

Three billion people, around 40% of the world's population, use online social media. A number of studies have been done on the effects of social media; these can give us an idea of how these platforms could be affecting us. People use social media to discuss everything from customer service to politics, but the downside to this is that our feeds often resemble an endless stream of stress. Two studies involving more than 700 students found that depressive symptoms, such as low mood and feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness, were linked to the quality of online interactions. A study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine last year surveyed 7,000 19- to 32-year-olds and found that those who spend the most time on social media were twice as likely to report experiencing social isolation, which can include a lack of a sense of social belonging, engagement with others, and fulfilling relationships. In 2014, researchers in Austria found that participants reported lower moods after using Facebook for 20 minutes compared to those who just browsed the internet. Twitter was found to be a significant contributor to this stress because it increases awareness of other people's stress.