codes to relevant sections of the data, identifying patterns and connections, and formulating coherent and meaningful themes based on these patterns. Descriptive labels were also assigned to accurately capture the essence of each theme.

Report generation: The data for this study was obtained through interviews conducted with parents born prior to 1980. A systematic approach was employed to analyze the collected data, resulting in the derivation of overarching themes from the analysis.

Chapter 4: Findings

This study aimed to assess parental perceptions of social media's impact on their children's social, emotional, and behavioral development. The previous chapter provided an overview of the data collection process and the identification, assessment, and analysis of themes derived from participants' responses. In this chapter, the coding report and interview results are presented. The thematic analysis was conducted following the six-step process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2012), which includes familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes, and producing the final report (Boyatzis, 1998; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Results

Analyses were conducted using the data collected from the remaining nine participants. The participant demographics revealed that 78% were female (*N*=7) and 22% were male (*N*=2), with a mean age of 46.3 years (*SD*=4.1) (see Table 2). Most participants identified as African American (90%), were married (*N*=90%), held master's degrees (*N*=55%), and were employed full-time (*N*=77%) (see Table 1).

Table 3

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants

	N	%
Gender		
Male	2	22%
Female	7	78%
Race African American	9	90%
Caucasian	1	10%
Marital Status		
Married	9	90%
Single	1	10%
Education		

Master's Degree	4	40%
Specialist Degree	2	22%
Some College No Degree	1	11%
In College Grad Prog	1	11%
Employment		
Employed Full-time	7	77%
Unemployed	1	11%
Self Employed	1	11%

Table 4

Age Demographics

	N	Range
Age	9	41-52

Note. Participants were on average 46.3 years old (SD = 4.1).

Findings Analysis

Before the interview, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, which included a question about the number of children aged 12 to 19 in their household. It was found that at least one child in each family within this age range enjoyed engaging in online activities such as Instagram and viewing TikTok videos. Additionally, the parents themselves also reported engaging in various online activities, including chatting, networking, Internet browsing, video gaming, video watching, and connecting with friends on Facebook. The participants assumed their children spent at least four hours online and estimated an average daily Internet interaction time of three hours. It is important to note that the participants did not explicitly indicate how they tracked or measured the time spent online; rather, they provided assumptions based on their own calculations. The feedback provided by the participants revealed recurring patterns in their thoughts and everyday experiences. Subsequently, interview questions were developed in alignment with the theoretical framework supporting each research question:

1. **How Do Parents View their Child's Social Media Use?** Symbolic interactionism posits that individuals attribute meaning to symbols, which serves as the foundation for communication. Symbolically, social media represents connection and interaction. Young people attach significant value and importance to it as it serves as their gateway to communication, socialization, engagement, and staying informed and connected with others.

2. **What are Parents' Experiences of their Child's Social Media Use, Socially, Emotionally, and Behaviorally?** Putnam (1995) defined social capital as the formation of bonds with others, establishing norms, and building trust. This question investigates whether young people identify social media as a means for social connections. It also explores the consequences when this connection is disrupted and how they respond socially, emotionally, and behaviorally when unable to connect with their peers on social media.

3. **How Knowledgeable are Parents Regarding Using Social Media and Understanding its Functionality and Safety Parameters?** According to the constructivist paradigm, individuals develop an understanding and knowledge of the world through intrinsic and culturally based learning experiences, and by reflecting upon them. Social constructs are formed as individuals interact with others during their learning experiences (Amineh & Asi, 2015).

During a two-week period, nine interviews were conducted, each with eight standardized interview questions. The subsequent analysis generated 73 semantic codes, which were then systematically categorized based on the specific interview questions. This categorization process revealed six prominent themes that emerged from the data: (1) the utilization of social media as a

means of connecting with friends and family, (2) the use of social media for educational and informational purposes, (3) the complex and contradictory nature of social media, encompassing both positive and negative implications, (4) the importance of parental control and moderation in managing social media use, (5) the limited understanding of social media functionalities among parents, and (6) the concerns expressed by parents regarding their children's social media engagement. Furthermore, these themes were further analyzed and organized according to the research questions posed in the study.

1. **How Do Parents View their Child's Social Media Use**?

    a. Theme 1: Connection with Friends and Family

    b. Theme 2: Education and Information

2. **What are Parents' Experiences of their Child's Social Media Use, Socially, Emotionally, and Behaviorally**?

    a. Theme 3: A Dialectical Phenomenon: The Positive and Negative Implications

    b. Theme 4: Parental Control and Moderating Practices

3. **How Knowledgeable are Parents Regarding Using Social Media and Understanding its Functionality and Safety Parameters**?

    a. Theme 5: Limited Knowledge of social media and Its Functionality

    b. Theme 6: Parental Concerns

Identifying Thematic Trends as Aligned with Research Questions

Question 1: How Do Parents View their child's Social Media Use?

Theme 1: Connection with Friends and Family

Communication and staying connected with friends and family, the first theme identified in the research, is defined by the codes: connecting, engaging, interacting, staying in touch, and

staying connected. Participant 5 was very vocal as she shared, "Social media is used how you would like it to be utilized. It could be that you want to use it to hook up with somebody. If you want to use it to post funny memes or pictures, it's perfect." Participant 6 explained that her daughter:

> She is kind of like, just chillin' and not like not putting herself out there, but she is like observing and seeing what other people are doing, staying, and being nosey to see what people are doing. It is a social aspect for her.

Many parents observed that their teenagers primarily used social media for socialization purposes, enjoying the opportunity to observe what others were doing. While they actively engaged on various platforms, they rarely shared their own content. Instead, they would often post memes, funny videos, or use social media for entertainment, socializing, and communicating with friends. Parents expressed gratitude for the social skills their teenagers developed through these interactions but also acknowledged the potential dangers that could arise. Participant 8 succinctly summarized this sentiment by explaining:

> I believe they have benefited from it positively. However, there are also negative aspects, as we know. So, I do understand the importance of, you know, monitoring social media, and it is easy for them to get caught up in other things that they should not be engaging in.

> Parents also shared their perspectives on how their teenagers utilize social media. The consensus was that they enjoy watching videos, connecting with friends and family, playing video

games, observing what others are doing, socializing, and communicating. According to the parents, teenagers like to share pictures, videos, text messages, and emojis, and send video messages to express their thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Several parents discussed their perception of how social media serves their teenagers. Participant 2 stated, "So, just the connection with friends. People who are not friends. So, her followers, I guess." It was clear that her daughter enjoyed engaging with a wide range of people. Participant 5 added, "I think there are certain friends my son likes to keep in touch with. He may chat with certain friends in school that, you know, he may chat with." It was evident that connecting with friends was a priority. However, participant 7 shared how her children also used social media to their advantage by communicating with family members across the country. Participant 7 explained:

I have all these different family members all over the country, all over the world, Jamaica; here wherever and so I was like oh this is a great way to see how people, and what my family members are doing and, you know, So I joined it then.

Participant 8 said, "I think it's beneficial. Specifically, like me, they develop social abilities." Participant 1 had a child with special needs, and he realized her purpose for using social media was to learn new ways to interact with others. He shared:

She tries to use social media to feel more connected. I have a special needs child. So, what gathers her attention does not gather the attention of a child who does not have special needs or different abilities. My child uses specific social media to engage with other people

or to try and gain access to see if her view on life might match up with the idea of other

people.

Participant 3 reported, "Social media is like a connection for them to ease their anxiety, provide

support, and reduce their isolation." Participant 4 concluded by stating:

> Social media is a companion because I am 50, and her dad is 61. She is 17. She grew up as
>
> an only child but had three older siblings. So, it has been here in a house with just two
>
> aging parents, so that is her way of connecting. Especially during the pandemic last
>
> year.

As depicted, the parents identified social media as a means of connecting, developing

companionship, and communicating on a deeper level. Social media can also be a way of releasing

emotional stress and tension. Youth trust one another, and they share things that they do not trust

to share with adults. Each participant had something unique about connecting and communicating,

making it relevant to identify this as an essential aspect and theme of why youth use social media.

Participant 7 spoke candidly as she expressed respect for the digital native generation. She

remarked that this was their time to enjoy the culture. It was her job as a parent to respect that. She

explained how imperative it was to give her children space to explore the digital world and know.

Participant 7 explained:

> Um, I do not know. I tried that; in other words, I understand this. The generation, you
>
> know, was younger. Our parents did not fully comprehend what we were experiencing, and

it is our turn to be in that generation of not understanding. I am not trying to know

everything; I am trying to stay in my lane, live my 40-plus-year-old life, and let them live

their teenage years. So, I mean, I take it. My attitude towards it is that it is just like music,

you know. It is the music of that generation. Social media is for this generation; you enter

where you fit in.

The perceptions of Participant 7 indicated that social media is the youth's way of bonding.

Engaging in social media is how they entertain and communicate with one another. It is how they

stay "in the know." It is what this generation is doing, and it is okay. Every generation has its turn

to experience what we call a "trend." Social media just happens to be the trend for this generation.

Theme 2: Education and Information

The second theme describes how young people use social media to remain informed and

educated, as defined by the following codes: to observe and know what is happening, to learn, to

be informed, and to watch and see what others are doing. Parents described how youth using social

media to educate and inform themselves was particularly useful during the COVID-19 pandemic

quarantine. It allowed students to stay on top of their schoolwork and maintain contact with peers

and teachers. Participant 3 explained how social media helped her daughter stay caught up with

her schoolwork:

It keeps them connected with their friends, especially since we were all in quarantine

for two weeks. And so, like, my two kids, they could not be in school, but they

could maintain a connection with their friends, and it worked out well for my daughter

because she is doing a group project. And, you know, she was like staying on top of the assignment because she should not be involved in the face-to-face stuff.

Participant 9 reported that social media enabled him to help his daughter with her homework. He liked that he could use the information on the Internet to support his daughter, as he put it. He stated, "She's already a grade ahead. That way, it helps me help her with her homework. I haven't done algebra one and algebra two in years, but it helps me help her with her homework." Participants' stories were different. Participant 8 told how her son enjoyed gathering information and needed to stay on top of current events and sports. She explained…

My son likes to stay involved with society. He wants to keep up with what is going on. From watching football, he has a basic understanding of football stats. Therefore, he is the first one in the house to learn what team won last night. He is like the newscaster for the entire house. So, he uses it to feel like he is one step ahead of anything breaking in the sports world. So, if anyone gets fired, hired, or hurts themselves, he wants to be the first to tell everyone in the household what happens. It is primarily intended for this purpose.

These findings indicate that social media is the mechanism for facilitating communication, interaction, connecting, and engaging with others. Logging in is what the youth are doing today. Back in the 1980s and early 1990s, outdoor play was commonplace. It was customary for young people to go to the park and meet up at shopping malls, and this served as their virtual playground, social network, and a means of connecting with others. Social media has become synonymous with outdoor activities in today's digital culture. The participants' description of their youth's

engagement and interaction with their devices is reminiscent of how young people used to interact before social networking.

Symbolic interactionism stipulates that people assign meaning to symbols that form the basis of all communication. Symbolically, social media signifies connection and interaction. Young people give it the utmost value and importance because it is their gateway to communicating, socializing, engaging, and staying connected, educated, and informed with others worldwide. Social networking helps them stay informed and educated by providing easy access to information and the ability to exchange information. It is beneficial to youth, but it is also helpful to parents. Among the benefits are homework help and instant access to many resources. When parents know they have this resource for assistance, they are more likely to feel supported.

Question 2: What are Parents' Experiences of their Child's Social Media Use, Socially, Emotionally, and Behaviorally?

Theme 3: Dialectical Phenomenon: The Positive and Negative Implications

The third theme, "social media is a dialectical phenomenon," is characterized by parent codes as having positive benefits and adverse outcomes. Positive benefits include strengthening mental health, staying connected, staying connected, education, building self-esteem, and developing relationships. Adverse effects include family and peer pressure, exposure to inappropriate content, negative impacts on their minds, reluctance to share information with family, and bullying behavior. All nine participants agreed that social media provided their children a place to connect with others and helped them not feel alone or isolated, particularly when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. It was helpful and made the youth not feel alone. Participant 8 explained:

Yeah, I like that during COVID-19, they could still engage in these groups. They were able

to engage in church, and they could continue socialization instead of not, you know,

socializing at all. I do think that was a highly beneficial component of social media.

Another positive benefit of social media is that it helps build self-esteem and confidence in youth.
Participant 2 stated:

It helps her self-esteem, too, because when others respond to her posts and give her positive

feedback, it creates positivity on her behalf. It does not appeal to me much because I feel

like you should have your own, and you have a certain respect for how you should be

regarded. But at this age, it is obvious she is 17. This is the biggest thing in life, so.

Social media is essential in solidifying youths' self-esteem, as Participant 2 outlined. Their

motivation is based on the feedback received through social media. Participant 4 felt that it helped

her daughter become more outspoken:

"One of the things she gained was the ability to be more, I am sorry. She is more outspoken,

straightforward, and engaged with others, but she is an introvert. But she has come out

more. As far as that is concerned, I am responsible. So, it helped her interact with peers

more. Yes."

Participant 1, on the other hand, shared his thoughts on how social media benefits and hinders his

daughter with special needs. He explained:

I think she tries to use social media to feel more connected. I do not know if this is relevant, but I have a special needs child. So, what gathers her attention does not gather the attention of a child who does not have special needs or different abilities. My child uses specific social media to engage with other people or to try and gain access to see if her view on life might match up with the idea of other people. Rather than looking at articles, she spends more time reading the responses to other people's reports.

In this case, participant 1 was concerned about his daughter's reliance on what others thought of her. She used social media to obtain feedback from her friends and followers. She checked her posts and comments to see what others were saying, so her mood or attitude was determined by their responses, likes, or lack thereof. She would respond back or even attempt to outdo her previous response. Participant 1 continued:

The other is that she can use it to reach her friends and see what they do. And that is a give and take. Sometimes I like that; sometimes I do not because it takes away the personal interaction with people. Anyone can tell you who they are behind a computer screen. And yet, face to face, because of her unique ability or special needs. She is kind of socially awkward. At the same time, with her social awkwardness, I will say this; with her being socially awkward, she can talk to people without physically meeting them. So, that makes her feel comfortable. Yet, at the same time, it does not help her social awkwardness because sooner or later, she must get out in this world and try something.

While social media gave his daughter self-confidence, it also hindered her socially. At some point in life, he felt that she would have to embrace being in the real world and meeting face-to-face with actual people. Social skills, self-confidence, and self-esteem are qualities that she will need to maintain quality conversations and socialize in the real world. Some negative aspects emerged: "peer pressure and vulnerability, inappropriate content, bullying behavior, and always on." Participants expressed concerns they had about their youth. Participant 9 noted, "Everybody is clout chasing. When you are clout chasing, you cannot be true to who you are because there is a lot of peer pressure. Right. There's a lot of peer pressure on social media." Participant 2 stated, "My daughter was involved in some high school Instagram beef some time ago, like ninth grade or 10th grade. But currently, hopefully, preferably, there isn't anything going on."

Participant 5 reported, "A friend of my son's thought his friend was harassing a girl and, you know, really put this girl in a difficult place. I was proud of my son that he deleted the kid who blocked his number." Most parents were concerned about girls and the ways that social media affects females. Participant 8 and others talked about censorship and pornography, which are some of the inappropriate content that floods social media. Participant 8 explained...

Some of the anime cultures we found were very inappropriate, which is one of the dangers. And, you know, we need to increase parents' awareness of and specifically really talk to our children about, you know, the inappropriateness of some of the anime.

Participant 1 believed the youth are vulnerable and are just living for the moment. He thought they were being influenced by what they saw online. He explained:

The other negative that I see, the issue with my daughter, is that sometimes she will post things. Instead of living her now moment, she lives for the moment when she can look back on social media and see how many likes she has. And then it becomes all about people's opinions, instead of your own opinion about yourself. As I often tell people, I do not care if you like me or not. I have my house keys. I can come and lock my door. I do not have to deal with it, unlike others who might see that Facebook is their life. They do not see it as entertainment anymore. It has become a part of us that we are afraid to let go of. A few days ago, Facebook shut down for six hours, and people lost their minds, calling me. Do you know we cannot get on Facebook? I was like, okay.

As he referenced the shutdown, he noted that people were anxious and concerned that they could not access their social media accounts. Being disconnected and unable to log on had a noticeable impact on their lives. His concern for his child and other children under his care distinguished him as a father. He would never wish that for his child or anyone he cares about.

Theme 4: Parental Controls and Moderating Practices

The fourth theme identified, "Parental controls and moderating social media use," generated some interesting discussion, and responses resonated across most participants. Codes such as trust, autonomy, education, mindfulness, awareness, time management, and following rules formulated the theme. Many participants reported not using parental controls to moderate their youths' social media use. However, after further discussion, those participants learned they had parental controls and moderating practices. The participants thought in traditional terms and considered methods like passwords and tracking devices, which many of them utilized when their

children were much younger. The consensus was that parental controls and moderating practices, which they employed for their youth, changed after the age of sixteen. Participant 8 reported...

One thing we do with our children under 18 involves them not being allowed to have restricted devices. Therefore, they must have their devices open, and we must always be able to access their passwords. At any time, they already know that we can do a random, you know, phone or computer check or laptop check. Again, my husband has computer software downloaded on the computer systems to monitor any activity on the computer.

Participant 8 believed that monitoring their children's computer activity and random telephone calls was necessary. Families should be aware of what their children are doing on social media. They should remain involved in their lives to serve as a protective barrier because they cannot control everything through social media. Participant 2 reported:

I had none when she was younger because she turned 18 on Sunday. But when she was younger, she was 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16. We had different things in place. We did have some apps in place when she was about 12 to 14. There was also constant monitoring of putting your phone in the hallway instead of keeping it in your bedroom when you lay down to sleep. He was continuously monitoring that. But then, after a while, we got tired of it, so we just kept reiterating what our expectations were.

Reiterating safety is crucial, according to Participant 2. Before, she took her daughter's mobile device and checked on her constantly. When youth have full access to electronic devices,

they are likely to be "always logged on." What they say, read, and do while logged on are essential monitoring questions, as online content significantly contributes to influence, impression, and peer pressure. Participant 4 used a tracking device to monitor her daughter in the past. However, she stopped using the device after her child turned 16. She reported:

> Until she turned 16, I was more interested in whom she was talking to. I was checking text messages. I looked at phone numbers, and I was like, who is this? Who is this? Once she turns 16, I start letting go slowly but surely. And now that she is 17, I am like, okay, she is 17, I must begin letting go because she probably will not be around in another year. Now, I do not have too much. I used an app on her phone to monitor her text messages. I could see the phone numbers that she was using. Once she turned 16, I pulled back. So, I no longer have that app to access those text messages. But I still will tell her to bring me her phone from time to time. And I will check it that way.

Although participants were trying to provide their teenagers with some autonomy, they found the process of letting go more challenging. Monitoring apps do not establish trust or improve relationships with adolescents. It is not unusual for parents to look for authentic ways to communicate with their children, so allowing them access to social media without a "watchdog" can help. Random checks were still conducted, however. Participant 5 shared:

> I try to pay attention to my son's behavior. If I see him on his phone, but he is still behaving generally like a teenager, I give him his space. I want to let him grow, and I want to let him do his thing. But I would like to be more involved if I see that he is a tad quieter than usual

or a bit more withdrawn than average. What are you doing, what are you looking at, and what is the issue?

Parents were teaching and learning from their children; it was a shared and learned experience. While it is sometimes difficult to let go, parents must trust that their children are doing what is right and making the right decisions. Participant 1 stated:

I am her father. And because of my relationship with her, she is less likely to rebel against what I say. I allow her to have her opinion. She has choices, but she follows the options I put out there for her to follow. In other words, I know which way she might go; either way, I am prepared for the consequences. And I try to prepare her for the results of whichever way she chooses. But so far, I still have some control over how she moves.

Participants were all concerned about their children's safety and well-being. A fundamental concern for each participant was to trust them, monitor their activity, and know with whom they interacted. Despite the children's desire to not share information with them, the parents still managed to find ways to ensure that they could keep an eye on what they were doing, how often they used social media, what type of content they shared, and who engaged with them.

Question 3: How Knowledgeable are Parents Regarding Using Social Media and Understanding its Functionality and Safety Parameters?

Theme 5: Limited knowledge of Social Media and its Functionality

The fifth theme is "limited knowledge of social media use," defined by the following codes: *ask if I do not know, limited functionality, not as knowledgeable, and familiar with social media.*

Most participants reported that they understood how to use social media but did not understand its functionalities. They could use Facebook, send text messages, navigate various platforms, and search for information. However, when it came to the text language and the different social media features such as videos, pictures, group chats, and online social gatherings (Discord, clubhouse, and fans only), the parents had a challenging time keeping up, and they felt overwhelmed. The parents believed they were knowledgeable enough to handle only what needed to be done. Participant 8 said:

Yes. So, the reality is that my youth consider me a mom-mom on social media, and they say I should not be on social media. I typically only really engage on Facebook. I do have an Instagram, but I do not know the ins and outs of Instagram. I have had Snapchat, and I never really utilized Snapchat. And I understand TikTok, but I have never had to talk or engage with TikTok either.

Participant 6 said:

Yeah, I am knowledgeable, but not as much as teenagers. You know, sometimes even my kids write to me with questions. I will say what this means, and it is an acronym or broken, like broken language, which is broken English. So, I am kind of annoyed about that too. But I am horrible, but I know some of it, not all.

The participants felt that their children would not tell them things or share information with them because they did not think they understood. Participant 6 continued:

As a newbie, I do not know what all the different terminology means, and even though they write very fast, I am like an old typewriter trying to get my head around it all. Wait, let me try to think about what I am saying. No, they are just like boom. It happens so quickly, so I know some, but not all, and I am sure there is more stuff that you are aware of that I am totally in the dark about.

Parents were not afraid to ask for help with messages, acronyms, or emojis they may not understand. Many participants had older children to whom they could turn for help if needed. Participant 4 stated that she would ask her son questions as required. She stated:

Some of the emojis I must ask. But most of the emojis I know are done on Facebook. So, I am pretty good at those. Even some of those I do not know. But anytime I was checking her text messages and videos, I would say, who was that on the video and in text messages? I will say, what does this mean, you know? They talk in codes. But I asked her what this meant, and I did not just stop there. I will call my son. My son is 30 now. I will call him and say, "What does this mean?"

Likewise, Participant 8 would call her older daughter if she came across a text or emoticon that she did not understand. She explained, "That's where I get my daughter involved; I'll ask her for, you know, what does this mean? And then I'll address it with my younger child." Participant 5 was comfortable using Google to search for information. She stated, "You can look up everything like what does this mean? If you see an abbreviation, you can look it up to find out what it means."

Theme 6: Parental Concerns

The sixth theme, "Parents are concerned with social media usage," is defined by the following codes that express their concerns*: Impact on young girls, challenge to monitor, social media bullies, disconnected from people, lack of morals and values, too intrusive, too dependent on others' opinions, need to find balance with usage, keep information from parents, and parents need more education.* Participant 7 pointed out that social media was more troubling for young girls than boys. She reported:

> The girls have it a lot harder, I think, with their body image and things of that nature than the boys. I do not see, right now, the only thing my boys can do a little bit with their hair, like how their hair looks, but I do not see much in terms of body image and shaming a lot of girls go through. So that would be my biggest concern if I had, you know, little girls in the house.

Each participant shared concerns about why social media have been viewed as a "double-edged sword." As the parents shared their perspectives, the evidence was clear that while they wanted to give them autonomy, safety, and awareness were their primary concerns. Participant 2 described:

> It is just basically what I have addressed with the safety measures. Now she is older; she is a beautiful young woman. She is easily accessible because she is on a social media platform. And we want her to be careful with people approaching or DMing her. You know

that type of thing. As we explained, we want her to be careful with that thing because we do not know. What are people's motives could be? And so, we want her always to be aware, you know, be cognizant because everybody is not friendly, and although they present themselves to be nice, Be careful.

Participant 1 shared similar concerns. He recognized that his daughter would be on her own without his guardianship and would have to deal with making decisions on her own very soon. He reported:

I have some concerns because sooner or later, she will start to make her way in this world, and I can only hope that the things I instilled in her will remain. However, the deeper concerns are that the world is getting nastier than it used to be when I was coming up. We had values, and I see a lack of deals on social media. I see that in my time, we had parents and siblings that were our friends.

Participant 9 expressed concerns about the disconnect and the loss of relationships that young people experience. He shared, "You lose so much on social media that sometimes it's difficult to have a relationship outside social media." He explained how that further complicates things because the youth do not like to talk to their parents about what is happening or what they are feeling. He further explained, "They are not quick to share whatever mental or emotional abuse on social media. They won't be able to share because they don't think we know what's happening; we might be slow or behind the times." Participant 1 elaborated on his perspective and shared his concerns about youth's use of social media by stating:

At times, social media dulls the senses in a way. I think it makes people more tired of certain things in life. Everything is becoming so commonplace. The violence that you see in it. The lack of empathy that you see in it. There are no proper monitoring systems on social media. You can say whatever you want to anyone. You can pretty much bash somebody and get away with it. You can even disguise yourself on social media and say what you want without being held accountable. So, I think social media has hurt the growth of youth in many ways. And when I say kid, I am speaking of people from 5 to 30.

Participant 6 thought of her work in the healthcare industry and discussed how social media permeated the lives of her adult peers. She stated:

I find social media very intrusive. As adults, you know, it can take so much time away from you. I know that working in healthcare, you know, people are so preoccupied with it during the day. It allows for gaps in health care because I see nurses and people on the phone. It is very intrusive. Social media is very invasive, and I do, you know, I can only imagine what it is doing to children's brains because, as an adult, it is like a highway. It is like; we talked about marijuana being a gateway drug; I think that the Internet is a gateway drug like, you know, it is significantly, it opens your mind to anything. You can type it in and have a computer on your hip. It is amazing. But it is also terrifying.

Too much of any one thing is never a good thing; thus, the concept of social media is a "double edge sword." Participant 8 shared her concerns about the digital era's lack of education and awareness. She stated,

> It is essential that the more we become aware of this, you know, the culture of social media, the more education that is out there, specifically for parents who may not have grown up in this digital age. I think the better off we will be. So, I think parental awareness and education for our children are needed.

Conclusion

The analysis of the data revealed a prominent theme centered around parental concerns regarding their children's social media use. Participants expressed a range of emotions, including sadness, frustration, and anxiety, in relation to their children's online activities. They also engaged in discussions about the impact of social media on their children's identity formation and interpersonal relationships. Another significant theme that emerged was the challenges associated with managing youth's social media use. Participants voiced various complaints and concerns, such as the perceived encroachment on family time, the vulnerability and impressionability of youth, the potential for harm or harassment, and the abundance of inappropriate content on social media platforms.

The study findings indicate that parental concerns about their children's online behavior persist irrespective of age. As children progress through different developmental stages, the risks associated with social media use do not diminish; rather, they evolve. Therefore, it is imperative for parents to maintain vigilance and actively engage in their children's online activities. Furthermore, the findings underscore a heightened degree of concern among parents regarding their daughters' navigation of social media platforms. This observation highlights the necessity for parents to actively monitor their daughters' online engagement due to the perceived increased vulnerability they may face.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

Discussion

Summary Findings

The aim of this study was to gain insights into the perceptions of digital immigrants regarding the impact of social media on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth. By exploring the views, experiences, and knowledge of parents, the study aimed to address three research questions. The findings revealed that youth utilize social media for various purposes, including connecting with friends and family, staying informed, and seeking educational content. The participants shared both positive and negative experiences related to their children's social media use. Positive aspects included forming positive connections, bonding with peers, and boosting self-esteem. However, negative aspects involved encroachment on family time, dealing with cyberbullying incidents, and exposure to inappropriate content.

Interestingly, most participants in the study reported having limited knowledge of social media and its functionalities, which raised concerns. One major concern highlighted was the difficulty in monitoring, moderating, and ensuring the safety of their children while navigating social media platforms. This study contributes to the existing body of literature by shedding light on contemporary digital culture. It provides informative insights and offers a unique perspective on addressing the challenges posed by the growing influence of social media. It emphasizes the importance of bridging the generational gap between parents and youth, fostering a common language, and building a stronger parent-child relationship. This can lead to enhanced trust, autonomy, and a safer environment for youth to navigate the digital landscape.

In this chapter, the findings will be connected to the theoretical framework and literature review. Implications for future research and practice will be discussed, along with the study's

limitations and suggestions for future research. The chapter will conclude with final thoughts on the topic.

Drawing Conclusions

All participants in the study came from diverse backgrounds and had varied experiences, yet their perspectives on social media were remarkably similar. The dialectical discussions among the respondents regarding the impact of social media on youth's social, emotional, and behavioral development were both captivating and enlightening. On one hand, participants expressed appreciation for the positive effects of social media on their children, emphasizing benefits such as connecting with friends and family, staying informed, and accessing educational resources, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine. However, participants voiced concerns about the potential negative consequences of unregulated and unmonitored social media use. These concerns included the erosion of family time, vulnerability to harassment, excessive screen time, and exposure to inappropriate content.

Several noteworthy concepts emerged from the data. Firstly, parents expressed concerns about their children's online behavior regardless of their age. Furthermore, as children grow older, the risks associated with social media use do not diminish; rather, they evolve. Lastly, there was a prevailing perception that girls are more vulnerable than boys in the online environment, leading parents to exhibit greater worry for their daughters' safety on social networking sites. Parents play a crucial role in safeguarding their children and mitigating risk factors. They serve as the first line of defense and are instrumental in preventing problematic behaviors.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of understanding both the positive and negative aspects of social media in youth development. It highlights the need for parental involvement and guidance to ensure the well-being and safety of children navigating digital spaces.

The findings contribute to the existing body of literature by providing valuable insights into the perceptions of digital immigrants regarding the impact of social media on youth. These insights can inform future research and practice in promoting responsible and safe social media use among young individuals.

Connection to Theoretical Framework

To develop a comprehensive understanding of how social media affects the social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth, it is important to explore the perspectives of digital immigrants within a theoretical framework. The theories of symbolic interactionism, social capital, and socio-cultural constructivism have been utilized to analyze data and gain insights into the complex dynamics of this phenomenon. These theoretical perspectives provide valuable understandings of how social media influences the experiences and interactions of young individuals, encompassing both positive and negative aspects. By examining the multiple dimensions of this issue, a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with social media use among youth can be achieved. This knowledge can then be applied to develop effective strategies to support young people in navigating digital spaces successfully.

Symbolic Interactionism: Adolescents and Social Media

According to symbolic interaction theory, human beings assign meaning to symbols, constituting all communication. The use of social media has grown, and youth attribute value and importance to it. Adolescence is when a young person's mind is formed and shaped. Adolescents conform to their socialized environment as they progress through this developmental stage. There is ample research supporting the idea that socialization is critical for adolescent development. For instance, studies have shown that peer relationships are essential in shaping adolescent behavior and attitudes (Brown & Larson, 2009). Adolescents tend to conform to their peers' expectations

and norms, which can lead to both positive and negative outcomes. Additionally, research has found that parental influence declines as adolescents grow older, with peers becoming more influential (Steinberg, 2014). This highlights the increased likelihood of adolescents conforming to their social environment as they navigate through adolescence.

During this developmental stage, parental authority starts to decline, and peer groups gain more prominence. For adolescents, staying connected and informed through social media becomes a primary concern. Participants in the study spoke candidly about how important social media can be for their youth, especially in staying connected with their friendship circles. Several participants discussed the value that their children attached to owning a cell phone and its significance for them. Cell phones are more than just an instrument for talking over the phone. A cell phone is the youth's connection to their social world. For example, participants in the study discussed how their children slept with their phones, performed chores on their phones, ate with their phones at the dinner table, and engaged in all activities on their phones. Their cell phones provided them with access to social media. Social media is their connection to their social world, which includes how they communicate, interact, and engage with others.

According to Herbert Blumer, a prominent symbolic interactionist, meaning emerges through individuals' interactions with objects and events (Aksan et al., 2009). Social media serves as a platform for young people to interact with one another. Given the ever-evolving nature of social media, it becomes challenging to monitor and keep up with these changes. However, considering the noteworthy influence of social media on adolescent social development, it is crucial to recognize that adolescents may start adopting the mentality and cultural values associated with social media. This can shape their interpretation of life based on their experiences and influences.

Participants in the study shared their experiences of monitoring and mediating their children's social media use. They implemented measures to protect their children from online predators and influencers. Some parents actively involve themselves in their children's social lives to educate and safeguard them against cyberbullying, peer pressure, and attacks on their self-esteem. Several participants shared firsthand experiences of being bullied or experiencing depression themselves.

Symbolic interactionism underscores the importance of symbols, interactions, and human agency in social life (Griffiths et al., 2011). Within this framework, young people invest in developing their identity through engagement with online social media. Adolescents place significance on how others perceive them, which shapes their own self-perception. For example, one participant mentioned how his autistic daughter utilized social media to develop her social skills and boost her self-esteem. She relied on social approval from her online friends and used feedback to learn what was acceptable or not. While her father acknowledged the benefits of social media in building her confidence, he also expressed concerns about the values and importance she placed on her online presence and persona.

Cooley's concept of the "looking-glass self" elucidates how adolescents define themselves within the context of socialization, often through social media. According to this theory, individuals construct their self-concept based on how they believe others perceive them (Jones, 2015). Applying this concept to social media usage reveals its profound impact on adolescents' perceived self-concept. In other words, social media significantly influences how adolescents view themselves. The feedback received through socialization, connections, interactions, and involvement in the online social world can either foster or undermine their self-confidence.

Social Capital and Social Media

Putnam (1995) defined social capital in terms of friendships, norms, and the development of trust. Adolescents seek a sense of belonging, sharing personal problems through self-disclosure and togetherness; that connectedness helps shape their identity and feelings of belonging (Davis, 2012). If a relationship is somehow ruptured or pierced, the detachment can have damaging effects, leading to feelings of isolation and disconnection. The participants in this study disclosed the importance of building social connections and friendships through followers. Having more followers contributes to one's popularity, and lacking friends or likes can impact one's self-esteem negatively. Being expelled from a social group or not invited to join a text group may have adverse effects.

One participant described how her daughter was intimidated and bullied. Her secret was kept for some time. She fell into a major depression but eventually worked out of it. She only managed to get out of it after disconnecting from social media for a few days. Another participant described how she had to take her daughter's cell phone for over a year due to a "group chat beef." The issue persisted, and the parents had to involve the school. Disconnection from a social group or being banned could have detrimental effects. It may damage a person's self-esteem in the same way that belonging to a social group can boost it. Social groups provide interpersonal bonding, group identification, and group affiliation opportunities. Various social groups include group text messages, video chats, and social media accounts. The group associations adolescents create in their societal environments are necessary, and they are considered a form of social capital (Hammond et al., 2018). Such social capital provides a sense of belonging, trust, and solidarity.

According to social capital theory, social media could provide adolescents with a place where they can share goals, reflect on shared experiences, and identify with their peers.

Cohesiveness enhances collaborative processes and outcomes for those who benefit from it. Hillier and Harrison (2007) discovered that adolescents who engaged more online had a better sense of self, indicating a better understanding of themselves. Researchers suggested that social media can be a valuable tool for young people to practice identity development skills such as self-presentation and self-disclosure (Uhls & Subrahmanya, 2017). Several participants shared how social media helped build self-confidence in their youth. The participants disclosed how their children looked to receive positive feedback on their posts as it created positive energy in their behavior.

Furthermore, participants reported that their youth regularly checked their social media posts to remain current on current fads and trends. This helped them stay informed about what was happening in the community. The child also stayed connected with friends and stayed connected to people they knew. Participants discussed the advantages of having such a resource, which became social capital for them. Families and schools can communicate with each other and their children's parents, and this option became an essential resource for them. Without such a positive social connection accumulated through symbolic social media, individuals may feel lost, disconnected from their social network, and lonely. This can adversely affect adolescents' mental, emotional, and behavioral health.

Social Constructivism: Parenting and Social Media

According to the constructivist paradigm, people form an understanding and knowledge of the world by having intrinsic and culturally based learning experiences and reflecting on them (University of Buffalo, 2020). The learning experiences people undergo as they socialize and interact with each other lead to the formation of various constructs. Age differences can influence the way people learn and grow, and therefore, they can affect how social constructs are formed. A parent's age may be a factor in his or her ability to relate when trying to understand the value of

social media to their child. The participants in this study confirmed that their age differences could be a factor. One participant shared how her daughter used social media because she was the only child in the house, and social media was her connection to the outside world. Their daughter was an introvert. She did not talk much to them or share things with them. They noticed how social media opened her up and showed another side of her. She was more communicative as well as expressive. The participant was able to see a new side of her daughter and learn things about her daughter through her self-expression on social media. Some things were good, and some things were not so good. The participant created some of the social media accounts because of her daughter. The participants began to develop a shared language and learning experience.

While digital immigrants were raised and socialized differently than digital natives at one point, some participants in this study relied upon the knowledge and wisdom of their younger days to guide, instruct, and monitor their youth's interactions while navigating social media. The participants implemented techniques and strategies that their parents used to raise them, or they used techniques deemed appropriate for an earlier time, but they felt defeated as they had to rely on their youth for support in managing the use of social media. Many participants resorted to restricting or taking the object away from the child to keep them from using it. While these tactics may work temporarily, youth can gain access to the Internet and social media anywhere. One participant shared how she realized this truth when her child was in school or with her peers. Another participant shared that monitoring her daughter was exhausting; all they did was fight. The participant decided to allow her daughter to make her own choices regarding navigating social media once she turned sixteen. Parents' way of communicating, interacting, and monitoring their youth's social media use reflects their learning experience. They will be impacted by their child's behaviors, interactions, and connections relative to their social media experiences. This is

primarily because the expansion of the social media culture makes it difficult for parents to stay on top of the changes in technology and keep track of how much their children use social media (Nikken & De Haan, 2015).

When determining a child's identity, parents should be the primary influence. This applies especially in their social, emotional, and behavioral development. Research has examined social interaction in which parents attempt to transfer values, attitudes, goals, and skills to their children (Yeun et al., 2018). Many parents find this difficult due to social media's symbolic connection to peers, social capital, and youth self-identification. As a result, parents are left to contend with this new socio-cultural phenomenon. The participants in this study described how they became aware that their time had passed, and it was now their turn to participate in the generation of understanding. For them, social media is an integral part of this generation. Many parents desire their children to grow up and be a part of their culture but do so safely. Participants embrace a culture of mutual understanding, and they want to build relationships with their youth to work together. Through their interactions, the participants learned what they needed to know from their children, and the children realized what they needed to know from their parents. Through shared experiences and a shared language, parents gained the necessary trust and recognition of their youth to help them become independent. Several of the participants in the study noted that when their children reached the age of sixteen, they were given more trust and freedom about using their cell phones. The participants developed rules and established a monitoring system that allowed their youth autonomy and independence in dealing with social media.

Connection To Literature

The second chapter examines the effects of social media on the social, emotional, and behavioral development of adolescents, as well as parents' perspectives on teenagers' social media

use. This study analyzes participants' views and opinions on how social media influences youth development. Participants shared their stories during interviews and discussions, aligning with existing literature. The discussions emphasized young people's primary motivation for using social media. Parents express concerns about their children's social media use due to its dual nature, with both positive and negative implications. Participants also noted that their youth regularly accessed social media to stay updated on trends and events in their communities.

To Connect with Family and Friends and to Stay Educated and Informed

Studies conducted by Keles et al. (2019) suggest that social networking can offer young people positive opportunities to develop and maintain social connections, share interests, provide support, and acquire knowledge. This study found that youth use social media for interaction, engagement, socialization, connecting with friends and family, and staying informed. Participants' responses align with WeRSM's (2016) top ten reasons for using social media. According to the participants, social media is a valuable tool for young people to stay in touch with friends and family, even when they are far away. They also emphasized how social media allows them to stay informed about global events and the lives of loved ones. Sharing pictures, videos, and text messages is the preferred mode of communication among their youth.

The focus of this study was to gather information and gain a deeper understanding of participants' perceptions of how social media influences the social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth. As participants shared their experiences of raising children in the digital age, it became evident that parents recognized the significant role social media plays in the lives of their youth. Social media serves as a means for social interaction, emotional connection, and behavioral expression, as highlighted by the participants, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The surge in social media usage during the pandemic provided young people with an outlet to stay connected to the outside world. Utz & Muscanell's study (2015) on social capital supports this notion, demonstrating the benefits of using social media. According to the participants, they were grateful that their children had access to social media during the pandemic. It served as a social outlet, allowing them to stay connected, engage with others, and avoid feelings of isolation. Through video chats, text messages, and game rooms, youth could communicate their thoughts and emotions in various formats. Socializing on these platforms helped many young people overcome social isolation, build self-esteem and confidence, and establish connections with individuals from around the world.

Dialectical Phenomenon: Positive and Negative

Social media is no longer a novel concept. Since the turn of the millennium, it has grown to become an everyday necessity for many people worldwide. Ofcom's 2018 report revealed that 35% of 12-15-year-olds reported difficulty controlling their screen time, which is relevant to the current research. Participants in the present study also reported that their children found it challenging to disengage from their cell phones, even for routine activities such as completing chores or spending time with family. This aligns with Twenge's research, which has demonstrated a correlation between social media use and negative outcomes, such as decreased face-to-face interactions and reduced engagement in activities that promote well-being (Twenge, 2017; Twenge & Joiner et al., 2018).

Parents have expressed concerns about their children's excessive use of social media and have created rules to limit their screen time. Kuss and Griffiths (2017) assert that being "logged on" to social media has become an accepted norm, with a perceived obligation to engage on social networks to avoid missing current events and social connections. This pressure to remain

connected is consistent with Twenge's research, which has also highlighted the role of social comparison and FOMO (fear of missing out) in driving social media use among young people (Twenge, 2017; Twenge & Joiner, 2018). The present study, Twenge's work, and the Ofcom report all raise similar concerns about the detrimental effects of excessive social media use on young people's well-being. Twenge's research findings provide valuable context for understanding these issues and can inform efforts to address them.

The positive implications of social media include the social connections one can make, the interactions they have, the social activities they enjoy, and the opportunities to meet new people worldwide. Social media is full of information, and it is easy to share content from wherever you are in the world. Accessing so much information in seconds can be exhilarating. Creating and connecting instantly works for a lot of people. Social media has helped many young people build their self-confidence, display their talents, and discover new hidden talents. Exploring, developing, and sharing make social media magical and exciting for so many people. However, this same exploration can also trigger adverse reactions due to several factors.

While some may argue that online communities are suitable for young people, a few participants in this study expressed concerns about their teens anonymously discussing their mental health problems. One parent was concerned about this issue and did not like that his daughter did not share her fears with him. Parents who expressed concerns deemed them dangerous, as their children were more at risk when conversing with strangers and untrustworthy individuals. Research by Coyne et al. (2013) suggested that social media can strengthen friendships and individuals' emotional well-being. Williams (2020) claimed that online communities can offer adolescents healthy opportunities to anonymously engage with each other and vent about their mental health. However, the parents in this study disagreed with these results. In their opinion,

they could not protect their children if they do not know whom they are talking to or about. Parents need to be involved in their children's lives, provide advice, help them make healthy decisions, and protect them from predators who lurk in the online world. Keles et al. (2020) agreed and asserted that consistent support from family social networking can provide young people with positive opportunities to develop and maintain social connections, share interests, and find a space where they can receive support from their peers and learn an almost infinite range of things.

There have been instances in which young people have been bullied and harassed due to incidents on social media. Uhls & Subrahmany (2017) identified negative associations with social media such as cyberbullying, social anxiety, depression, and access to developmentally inappropriate content. Because adolescents have unlimited access to their peers via mobile devices, accessing social media can impact adolescents' physical health, social behaviors at home and school, and overall emotional well-being (Uhls & Subrahmany, 2017). Several parents in the study shared instances where their youth were victimized or knew someone who was bullied or victimized on social media. The stories told by the parents were indicative of the frustration and feeling of helplessness that each parent experienced. Their children slowly drifted away due to cyberbullies shaming them on social media for the world to see. One parent shared an experience she lived through with her teenage daughter in which her daughter was bullied. The participant had to shut her daughter off social media for a while due to its impact on her mental and emotional well-being.

Young people rely on social media and look to it as a confidence builder, a source of social capital, a self-esteem booster, and a source of connectedness. According to research by Zhao and Zhou (2020), increased use of social media is associated with worsened mental health. In the absence of social media, many people lack identity formation. One parent shared how he was torn

regarding his teenage daughter's use of social media. On the one hand, it was helpful for her, but on the other hand, it was not. Because of her special needs, it helped with her communication skills and, in some ways, her self-esteem. She used it as an indicator to help her with her socialization skills, but she sometimes relied on it too much. This participant shared how she became dependent on the comments and feedback of her followers. Additionally, she shared how their opinions began to shape and form her beliefs about herself.

Likes, comments, and feedback from social media followers are very influential. Having more likes increases one's involvement and engagement with social media accounts as an individual begins to feel more empowered and famous, and their self-esteem increases. Likewise, if that same individual were to lose those likes, and if those likes turned into negative feedback, the youth will feel abandoned and useless, and their self-esteem will suffer. A participant relayed a similar experience when her teenage daughter posted negative comments on social media. While it was a challenging time for the entire family, they managed to navigate the difficult period, and the participant's daughter bounced back successfully. This family was equipped with tools, education, and the ability to support their daughter during that tough time. What about parents with limited knowledge of social media or access to resources?

Limited Knowledge and Concerns with Social Media Use

The study's participants reported that due to a lack of knowledge and limited understanding of social media culture, they tended to focus only on what they knew and rarely ventured out. They sought help from older children or conducted research to learn more about social media. Participants described their involvement with social media as primarily using Facebook, listening to music and podcasts, watching movies, shopping, texting with friends and family, and playing

online games. They agreed that social media was changing rapidly and could be challenging to keep up with, leading to concerns about their children's use of social media.

Parents must rely on their trust in their children regarding social media, but if trust is violated, other issues can arise. Encouraging parents to regulate social media use can help prevent problematic behavior associated with excessive use by young people. Participants in the study encountered situations in which they were concerned about their children's social media use. They described how young users had reached a point where they no longer engaged in outdoor activities or face-to-face interactions with friends or family, refusing to participate in any activity that did not require electronic devices. The problem was so pervasive that participants needed to create rules for using social media due to the prevalent behaviors among their children.

To manage their children's cell phone and social media use, parents prevented their children from making calls or sending text messages during dinner hours by removing their cell phones. They required their children to turn in their cell phones at bedtime to ensure they could get adequate sleep. Parents also monitored cell phone usage and implemented tracking devices or parental controls online to curtail problematic behaviors or prevent them from becoming problematic. Parents must serve as "watchdogs" to moderate social media use since there are no content restrictions or other ways to monitor youth's access to social media content. Parents are concerned about the safety of their children while they are on social media but also wish to maintain their privacy and not violate any boundaries while navigating social media.

Jean Twenge's research has shown a correlation between increased social media and cell phone use and mental health issues such as depression in teens (Twenge, 2017; Twenge & Joiner et al., 2018). The participants' feedback highlights some of the ways parents try to manage their children's cell phone and social media use, such as removing phones during dinner and at bedtime,

using tracking devices or parental controls, and monitoring usage to prevent problematic behavior. These efforts align with Twenge's concerns about the potential negative impact of social media on young people's mental health. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the relationship between social media use and mental health is complex and multifaceted (Orben & Przybylski, 2019). While some studies have found a link between social media use and negative outcomes, others have found positive effects such as increased social connectedness and support. Therefore, it may be necessary to consider multiple perspectives when examining the impact of social media on youth.

Parental Controls and Moderating Practices

According to Baumrind (1987), adolescents seek autonomy and independence. Adolescence is the time when adolescents begin to distance themselves from their parents. They begin to experiment, take more risks, and add more challenges for their parents who are responsible for overseeing their safety and well-being and establishing proper boundaries to help them shift into adulthood (Erickson et al., 2016). The parents feel responsible for monitoring what their youth are doing. Part of watching their child includes talking to them about the dangers that are out there, educating them, and making sure they are aware of how cunning people can be, helping them exercise sound judgment, and moderating their social media usage.

One participant gave specific details regarding how he had to monitor his daughter. He used various apps from age 12 to 16 to moderate and monitor her usage. He took away her phone at bedtime and made her place it in the hallway where he could see it on the shelf by her bedroom. He reiterated his expectations and monitored what she was doing constantly because accessing social media was so easy. If she were not logging on to her cell phone, she would get online access using the computer, laptop, tablet, or a friend's phone. The participant shared that it became tough

to monitor her social media use constantly. As she got older, the focus shifted from tracking to having discussions about safety measures and expectations. The participant shared how he discussed the dangers of predators luring people into dangerous places and how important it was for her to use good judgment, follow the rules, and be safe.

Safety discussions have become a regular occurrence among parents. Another participant mentioned that she conducts random checks on her child's devices. The child can request a cell phone, laptop, or computer at any time, and the parents would explain the purpose of each device. One father stated that he has the right to go through his child's phone whenever he chooses because he pays the bills. He believed that since he purchased the phone and covers its operational costs, he has the authority to do so. However, adolescents often feel violated when their parents monitor their every move. The keys to adolescents' growth and development are individuation and autonomy. Privacy and boundary violations can trigger an increase in risky behaviors among adolescents.

Implications for Social Work Practice

As social media continues to develop and more digital natives take on this technological lifestyle, digital immigrants need to be aware of innovative technological developments and their impact on the younger generation. Knowledge and awareness are necessary because many parents rely on their children for information and trust that they are responsible while interacting on social media. As noted in this study, parents' limited understanding of social media and its various functions tends to be a significant cause for concern, prompting parents to seek effective ways to monitor their youth's social media use. The implications of this study are based on two of the six themes: parental concerns and moderating practices, which encompass factors such as FoMO,

cyberbullying, social identity, and the 'always logged on' mentality. These factors are detrimental to the youth's social, emotional, and behavioral health.

The literature indicated that parents have difficulty spending time with their children since they are always online. Barry et al. (2017) asserted that many young people struggle to log off and separate themselves from social media due to fear of missing out (FoMO). Abi-Jaoude et al. (2020) emphasized that young people tended to engage in self-reflection. Another finding from the study participants was that their youth heavily relied on their followers' likes and comments in determining how they perceived themselves. Also, the participants expressed concerns about the amount of time their children spent online and away from family activities and the content they were exposed to when they were online. Social media sites have become increasingly commonplace for other kinds of negative interactions such as cyberbullying, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts.

This study identified parental concerns that can be addressed with prevention and intervention work at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of social work. The key to developing prevention programs can be found in recognizing the benefits and identifying the drawbacks of this social media culture. These programs can provide parents with information about the many aspects of this social media culture and offer several benefits such as:

1. Prevention and intervention programs can serve as protective factors that decrease problematic behaviors and promote self-awareness, social identity, and improved self-esteem. Social workers can provide supportive services and assist adolescents in developing a sense of pride, self-worth, and self-appreciation, rather than relying on external validation. Programs can include self-help groups and counseling services to

teach youth skills that foster assertiveness, self-confidence, self-awareness, self-esteem, self-identity, and self-love.

2. In the context of prevention and intervention programs, parents and children may benefit from establishing a common language, engaging in learning experiences, and developing a stronger parent-child relationship. Social workers can provide counseling for parents and children, family therapy, and parenting support. They can also introduce the co-generative learning approach to teach parents and children how to collaborate and learn from each other. Assisting parents in effectively communicating with their children is an important step toward fostering communication and enabling active engagement in their children's lives. It also ensures that parents can appropriately supervise their children in the digital age.

Parents have a crucial role in ensuring the safety, protection, and overall well-being of their children, making them the first line of defense in mediating safe social media use. According to Powell et al. (2013), young people with low self-esteem, self-worth, and poor socialization skills are more susceptible to the negative effects of social media due to their lack of self-confidence. The study also found that it is challenging for parents to monitor and regulate the digital content that their children are exposed to. The multitude of social media platforms and the rapidly evolving digital language and social environment make it increasingly difficult to keep up with how youth exchange and receive information. Participants expressed concerns about the vulnerability of young people who may struggle to cope with the vast amount of information disseminated across social media platforms. Additionally, they noted that youth often take what they see at face value, adding an extra layer of uncertainty to their already vulnerable state.

Youth express a desire for independence and autonomy. Parents want to give their children this freedom while ensuring they can supervise and protect them. Considering this, the study aimed to address the second implication of moderating practices. With social media being an open platform, youth are exposed to a wide range of positive and negative content, which is taking its toll on their overall well-being. Social workers should advocate for policies and laws that protect content sharing and restrict the availability of controversial material on social media. The main objective is to provide parents with the tools necessary for supporting their youth's safe navigation of social media across various platforms:

1. Social workers can start by advocating for policymakers to pass more laws like 47 U.S. Code § 230. This law protects the private blocking and screening of offensive material and safeguards youth by empowering parents to restrict their children's access to inappropriate content while interacting on social media and online video gaming. Additionally, this law addresses behaviors such as cyberbullying and social shaming, providing protection for children.

2. Social workers and educators can develop programs such as the Digital Literacy Safety and Awareness Programs for Parents, which I have implemented. This program aims to equip parents with digital literacy skills, the ability to navigate digital technology, and the necessary tools to protect, moderate, and safeguard their children from problematic behaviors associated with the "always logged on" mentality and other related behaviors. Through education, parents can overcome their reluctance to provide their children with the autonomy and independence they desire while navigating social media.

Because these implications for the field of social work may lay the groundwork for clinical practice, education, and advocacy efforts, they may eventually lead to more intervention and prevention programs, including substantive policies that, once in place, will support parents and facilitate youth in navigating social media and its culture more safely.

When parents observe risky behaviors, they may assume that the behavior is unrelated to their monitoring. This can create a vicious cycle that leads to tension and discord between parent and child (Erickson et al., 2016; Finkenauer et al., 2002). One participant shared an experience where she took her daughter's cell phone away for over a year. Prior to taking the phone away, she had installed a tracking device on it. Her daughter was seventeen at the time and was about to turn eighteen. Eventually, she returned the cell phone to her daughter, and they worked on rebuilding trust. The participant had to learn to let go and trust that her daughter would make wise decisions, allowing her to go through the process of individuation and autonomy development. Parenting involves allowing children to grow up and trusting them to make good choices.

Another participant expressed the sentiment of "I trust you until I don't." This parent gave her sons more freedom on social media compared to her daughter at the same age. She believed her sons had a better understanding of social media and were more knowledgeable than she was, so she trusted them. Studies by Benedetto & Ingrassia (2020) have shown that parents may feel uncertain in mediating this dilemma when their child is more knowledgeable about social media. Parents are dedicated to raising and protecting their children, but they also recognize that there will come a time when their children will be independent and make their own decisions. They can only hope that the guidance they have provided will help their children become independent thinkers when it is time to make decisions in adulthood.

Suggestions for Further Research

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed how people communicate, engage, and interact with one another. Considering 4.66 billion people have access to the Internet (Statista, 2021), social media plays a significant role in our daily lives. Before the pandemic, social media was considered a form of entertainment, but now it is an integral part of everyday life. Research in the following areas may be beneficial for gaining a deeper appreciation of the impact of social media on youth's social, emotional, and behavioral development:

1. How has the pandemic impacted the younger generation who grew up with digital technology?

2. What are the differences in perspectives on social media between older generations and the younger digital natives?

In addition to understanding effective ways of moderating youth's social media use through parental involvement, there are other areas that deserve exploration:

1. Can a co-generative parenting approach be practical in strengthening parent-child relationships in the digital age?

2. Does granting more autonomy over social media usage reduce risk factors for young individuals?

It would be beneficial if social media and content developers were required to create filters and blockers when developing content. This would enable people to post and share on social media platforms while mitigating problematic behaviors resulting from overexposure to social media among young people. Future studies could explore whether overexposure may result from a lack of government regulation and whether restricting access to objectionable or inappropriate material on all social networking sites would be effective.

Reflexivity and Positionality

I have experience with social media and its impact on youth's psychosocial development. This topic has motivated me to learn more about it. My personal values significantly influence my worldview and impact the choices and decisions I make for myself and my children. As a mother of two boys, aged 12 and 17, I empathize with parents who struggle to regulate their children's social media usage and mitigate its effects on their social and emotional development.

Observing my sons grow up in this technologically advanced society, I am both amazed and concerned by how connected and immersed they are in the virtual world. Comparing their world to mine, I realize the stark differences and strive to understand their experiences better. Conducting interviews with participants, I felt a growing sense of excitement. Throughout my research, I was particularly interested in hearing how other parents navigate the social media phenomenon and manage their children's social, emotional, and behavioral interactions. Even though I had not shared my own experiences, their insights were helpful. As participants shared their lived experiences, perspectives, and perceptions, I noticed similarities in our attitudes, beliefs, and experiences.

My perspective on data has shifted due to these newfound insights. I now understand that social media does not pose a threat to the digitally native generation as they are familiar with its operation. However, digital immigrants often have fears and concerns due to the rapidly changing digital landscape, which makes them less familiar with social media and its functions. The knowledge gained from understanding parents' lived experiences will equip me as a mother, educator, researcher, and clinician to provide psychoeducational and counseling services to at-risk youth. It will also help me develop programs that assist parents in managing, moderating, and safeguarding their children as they navigate digital and social media spaces.

Conclusion

There is a growing awareness of the seriousness of these social problems. As social media becomes a standard part of everyday life, parents of digital natives must find innovative ways to reach and connect with their youth. They need to be open to changing their beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and assumptions related to social media use to safeguard and protect their children from problematic behaviors associated with the "always logged on" mindset or excessive use of social media. With this idea in mind, digital immigrants must be ready to exercise:

1. Embrace change and overcome any uncertainty or discomfort that arises from a lack of knowledge, especially in the face of new media innovations.

2. Develop an understanding and awareness of this social phenomenon.

3. Strive to find a balance in managing and moderating their youth's social media usage.

The public needs to be educated about this social issue to develop protocols that address the mental health challenges arising from excessive social media use. Parents and caregivers can benefit from digital literacy, safety, and awareness programs. Cognitive and behavioral health programs can support youth and families by providing self-help groups and counseling services. Community participation can be achieved through intervention and prevention programs at local organizations such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, or Community Action Program. Providing prevention programs, educational services, and supportive counseling services can help foster a relationship of trust between parents and their children. Advocating and raising awareness for digital safety can enable parents to engage more fully in their children's lives, reinforce parent-child relationships through shared language and experiences, and empower parents to protect and safeguard their children as they interact and navigate the digital environment.

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47 U.S. Code § 230 - Protection for private blocking and screening of offensive material

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Appendix A

Research and Interview Questions

<u>Criterion Based: Parents born before 1980 with at least one child between 12-19 who engage in social media at least once per day.</u> *This is based on Prensky's (2001) definition of digital immigrants born before the emerging digital era, in 1980. Also, Lenhart (2015) & OfCom Report (2019) showed that 92% of adolescents logged on at least once daily.*

<u>Convenience and Snowballing</u>: Use colleagues and peers via recruitment on social media who I know who one child have at least, have access to the Internet, and possess an electronic device to participate in the study via Zoom and Qualtrics.

<u>Research Questions</u>: The following research questions were constructed to understand parents' perception of social media's influence on youth's social, emotional, and behavioral development.

1. **How do parents view their child's social media use**? *Symbolic interactionism stipulates that people assign meaning to symbols, which forms the basis of all communication. Symbolically, social media signifies connection and interaction. Youth gives it immense value and importance because it is their gateway to communicating, socializing, engaging, and staying informed and connected with others in their world.*

2. **What are parents' social, emotional, and behavioral experiences of their child's social media use**? *Putnam (1996) defined social capital as forming bonds with others, establishing norms, and creating trust. This question explores whether youth identify with social media for their social connections, what happens when that connection is disrupted, and how they respond socially, emotionally, and behaviorally when they are unable to connect with their peers on social media.*

3. **How knowledgeable are parents when using social media and understanding its functionality**? *According to the constructivist paradigm, people form an understanding and knowledge of the world by having intrinsic and culturally based learning experiences and reflecting on them (University of Buffalo, 2020). Social constructs are developed as people interact with others during their learning.*

Appendix B

Demographics Questionnaire

How do you identify?
- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Please specify.

What is your age?

How would you describe your race/ethnicity?

Please describe your level of education.
- a. Did not complete high school or receive a GED.
- b. Earned high school diploma or GED.
- c. Attended some college but did not complete a degree.
- d. Currently attending a 2- or 4-year college.
- e. Earned associate degree.
- f. Earned bachelor's degree.
- g. Attended a graduate program but did not complete a degree.
- h. Currently attending a graduate program.
- i. Earned a master's degree.
- j. Earned a specialist's degree.

What is your marital status?
- a. Single
- b. Committed relationship
- c. Married
- d. cohabitating
- e. Widowed
- f. Divorced/Separated

What is your current employment status?
- a. Employed full time
- b. Employed part time
- c. Unemployed and currently looking for work
- d. Student
- e. Retired
- f. Homemaker
- g. Self-employed
- h. Unable to work

How many children do you have between the ages of 12-17?

What are their ages?

In what activities do your youth engage while on social media?

In what activities do you engage while on social media?

On average, how many hours do your youth spend engaging on social media per day?

On average, how many hours do you spend engaging on social media per day?

Interview Questions:
1. How do(es) your youth use social media?
2. What purpose do you believe your youth's involvement with social media serves them?
3. Explain what you know about social media and its functionality. For example, how familiar are you with accessing various social media platforms?
4. How knowledgeable are you when using digital language? The digital language uses texting, emoticons, video, and group chats.
5. Describe the positive benefits your youth has gained from their social media use.
6. Describe negative outcomes you have noticed for your youth since engaging in social media.
7. What are safety measures in place for your youth's social media use?
8. Share any concerns regarding your and your youth's understanding of social media.

Appendix C

Consent to be part of the research study

Title of the Project: Live Experience of Digital Immigrants Raising Digital Native Perception
of social media influence on youth mental health
Principal Investigator: Bridgette N. Montgomery MSW, LCSW, Millersville University
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Karen Rice, Ph.D., MSW

Invitation to be part of the Research Study
You are invited to participate in a research study that focuses on understanding digital immigrants'
lived experiences, raising digital natives' perceptions of social media's influence on youth mental
health. Please read this form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate in this study.
Purpose of the study
The study aims to understand digital immigrants raising digital natives' perception of social
media's influence on youth's mental health. This narrative derived from the lived experience of the
parents will be used to educate and inform mental health practitioners, educators, policymakers,
and parents on how best to provide innovative digital literacy, safety, and awareness programs for
the younger population.

Your Participation
If you choose to participate, you will be asked to partake in a one-to-one interview lead that will
last approximately 60 minutes.

Compensation for Participation
Participation is voluntary, and the study offers no incentives or compensation.

Benefits from this study
One way you may benefit from participating in the study is by learning new information that can
be used to enhance your relationship with your youth and social media culture. Taking part in this
research project is voluntary, and you can stop at any time.

Potential Risks
The risks to participating in this study are minimal. You could experience potential drawbacks as
you may learn new things about social media and your child that you may not be aware of before.
If so, debriefing with a counselor will be offered following your interview.

Debriefing
The contact information of the researchers is on the consent form below. Participants are free to
contact us at any point to obtain further details about the study.

Protecting your information
The information you share will be confidential, and I will not include any information that could
directly identify you to protect your privacy.

Confidentiality of data collected
All information will be stored in a lockbox on a password-protected external hard drive. Other people may need to see the information I will collect about you. These people work for Millersville University and government offices responsible for ensuring the research is done safely and correctly. The only exception to the protection of confidentiality is if you talk about the abuse or neglect of a child by yourself or someone else, in which case I am required by Pennsylvania State law to report this to the Statewide Central Registry. This may result in an investigation to determine if the child or children you talked about has been abused or neglected.

Contact information for questions about your rights as a research participation
If you have questions, the primary researcher conducting this study is Bridgette N. Montgomery MSW, LCSW. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Bridgette N. Montgomery MSW, LCSW at bnmontgo@millersville.edu or 267-206-8762. You can also contact Dr. Karen Rice at Karen.rice@millersville.edu or 717-871-5297, the dissertation chair of this study. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 717-871-4457 and ask for Rene Munoz or email at rene.munoz@millersville.edu.

Your consent
Please fill out and sign the consent form below to indicate whether you agree to participate. After you have signed this, you will be provided with a copy of this form.

I am 18 or older: Yes _____   No_____

I have read this consent form, or it has been read to me: Yes_____   No_____

I have had all my questions about the study answered to my satisfaction. Yes___   No

I have been given a copy of this consent form. Yes_____   No_____

I agree to participate in this research. Yes_____ No_____

By signing this document, you agree to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. I will give you a copy of this document for your records and keep a copy of the study records. If you have any questions about the study after signing this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above. I understand the study, and my questions so far have been answered. I agree to take part in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature   **Date**

Appendix D

Code Book: Categories, Themes, and Codes

Title: Influence of social media on Youth Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Development

Codes	Description	Files	References
PARENTS' EXPERIENCE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA USE		0	0
DIALECTICAL PHENOMENON		0	0
NEGATIVE ASPECTS		0	0
Always on and hard to disconnect		3	8
You cannot separate fact from fiction		2	2
Children are impressionable	Easily influenced and driven by peer pressure	4	9
Do not share with Parents		3	3
Impact on the Mind		4	9
Inappropriate Content		3	5
Nudity and Pornography		3	5
Peer Pressure		2	2
People get hurt and harassed		3	4
Struggle with finding alternative activities		1	1
Take from Family time		2	2
POSITIVE ASPECTS		0	0
Bonding with children		2	2
Build a relationship between parent and child		1	1
Build self-esteem		3	3
connecting with friends		3	4

Codes	Description	Files	References
Connection and interacting with people		4	4
Educative		2	2
Stay in touch with people and not isolate		2	2
staying connected		3	3
Strengthen mental health		1	1
Use how you want to		1	1
PARENTAL CONTROLS		0	0
Age		5	7
Autonomy and freedom		6	10
Be Cognizant of what you post or share online		2	2
Be mindful of who you talk to or connect with		1	1
Block sites		1	1
Develop Rules		1	1
Educating my child about the dangers		2	3
Follow the rules and expectations		7	10
Friending My Youth		1	1
Limit Usage		2	4
monitor purchase and get permission		1	1
Monitor the youth	More parental controls and apps	7	13
Monitoring Use		3	11
Responsibility to protect		4	13
Talk to my children about what is out there		3	5
Time management, monitoring time		1	1
Trust my child		5	9
PARENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF		0	0

Codes	Description	Files	References
SOCIAL MEDIA AND FUNCTIONALITY			
CONCERNS WITH SOCIAL MEDIA		0	0
Difficult to monitor		1	1
Disconnected from people		4	6
Do not share information with Parents		2	3
Facebook is for Old People		1	1
Impact on young girls	Make the parallel to how media affects girls in general (pull up some research to support that).	5	7
It is intrusive		2	3
Lack of morals and values		1	1
Need more education for social media awareness		1	1
Need to implement Balance with Usage		2	3
Rely on people's opinion		2	3
False sense of reality and security		1	1
Social Media Bullies		5	5
There should be a rating for social media sites.		3	4
LIMITED KNOWLEDGE		5	7
Ask if I do not know		3	3
Familiar with social media		3	6
The Internet is like a gateway drug		1	2
Limited to functionality		3	3
Not as knowledgeable or savvy		1	2
PARENTS' VIEW OF		0	0

Codes	Description	Files	References
YOUTH SOCIAL MEDIA USE			
TO COMMUNICATE AND STAY CONNECTED		0	0
Connecting with friends		1	2
Interact and engage		0	0
Communication		4	7
Entertainment		1	1
It is how they communicate		4	4
To play video games		1	2
To post comedy and meme		1	3
For the social aspect		5	7
To communicate		1	2
To share pictures and post things		1	1
Stay connected with friends		2	4
to connect and interact with people		5	8
Use it to stay in touch with family and people all over the world		2	2
TO STAY EDUCATED AND INFORMED		0	0
observe and see what others are doing		3	3
To be informed		1	1
To learn		3	3
To observe and know what is going on		1	1