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Bachelor's Thesis

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**The influence of social media on the development of
children aged 13 to 15**

Bachelor's Thesis

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Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on 01.08.2022

Oleksandra Tsyhannyk

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Abstract

Social media has grown exponentially in the last few decades, and is continuing to develop, making its way into every aspect of our everyday lives. This bachelor's thesis dives into the problematic of how children aged 13-15 are influenced by social media, and how it impacts their development. It first explores the history of social media, and then moves onto presenting the current state of social media and the most popular platforms. After introducing the topic from the general perspective, the thesis delves deeper into the issue of young teenagers and social media, the processes, and effects of it. The second part of this work includes practical research on the topic, the evaluation of its results and following discussion.

Abstrakt

Sociální média v posledních několika desetiletích exponenciálně rostla, a neustále se vyvíjejí a pronikají do všech aspektů našeho každodenního života. Tato bakalářská práce se ponoří do problému, jak jsou děti ve věku 13-15 let ovlivňovány sociálními sítěmi a jaký dopad mají sociální sítě na jejich vývoj. Nejprve práce vysvětluje historii sociálních médií, poté přechází k prezentaci současného stavu sociálních sítí a nejpopulárnějších platforem. Po představení tématu z obecného pohledu se práce ponoří hlouběji do problematiky mladších teenagerů a sociálních sítí, do zkoumání relevantních procesů a efektů. Druhá část této práce zahrnuje praktický výzkum na dané téma, analýzu jeho výsledky a následnou diskusi.

Keywords

social media, children, adolescents, self-esteem, online, offline, communication, influencers

Klíčová slova

sociální média, děti, dospívající, sebeúcta, online, offline, komunikace, influenceré

Title

The influence of social media on the development of children aged 13 to 15

Název práce

Vliv sociálních médií na vývoj dětí ve věku 13 až 15 let

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1. Introduction

Within the last 20 years social media have become a huge part of our everyday lives. Opportunity to voice your opinions, share and discuss the content you've created, meet people with the same interests as yours and the overall psychological feeling of continuous communication are just a few of the basic reasons why social networks are so popular. An important factor is also anonymity – a possibility to talk about anything with anyone without revealing personal information. They influence all of us individually in one way or another, and it doesn't look like the development of social networks is about to slow down any time soon.

Today, we have generations of children who grew up with free access to internet since they were infants, and the major generation gap is more visible than ever.

„At the global level, it has been estimated that already one child in three is an internet user, and that one in three internet users is a child under 18 years of age.” (Gennaro, Miller 2021 p.5).

It is commonly known that majority of social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, have a policy stating that a person needs to be over 13 years old to create a profile. That comes from the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) of 1998, which makes it illegal to collect or store the personal information of children under age 13.

Initially, the topic of this bachelor's thesis was *“The influence of social media on the development of children aged 11 to 14”*, however, to avoid any legal complications with collection data of children under age 13, I made a choice to make the age border slightly higher, changing the topic of the thesis to *“The influence of social media on the development of children aged 13 to 15”*. In this work, such terms as “teenagers” or “young adolescents” will be used interchangeably to refer to a child in the mentioned above age category.

While conducting my research and studying scholarly materials, the need to slightly change the structure of the initial bachelor's summary became apparent. A few of the sub-topics differ from initial thesis to better suit the flow of the work. The same occurrence is applied to the list of sources as well. Not all the sources in initial summary contained useful information, and were later replaced by different, more relevant materials.

2. Understanding social media

To better understand how social media influence children, we need to first be able to define what social media are, what is the reason for their existence, their development, and finally – the differences between specific social media platforms.

We need to better understand social media as a whole to place children aged 13 to 15 into the matter. At this time, we are all surrounded by social media and its content regardless of our direct involvement with them. That means, that a person who is not a user registered on a social media platform can still consume its content, even if the influence of it on a person's mindset will be much less impactful. In such world, the significance of social media cannot be ignored.

„One obvious problem with studying the phenomenon of social media is that it involves a multitude of probing angles that each bring along a different academic expertise “(Dijk, 2013, p.43).

2.1. History of social media

2.1.1. Network society

Jan Van Dijk (2012) defines social media as *internet applications that enable the sharing of things*. Us humans are social beings, and the need to communicate is as old as humanity itself.

According to the historians J.R and W. McNeil (2003) people built so-called human webs and networks since the development of human speech at least. The communication is crucial for cooperation, leading to (or forcing)/progress and change. The McNeils define five worldwide webs that developed chronologically:

- *The First Worldwide Web* consisted of separated hunting and gathering tribes.
- *The Metropolitan/City Webs* followed as tribes began to settle and grow. They served as storehouses of information and goods.
- *The Old-World Web* came to be after the partial fusion of civilizations in Eurasia and North Africa, resulting in the interventions and clashes of cultures, religions, and habits.
- *The Cosmopolitan Web* was brought after the connection of European and American civilization into contact with each other. People started to move around, the information circulated farther and farther.
- *The Global Web* covers the last 160 years and is the period in which we live now. The defining characteristics of this era are urbanization and population growth. With the

entire planet „covered,, on one massive network – the web is not spreading anymore but thickening (McNeil and McNeil, 2013).

Van Dijk split the Global Web Era into two periods: mass society period and network society period.

„The mass society is an assembly and connection of relatively homogenous separate local places. These basic components or units of the mass society are marked by the physical co-presence of their members. (...) The mass society is very much clustered with strong ties of high density (in local communities and extended family structures), and it contains relatively few weak ties connecting these clusters at long distances in diffuse network structures. “(van Dijk, 2012, p.44-45).

Just from this description of mass society, we can logically derive what kind of developments resulted in creation of modern network society.

„(...) in the contemporary process of individualization, the basic unit of the network society has become an individual who is linked by networks. Traditional local collectivities such as communities, extended families and large bureaucracies are fragmenting. (...) In the network society face-to-face communication remains the most important kind of communication in many ways“ (Dijk, 2012, p.45-46).

It is important to note, that this development is most prominent in western societies. The distinction between the mass and network societies can be clearly seen today between generations.

So, in conclusion, people were always connected with those around them, forming communities and societies. These formations developed and grew as the history progressed, building more and more bridges between the individual settlements, states, and cultures scattered around the Earth. In this thesis, I see the five webs as natural steps of progress, the reflection and result of human’s desire to connect and explore. The network society – which is current seen as a part of the global web – may gradually evolve into a separate six’s „digital web“– the one that describes the world in which „the online“ is an undetachable, given part of one’s life.

2.1.2. Technical development

In the previous part we’ve established the history of human webs and networks, from a sociological and historical point of view. Now, let’s look at the development from more of a technical side.

“While the internet was developed from the late 1960s, it was not until the early 1990s that the web evolved into what we understand as the „online“ today“ (Hinton and Hjorth, 2013 s.8).

Rheingold (1993) describes the history of the net. In 1960s the elements and base of what would later become the Net we know was created for the purpose of general use among the regular citizens, and that became a reality two decades later. In the meantime, however, 1970s and 1980s – the computers and the internet were used predominantly for academic and research purposes by scientists, college students, computer enthusiasts, etc. It should also be mentioned that the US Defence Department was involved in development and usage of the Internet, up until it became accessible to the public in early 90s. After that, various virtual communities were created. However, we are still talking about the era of Web 1.0

The development of the online can be divided into stages Web 1.0 and Web 2.0, even though there are no clear distinction where one ends, and the second one begins. The term Web 2.0 comes from O’Reilly Media’s Web 2.0 Conference, first held in 2004; the term Web 1.0 was coined after the event, as the existence of so-called Web 2.0 naturally implied the existence of Web 1.0.

To put it in context relevant for this work: Web 1.0 corresponds with the time where internet worked to efficiently find and display information you need or content you want to see via an easy and comfortable interface. Meanwhile, Web 2.0 is essentially a change from consuming content to creating and distributing content. To publish information on Web 1.0 a user had to have quite a few technical skills, as it was a rather complicated process. But Web 2.0 allowed its user to upload and share their content freely, which eventually led to the development of modern social media (Hinton and Hjorth, 2013).

2.2. Types of social media platforms

The definition of social media may vary depending on who is defining it, one of the biggest reasons for that being its constant development of. As more and more platforms, algorithms, and concepts emerge it gets harder and harder to draw a distinct line between what is and what isn't considered „social media“.

Obar (2015) lists four traits that are common among current social media:

- *Social media services are (currently) Web 2.0 Internet-based applications*
- *User-generated content is the lifeblood of social media*
- *Individuals and groups create user-specific profiles for a site or app designed and maintained by a social media service*
- *Social media services facilitate the development of social networks online by connecting a profile with those of other individuals and/or groups*

As of 2022, there is no one certain way to classify social media, and in this thesis, I will be using one of the most popular classifications used in practice – the Six Types of social media.

1. Social Networks – ex. Facebook
2. Social News – ex. Quora
3. Social Bookmarking – ex. Pinterest
4. Media sharing – ex. YouTube
5. Microblogging – ex. Twitter
6. Online Forum Sites – ex. Quora

Such classification is meant for an overall division and determination of common traits in certain social media platforms. As social media grow and develop, it becomes hard to put them into one box. For example, Reddit can classify as both Social News platform, and an Online forum site; Twitter, arguably, brings people together based on their common interests, which is a typical trait of a Social Network.

According to the recent data by Data Reportal (2022), the six most popular social platforms judging by the number of users worldwide are:

1. *Facebook*
2. *YouTube*
3. *WhatsApp*
4. *Instagram*
5. *WeChat*
6. *TikTok*

This work will be focused on the influence of social media on western society, therefore the biggest Chinese SNS will be excluded from the further analysis. Moreover, the messengers such as WhatsApp, and Bookmarking sites such as Pinterest will be viewed separately since they cannot be considered social media networks as such. Therefore, the five popular SNS we will be focusing on are: Facebook (№1), YouTube (№2), Instagram (№4), Tiktok (№6), and Twitter (№15).

2.2.1. Facebook

Facebook is an American social media platform founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. It is the largest social media platform today, counting to 2,9 billion users. Currently it's a part of the Meta technology conglomerate, along with such popular apps as Instagram and WhatsApp.

The platform allows the user to create a detailed profile, where they post information about themselves. They can make text posts that include pictures, videos, links and many more, essentially building up something that can be their diary, a place for checking updates about the current events, discussing their hobbies and interests, as well as making new friends.

Facebook has been a subject of numerous controversies related to user privacy issues, manipulation mass surveillance, and more (Mahdawi, 2018). It is also important to note, that although Facebook holds its place as the largest social media network, its overall popularity has been decreasing, specifically among the younger audiences.

2.2.2. YouTube

YouTube is a media sharing social platform, that was launched on February 14, 2005, by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim, and is currently owned by Google. YouTube has accumulated over 2.5 billion users, who collectively watch more than one billion hours of videos each day (Goodrow, 2017).

YouTube is a platform, where anyone can watch videos, publish the video content they've created, as well as comment on the content they've watched. It does include such features as Community – where creators can communicate with their audiences, as well as YouTube shorts feature, however simple consumption and creation of videos is still the platform's main attraction. The content on YouTube varies from 6-second-long memes to news broadcasts, talk shows, and personal diaries. Almost every music artist would upload their music video on YouTube. The platform also has a Premium version, that allows you to watch videos without advertising and includes a couple of other practical features, that are not available for an ordinary user.

YouTube remains relevant after over 15 years and is currently the leading video sharing platform. Just as Facebook, YouTube has been subjected to heavy criticism and accusations of misinformation, copyright issues, routine violations of its users' privacy, enabling censorship, and endangering child safety and wellbeing (Wikipedia, undated).

2.2.3. Instagram

Instagram is a media sharing social network founded in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. It's currently a part of the Meta corporation and has over 1.4 billion users. It's an app that allows the users to create a profile to share their pictures and short videos with their friends and world. Multiple features have been added to the app through the years, such as an inbuilt messaging, adding a few videos in one post, editing, and Insta Stories. Insta Stories – which allowed users to post their content to a sequential feed, with each post accessible to others for 24 hours – quickly became of the most prominent features of Instagram.

It's considered to be the second „favourite“ social media platform of internet users, just behind WhatsApp (Data Reportal, 2022). However, Instagram still revives its share of criticism for negatively affecting teens' mental health, its policy and interface changes, its alleged censorship, and illegal and inappropriate content uploaded by users (Wikipedia, undated).

2.2.4. Tiktok

Tiktok is an international version of a Chinese app Doyuin, developed by Byte Dance. It was released in 2017, and gained huge popularity right away, accumulating over 1.4 billion users as of January 2022 (Data Reportal, 2022).

The app allows its user to create short videos, featuring “sounds” on the background. Videos are the only format available on the platform. The use of sounds is a distinct trait of TikTok, as

one must understand the trends beforehand. The “sound” can be a song, a line from a movie, from another TikTok, or a distorted commercial tune. TikTok contains all kinds of content, which is selected and presented to the user via the For You (Recommendations) feed. One of the reasons, why Tiktok gained such a huge popularity so quickly, is because its algorithm can perfectly pinpoint your interests and present you the content you will enjoy in a long, never-ending feed.

TikTok is popular among the younger audience, as 41% of its users are aged 16-20. Among them, 90% of the users engage with the app daily (Meola, 2020).

As the other apps on the list, TikTok has become a subject of multiple controversies, and steamed such problems as addiction, content concerns, misinformation, user privacy concerns and more.

2.2.5. Twitter

Twitter is a microblogging and social networking platform established in 2006, where users can publicly post short messages called “tweets”. It can be accompanied by a short video a little over two minutes long, or four pictures. Other users can reply to a tweet, building up a communication pattern called “a thread”; they can also reply to someone’s else tweet by reposting them on their own profile (such tweets are known as “quotes”). There is also an option to like or re-tweet someone’s post without commenting on it. The app also includes a direct messaging option and recently introduced audio chatrooms known as “spaces”.

Twitter is used by older audiences, as 38.1% of its users are aged between 25 to 34 years old, and 20.7% between 35 to 49 years old. US is the leading country when it comes to the number of users (77.75 billion), followed by Japan (52.8 billion) and India (24.45%) (Statista, 2022).

According to the data, Twitter users are educated and politically involved, and the top 10% of active twitter users make up 80% of its content (Wojcik, Hughes 2019).

Twitter was recently bought by American billionaire Elon Musk for \$44 billion, which caused a debated on the platform. Twitter is also often criticized for becoming a platform with a large amount harassment, bullying and abuse, as well as the spreading of sensitive or explicit content.

2.3. The impact of social media on modern world

It is hard to underestimate the influence of social media on our lives in all kinds of aspects: personal lives, business, politics, entertainment, academics and much more.

The online marketing has completely changed the way companies communicate with their clients and present themselves. The social media manager must have professional for every big company, and we see each day the way companies change from professional, business communication tone to being fun, relatable and in-line with mainstream trend. The Duo Lingo owl on TikTok is a great example of such informal communication between a corporation and general public. And as for TikTok, the influence it had on the music industry is remarkable, as more and more songs are being discovered via platform and eventually pushed to radio-stations.

Influencers – today’s opinion leaders – are essentially online celebrities. Social networks, especially YouTube and Instagram, have enabled the emergence of new professions such as "youtuber", "Instagram model", „TikTok creator“ and much more.

Social media also play a huge role in political aspects of our lives. There are signs of increased political polarization among avid social media users, as the content they receive is tailored to fit their preferences. That results in creation of intense echo-chambers – environments where people become more and more reassured in their opinions, and weigh less receptive to contradictive beliefs (Hayat, Samuel-azran 2017). Not to mention, that for a lot of users’ social networks as Facebook or Twitter are the main source of newspapers and information on current events.

From the point of view of social interactions, social media is a great place to find new relationships. For some people, a friend they met online is equal to a friend they’ve met in real life. Dating app, such as Tinder, has changed the way people look for and build romantic relationships.

There are also many ways in which social media affect one’s mental health. For example, cyber-bullying can lead to depression or anxiety (Fernández 2011). An addiction can also be developed in case of frequent social media use, especially among younger generations.

Everything that happens in real life is reflected in social media on a global scale. Everything that happens on social media affects people in real life. We can watch the whole world, and the whole world can watch us. Social media have been (and keeps) influencing our lives in many ways.

3. Influence of social media on children aged 13-15

In modern world, there are many ways in which children as young as two engage with various types of electronic devices, and online platforms. A term was coined in the last few years to describe the current youngest generation – an “ipad kid” – a child that has been given a gadget (usually an ipad) from the moment they were born (Purchase 2022). The issue of the internet and technology goes deep and has many various aspects and sides to be studied, but in this work, we will focus on the youth and social media.

As it was stated before, an overwhelming majority of children under the age of 18 living in western societies use social media. It is a crucial part of their lives, and it generally impacts the way they grow up, which leads to a big difference between lives of modern young teenagers and experiences of the previous generations. Marc Prensky (2001) makes a division between so-called “digital immigrants” and “digital natives”. Digital natives are people who were born in the age of modern technology and internet. Digital immigrants are those who witnessed the creation of the modern technology as an adult and eventually had to incorporate them into their daily lives. Prensky’s article from over 20 years ago is arguably even more relevant today, as technology keeps evolving and the gap between digital natives and immigrants widens.

Another issue worth noting when it comes to rapid evolution of social media is that the concerns of legality, safety and internet use guidelines seem to fall behind. It is virtually impossible to stop a child from lying about their age online to register on social media platform or access 18+ content. It is also debated whether the parenting surveillance apps that allow parents to track their child’s every move online are acceptable in relativity to child’s privacy rights. Another interesting issue is, for example, the appearance of children on their parent’s social media profiles or, even more controversial, in so-called “family YouTube or TikTok channels”¹. It becomes apparent, that clear, specific legal restrictions and guidelines should be issued on the general topic of “kids on the internet”.

„Thus, while we live in an age where communication technology has evolved to certainly change our lives and social interactions in ways that only a few decades ago would have been unthinkable for many people, we nevertheless find ourselves in a tense relationship with this change. ‘Social media’, as it has come to be known, sits centrally within this tension.“
(Simpson, 2018, p. 3)

¹ „Family channel“ is a type of a blog/vlog where parents showcase their daily lives to the audience, and that includes having their children on camera and in those videos.

A lot of aspects of social media align perfectly with needs of youth between ages 13 and 15. At that age, children go through big changes physically and biologically, which directly affects their mental and psychological state. The quick development often leads to high sensitivity, a need for an identity search and establishment, a need to be independent from the adults and to be recognized by peers. Social media provides the perfect environment to meet those needs. A teenager is in constant communication with peers, the recognition is immediate and constant in form of likes and comments. What's more – internet presents to a child a wide range of interests, opinions, possibilities, and choices to be used in building their identity (Nesi 2020). It's much easier to find a community online that accepts you for who you are and aligns with your mindset, worldview, and interests. It's also a place where anyone can become who they want to be.

“The Internet is often presented as a place where one can explore alternative identities. The sense that it is a virtual space, with relative anonymity, has furthered the notion that one can choose to be someone or something different online than who one is offline.” (Simpson, 2018 p. 1)

However, without a doubt, social media is a double-edged sword. Multiple studies have concluded both negative and positive influences of social media on youth. As for the negative effects – depression, anxiety, eating and body image disorders could be developed. Internet addiction among youth is also a growing concern (Nesi 2020).

“A growing body of work now seeks to build on these studies with more nuanced investigations of how, why, and for whom social media use may have positive or negative effects on youth development. Social media comprises a vast array of digital tools, and thus characterizing its overall effect on youth remains challenging.” (Nesi 2020 p. 117).

3.1. Impact of social media on self-esteem

Following the topic of negative influence of social media on teenagers' mental health, we will now focus more closely on its impact on self-esteem.

To better evaluate the impact of social media on self-esteem it will be split into following processes: social comparison, social feedback, and self-reflection (Krause, Baum, Baumann, Krasnova 2021).

3.1.1. Social comparison

Social comparison is a need to evaluate yourself in relation to others. Usually, to compare yourself to someone else the object of the comparison must be similar in basic ways. For example, a young person can compare themselves to their classmates or peers, but not to someone much older or much younger. This process can be differentiated into *upward* and *downward* comparison (Krause, Baum, Baumann, Krasnova 2021).

Upward comparison usually results in diminished self-esteem, as the individual has compared themselves to someone objectively (or subjectively) better, and therefore negatively evaluated themselves. Downward comparison is the opposite – it is a comparison to someone who is objectively (or subjectively) worse. It usually results in an elevated self-esteem (Morse, Gergen, 1970).

As it was already stated before, social media has a lot to offer, and that includes pictures, videos, and achievements of other people presented online. That leads to an inevitable social comparison, especially when it comes to young developing individuals. The problem is that a lot of content online has been carefully built, selected, or even edited to create a perfect image of its owner. A constant exposure to idealized life being portrayed as a standard can lead to a negative, unhealthy self-judgement and downplay of the child's own appearance, achievements, and abilities (Nesi 2020).

“Social media has a very strong impact on the self-esteem of individuals. Students use these social networking sites for information, communication and building and maintain of relationships. But majority of the people end up making upward and downward comparisons with others. The upward comparisons make people envy others and their lifestyles and also feel less obliged and ungrateful for their bounties. As a result, the self-esteem of such people gets negatively affected.” (Jan, Soomro, Ahmad 2017 p. 337).

3.1.2. Social feedback

Social feedback is a process of self-evaluation based directly on interaction with others and their reactions to the individual. The reactions can be either positive and negative, therefore indicating an acceptance or rejection by peers or society in general. It is a way for an individual to experience a sense of belonging. Positive feedback usually leads to a better self-image and self-perception of an individual. On the other hand, receiving any kind of judgment, rejection or criticism can be very damageable for the individual's self-esteem and lead to negative consequents, such as depression (Baumeister, Leary 1995).

“Consistent with previous research, higher levels of social media use were associated with poorer sleep quality, lower self-esteem and increased anxiety and depression” (Woods, Scott 2016 p.47).

It's obvious how social media play into the need to be evaluated since it was largely built on interactions. It is easy to judge ones' popularity based on the number of likes received, based on their comment sections and more. For example, it is not an unpopular practice to delete posts that didn't get enough likes. Cyber-bullying is also a growing issue to be addressed as a lot of internet users underestimate the impact their negative comment has on the individual they've criticised.

However, it feels nice to receive likes on posts, or get complimentary comments from acquaintances, as well as strangers online. The positive feedback will lead to an elevated self-esteem. In fact, this kind of acceptance, as well as the desire to be seem, is often thought to be a reason why people post online. To look at it from other perspective: posting creations (whether it's art, writing, music or more) and receiving positive feedback can also bring positive effect on teenager's self-esteem.

3.1.3. Social reflection

Social reflection is a process where an individual evaluates themselves internally. It's quite hard to distinguish social reflection and social comparison, as both are in one way, or another affected by outside factors. Self-reflection, however, focuses on the internal self-evaluation, where internal standards, morals, and past behaviours serve as a base. As an example, self-affirmation gains popularity today. It is a way to convince yourself that you are worthy, good and elevate your confidence and self-esteem (Krause, Baum, Baumann, Krasnova 2021).

When it comes to the relation of self-reflection to social media, it can be seen in the following way: by disclosing information about themselves, by leaving a visible digital footprint online and creating content on social media one can look back on their behaviours, and evaluate themselves (Gonzales, Hancock 2011).

According to the 2021 research by Krause, Baum, Baumann and Krasnova the correlation of positive/negative impacts of each of the three processes are as follows:

- social comparison: largely negative impact
- social feedback: mostly positive impact
- self-reflection: mostly negative impacts

It is also important to note, that individual's experience online directly relates to their experience offline. For example, a teenager with low self-esteem can get either even more anxious due to social comparison or get their self-image elevated because of positive social feedback.

“To summarize, when researching the relationship between SNS use and self-esteem, inter-individual differences should be emphasized. As this review suggests, not all people experience the same effects on self-esteem through SNS use.” (Krause, Baum, Baumann, Krasnova 2021).

3.2. Influencers and their impact on children aged 13-15

One of the relatively new phenomena that came out of social media is a profession of an *influencer*. Cambridge dictionary defines an influencer as “*someone who affects or changes the way that other people behave*” or “*a person who is paid by a company to show and describe its products and services on social media, encouraging other people to buy them*”. The second definition opens a discussion about the monetization and profit made off influencers, the way modern influencer marketing works on teenagers. It is a topic worth looking into, however in this work we will look deeper into a psychological aspect of influencers' impact on teenagers and focus on the first provided definition.

The influencers are essentially online content creators with larger audiences. Their content may vary from fashion or make-up, to cooking, to movie reviews, to comedic sketches and much more. Some influencers reach millions of followers and are considered to be a part of the new generation celebrities with their own Fanclubs, merchandise, and more. Influencers usually work with companies and earn money by doing paid promotions.

In the research conducted by Westenberg (2016) on the topic of YouTubers' impact on teenagers the following conclusion was drawn:

“Teenagers are unaware of the influence YouTubers have on them. Teenagers ask YouTubers for advice, want to buy things YouTubers promote and copy their actions, language and clothing” (Westenberg 2016, p.28).

To put it simply, young teenagers often see influencers as their role models. When we combine it with the growing issue of social comparison, we come to an unfortunate result.

Body image and self-perception in terms of appearance seem to be the aspects most negatively affected by influencer culture. It is a commonly known fact, that young people, especially young girls, often feel insecure about their body image, and their mental health can be easily impacted in a negative way due to constant societal pressure. This issue was highly relevant even before the era of digital media, however it became even more evident in the recent years. The reason for that being the constant availability of those deemed “perfect” in a young teenager’s smartphone, as well as the fact that photographs and videos are easy to edit, which leads to an even more unrealistic beauty standard being created online. Research conducted by Panjra (2021) states, that: *“One of the most prominent themes that emerged out of the adolescent girls’ interview was of shrinking self. These subjects expressed a sense of dissatisfaction, self-doubt, feelings of insecurity relating to their own self as a result of comparing their own lives to the lives of fashion influencers. All five subjects interviewed expressed bodily dissatisfaction.” (Panjra 2021, p.380).*

However, body image is not the only way in which teenager’s mental health can be affected. A sense of inferiority, a feeling of missing out on “full life” and constant comparison of their own achievements to the influencer’s can cause issues with self-esteem and self-acceptance.

3.3. Impact on communication and the perception of outside world

Children aged 13 to 15, young teenagers, are in a crucial stage of their development. At this age, the importance of peer acceptance, and peer communication begins to rise. A child becomes slightly distant towards their parents and begins to look for a place where they can belong, be accepted, and understood. The main difference between childhood and adolescent friendship is the start of lengthy conversations, intimate self-disclosure, empathy, and support. Finding a friend to confide in is extremely important for a young teenager (Davis 2012).

As we have stated earlier, social media play a huge part in today's youth's lives. The way the relationships are built is also being reconstructed. Online communication offers several ways to communicate through: pictures, videos, texts, and calls. It allows teenagers to share their thoughts, interests, and news in more engaging and creative ways.

Modern technology allows people to stay online 24/7, see another person through their phone screen and talk to them. These changes are causing a shift in the way offline and online communication is perceived. Scholars debate, whether this shift affects the mental health of youth mostly negatively, or positively. In a way, easy online communication may cause social isolation of a child and get in the way of developing their social skills in real life. On the other hand, studies show, that online communication is mostly an extension of offline friendships. It simply allows teenagers to be in light contact (usually via messages) with their friends.

“In total, opportunities to meet face-to-face in an offline setting and direct interactions still seem to be very important for young people to make friends, to form a peer group and to interact with each other” (Décieux, Heinen, Willems 2019 p.14).

However, making friends online is not uncommon nowadays. It can be quite easy for a teenager to meet and bond with people they've met via an online discussion or in a community about something that interest both. It can also be easier to be open with someone they don't know, and someone who doesn't know them. I can give a sense of anonymity and security.

“Lonely and socially anxious preadolescents and adolescents typically feel nervous and distressed in self-disclosing in face-to-face interactions. Therefore, we expected that lonely and socially anxious preadolescents and adolescents would have more positive perceptions of the Internet's effectiveness to develop breadth and depth of communication, which in turn would positively influence their tendency to use online communication” (Valkenburg, Peter 2007 p.270).

The depth of online versus offline friendships has been an object of discussion for some time, and scholars seem to have various opinions on the issue (Valkenburg, Peter 2007).

4. Practical research

In the first part of this thesis, we've walked through a historical and social context of children between ages 13 and 15 on social media. The topic was covered rather broadly, therefore in the practical segment of this work I would like to focus on few specific hypotheses, that have been mentioned or logically concluded in the theoretical part.

4.1. Goals of research

We can define a few main hypotheses, that will be either proved or debunked via a conducted questionnaire:

Main hypothesis 1.: Young teenagers spend a lot of time on social media unsupervised, actively engaging in posting and reacting to content.

Main hypothesis 2.: Social media negatively affects mental health of young teenagers, specifically via social comparison.

Secondary hypothesis 2.1.: Influencers have a big impact on young teenagers.

Main hypothesis 3.: Young teenagers today make friends online and don't see the difference between online and offline communication.

4.2. The methods of research

The data to answer hypotheses and questions above has been collected using the quantitative research method. Specifically, an online questionnaire created via a Survio.com website. The questionnaire contains 23 questions: 18 closed multiple-choice questions, and 5 open questions, out those 2 were not mandatory to answer. The survey was conducted through June and July and is originally in Ukrainian language.

The reason why this methodology has been chosen was the nature of the discussion and topic of the bachelor's thesis.

“Quantitative researchers seek explanations and predictions that will generalize to other persons and places. The intent is to establish, confirm, or validate relationships and to develop generalizations that contribute to theory” (Leedy and Ormrod 2001, p. 102).

In other words, we are using the quantitative research method to either confirm or deny our hypotheses and answer our question that were developed based on the earlier explored theoretical base.

4.2.1. Analysing data

The data to be analysed will be taken from closed multiple-choice questions, with open questions providing an additional, more detailed, quite interesting information that might help us better understand the gathered statistical data. Such method of evaluation was decided on, as open questions ended up containing only a half of eligible responses. Such answers as a dot, or one letter were submitted to move on with the survey. Nevertheless, the eligible responses were interesting and can help to understand the results better.

The data from Survio.com website has been processed via Microsoft Excel program, to better visualise the results via graphs.

The 23 questions can be structured as follows:

- 7 questions on general usage of social media
- 6 questions regarding influencers, interest in social media and impact on mental health
- 5 questions regarding online vs. offline communication
- 2 additional open question regarding social media content and positive influences
- 2 additional demographical, and 1 statistical question

4.3. Representative sample

The representative sample consists of ukrainian children aged 13 to 15 years old. The reason for Ukraine being chosen as a country to take a representative sample from was due to author's personal connections. The decision to use personal connections (such as family, friends, interest clubs, school) as well as social media (author's personal Instagram, Telegram, Tiktok accounts) resulted in bringing 100 responses on the survey (the maximum allowed on Survey.com website). The method of such data gathering is called "snowball sampling".

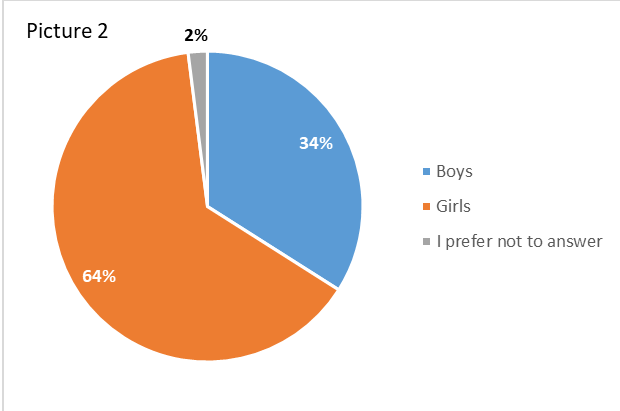
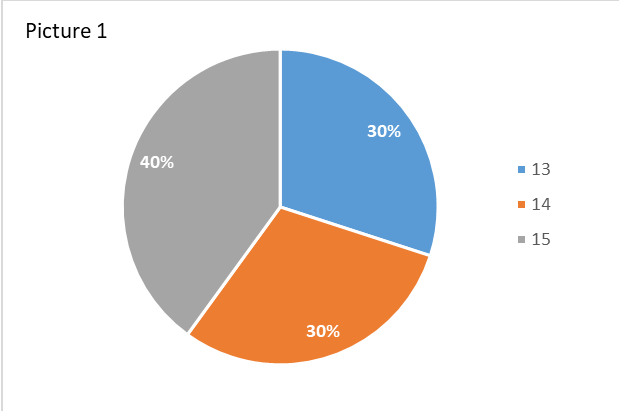
"Snowball sampling uses a small pool of initial informants to nominate, through their social networks, other participants who meet the eligibility criteria and could potentially contribute to a specific study. The term "snowball sampling" reflects an analogy to a snowball increasing in size as it rolls downhill" (Morgan 2008 via Wikipedia)

The origin of respondents fits the overall criteria of "young teenagers from western societies" and therefore doesn't influence the gathered results. In the attachments, you can find the questionnaire in English (it was translated to Ukrainian immediately and does not differentiate from the original survey).

In the research the gender and age (between 13-15) are also not being considered as an influential factor, and therefore were gathered for demographic purposes only.

4.5. The evaluation of gained results

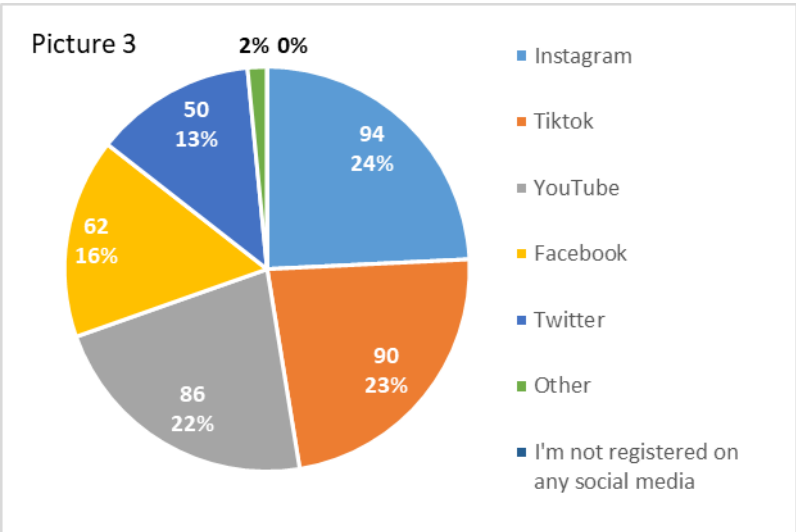
The survey was taken by 100 children aged 13-15 years old: 64 girls, 34 boys and 2 respondents chose not to state their gender (pic. 1). As for the age, 40 respondents were 15 years old, with ages 13 and 14 including 30 respondents each (pic. 2). These demographics questions were located at the very end of the survey, questions 22 and 23 respectively.



Question 1.:

Are you registered on any social media websites? Which ones? (multiple choice question)

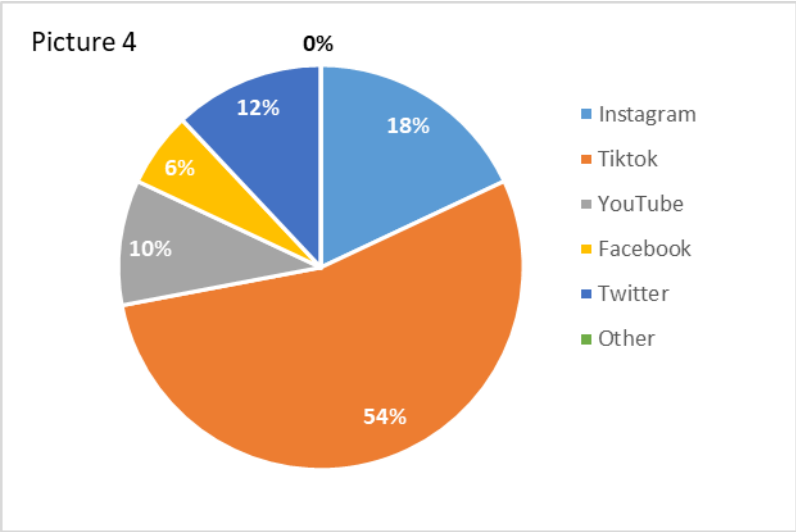
As you can see below (pic. 3) each of the proposed social media was chosen at least once, with Instagram (94 responses) and Tiktok (90 responses) at the top. YouTube was also a popular option with 86 responses, followed by Facebook and Twitter. This data show us, that young teenagers this days use multiple social media, and are registred on various platforms.



Question 2.:

Which social media platform do you use the most?

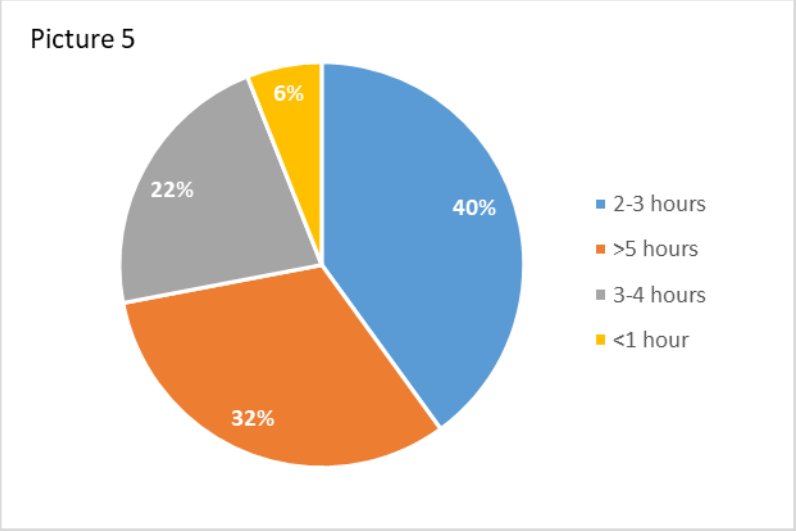
With only one response choice available, we can see a big difference in terms of response distribution, where TikTok is leading with an overwhelming 54% (pic. 4). More than half of the respondents chose TikTok as their most used social media platform. It's followed by Instagram (18%) and YouTube (10%), therefore the Top 3 most used social media align with the Top 3 social media with most registered respondents.



Question 3.:

How much time on average do you spend on social media daily?

As it can be seen on the chart (pic. 5) majority of respondents – 40% – spend 2-3 hours on social media daily. 32% of the respondents spend over 5 hours on social media daily, with the option of under 1 hours being the least popular – only 6%.



Closed question 3 is then followed by an open question 4, that allows us to have an additional insight on the respondents' perspective on their online time.

Additional open question 4.:

Do you feel like you spend a lot of time on social media?

Out of the 100 responses, 52 respondents gave a definite “Yes” to a question, while 34 respondents gave a definitive “No” answer. The rest of the respondents gave no clear answer and almost a half of them said that it depends on the day.

Here are a few interesting responses:

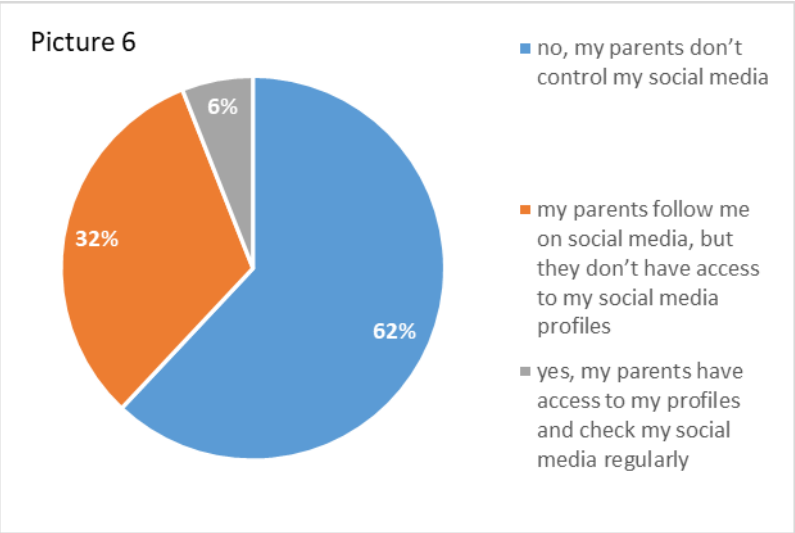
- *“When on holidays or weekends – yes, and I scold myself for it, but when it’s a workday – no.”*
- *“Yes, I think it’s a lot, but it only happens when I spend a lot of time at home.”*
- *“No, it depends whether I have plans for the day or not.”*
- *“Enough, just the right amount of time to see interesting information.”*
- *“I think yes, I should reduce my time spent there.”*
- *“Yes, but it doesn’t mean I want to change it.”*

What can be concluded from the open responses, is that young teens spend a lot of *free time* on social media, but not so much on busy days. Overall, the reactions were split with no drastic difference, with the response “Yes” being the most common answer in one way or another.

Question 5.:

Do your parents control or check on your social media?

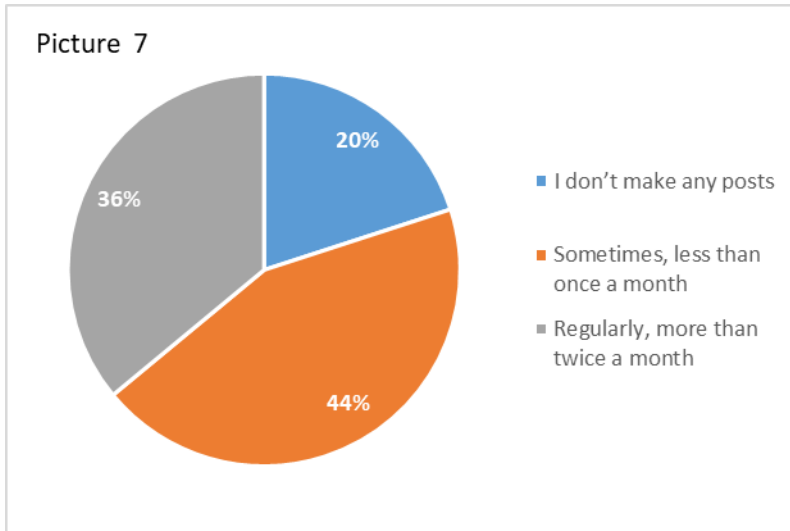
As it can be seen on the chart (pic. 6), overwhelming majority of young teenagers – 62% – are not supervised by their parents online. 32% responded, that their parents them on social media, but only 6% of young teenagers have their social media thoroughly checked and controlled.



Question 6.:

How often do you make posts on social media?

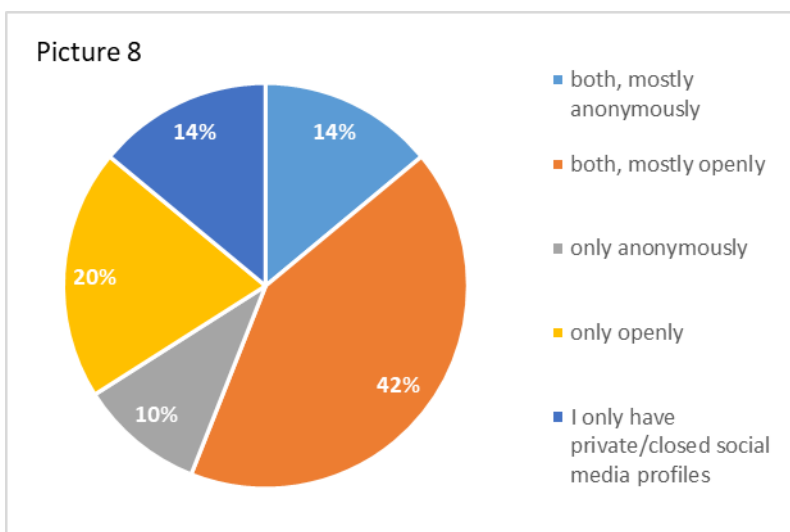
44% of respondents make posts less than once a month, while 36% make the posts regularly. Only 20% chose an option of not making any posts (pic. 7).



Question 7.:

Do you make posts openly (as yourself) or anonymously?

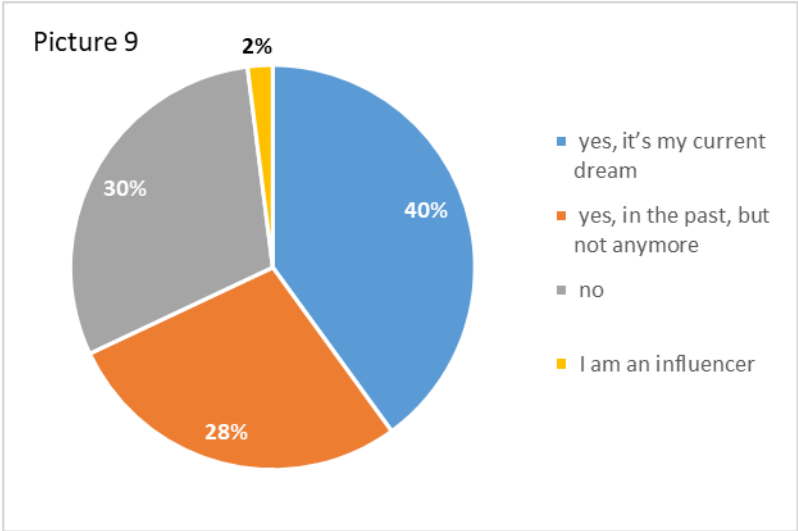
The results for this question have surprised me: most respondents – 42% – chose an option of making posts mostly openly, as themselves, followed by the “*only openly*” option (20%). The “*only anonymously*” option have gained the least number of responses, contrary to my expectations (pic. 8). Based on the theoretical research, I have though those young teenagers would be using the opportunity to stay anonymous online more frequently.



Question 8.:

Have you ever wanted to become an influencer?

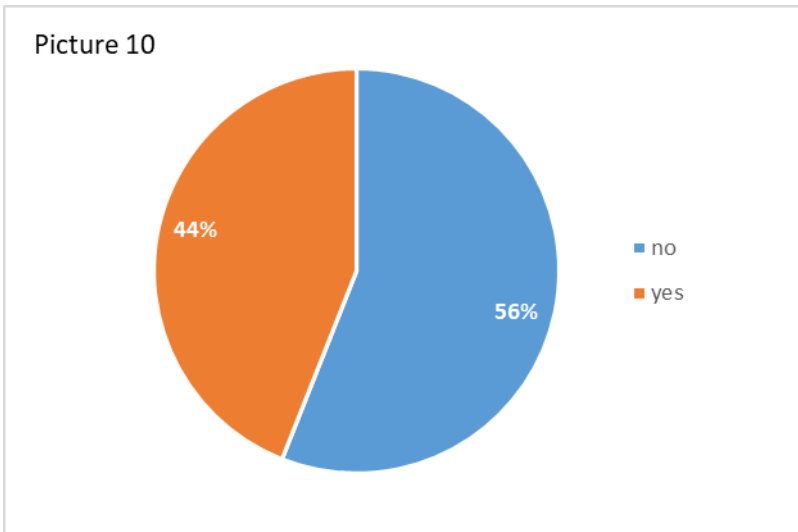
According to the survey results (pic. 9) majority for respondents – 40% – were interested in a career as an influencer previously but have moved on from that dream since. 30% were never interested in becoming an influencer, and 28% still want to become influencers in the future. Only 2 respondents chose an option of currently being an influencer.



Question 9.:

Have you ever tried starting your own blog/YouTube channel, tiktok account, etc.?

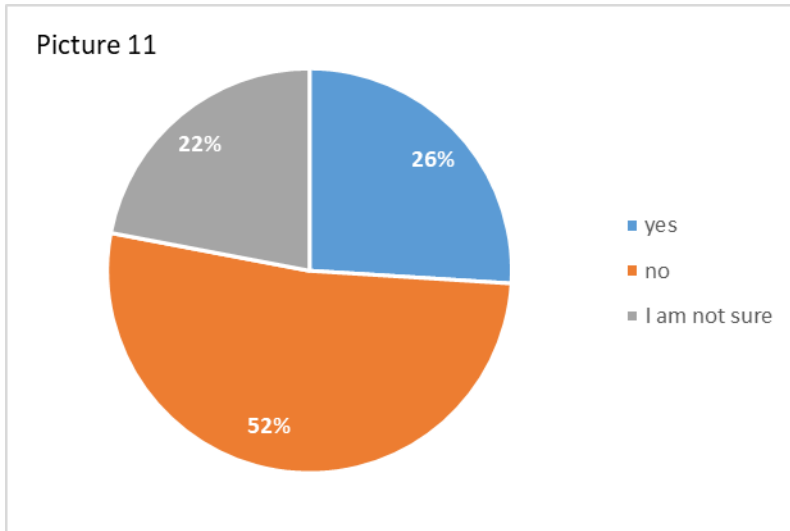
According to the survey, almost half of the respondents – 44% – have started their own social media accounts to pursue an influencer career (pic. 10). The percentage roughly aligns with the number of respondents who chose options “yes” in question 8.



Question 10.:

Do you consider yourself to be a part of some influencer's fandom²?

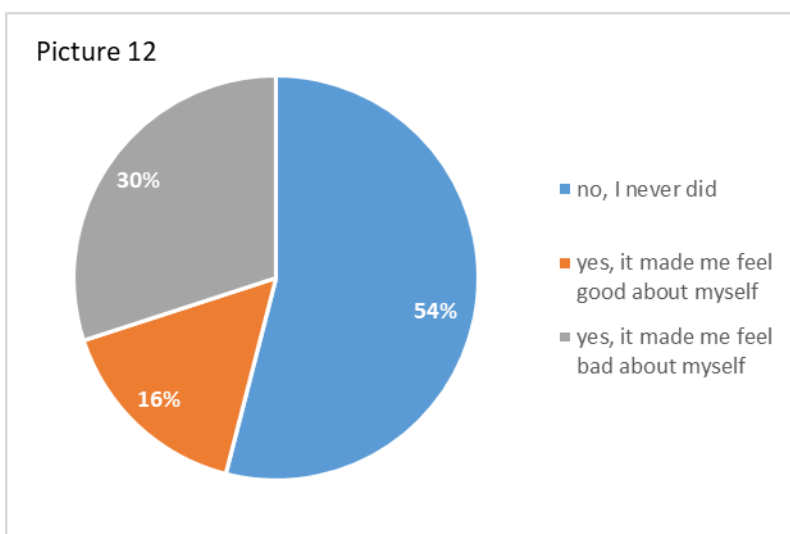
Once again, contrary to my expectations, majority of the respondents – 52% – do not consider themselves to be fans of a particular influencer (pic. 11).



Question 11.:

Have you ever compared yourself to people you've seen online? How did it make you feel?

According to the survey, majority of the respondents – 54% – do not compare themselves to people they see online (pic 12). This result greatly differentiates from the premise set up by previous studies mentioned in the theoretical part.



² Fandom – modern word for a fanclub

The explanation for this, however, could be tracked down to the structure of the question. Such processes as social comparison are often carried out subconsciously, therefore when a question of comparison was asked straightforwardly, the respondents chose the “no” answer (Morse, Gergen, 1970). Another possible explanation could be that the respondents were trying to make the choice that seemed “right”. The respondents might not have been honest with themselves or the survey. However, what does align with the theoretical premise, is that the respondents chose the option of “*it made me feel bad about myself*” almost twice as often as “*it made me feel good about myself*” option, with the relativity of 30% to 16%. The downside comparison seems to be prevailing.

Additional open question 12.:

If you chose answer “yes” in previous question, could you explain why you chose it? Why did it make you feel good/bad about yourself?

As an addition to closed question 11, 46 respondents were asked to elaborate on why they chose one of the two “yes” options. Only half of the answers were eligible, below are the few most interesting and representative responses.

- From respondents who chose “*yes, it made me feel worse about myself*” option:
 - “*Not successful*”
 - “*Depressed*”
 - “*I felt, as if I haven’t achieved enough*”
 - “*Negatively, I had a feeling I was doing something wrong and a feeling of pain*”
 - “*I felt, as if I’m not pretty compared to this blogger, but not I understand, that it’s not like that at all, and we are all different*”
 - “*Because they looked cooler, than me*”
 - “*Now I understand it’s just internet, but I was jealous of [someone’s] better life*”
 - “*I’ve had complexes because of it... I compared myself to activists and developed [people]...? I think something like this. I felt stupid and lazy*”

- From respondents who chose “*yes, it made me feel good about myself*” option:
 - “*Usually I feel smarter after it*”
 - “*Yes, and I could see that I can be like that person*”
 - “*I was a part of the community, so I felt like I was a part of something bigger*”

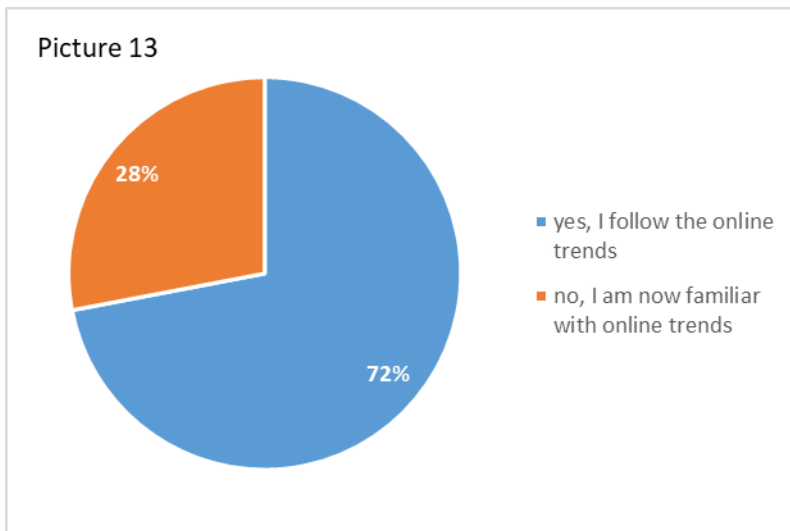
- “Stronger”
- “I wanted to change and start learning something new”

Overall, the results of comparison were mostly negative, whether it’s regarding the physical looks, level of success, or an overall feeling of people online living a better life.

Question 13:

Do you follow any online trends?

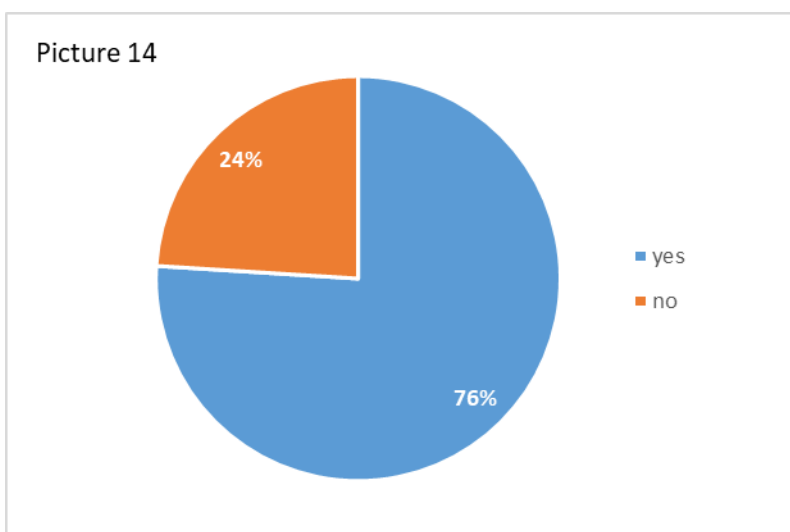
As expected, majority of the respondents – 72% – follow the online trends (pic 13).



Question 14.:

Do you have online friends?

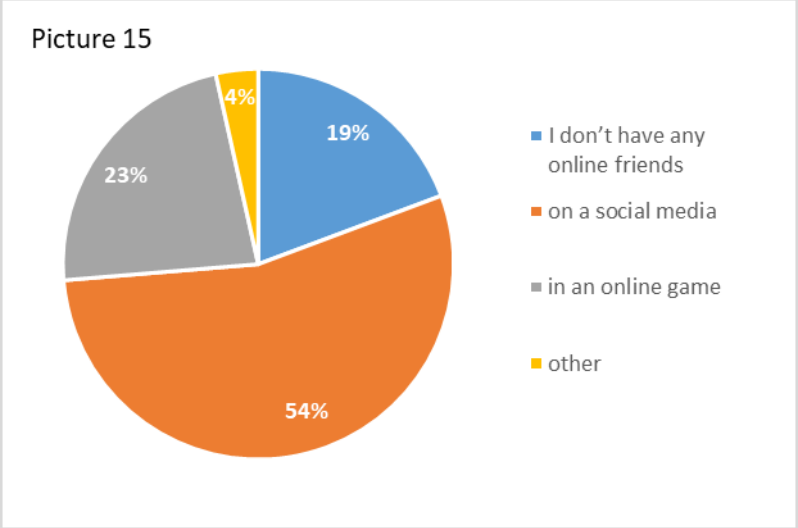
An overwhelming 76% of respondents chose the “yes” option in this question (pic. 14).



Question 15.:

Where did you meet your online friends?

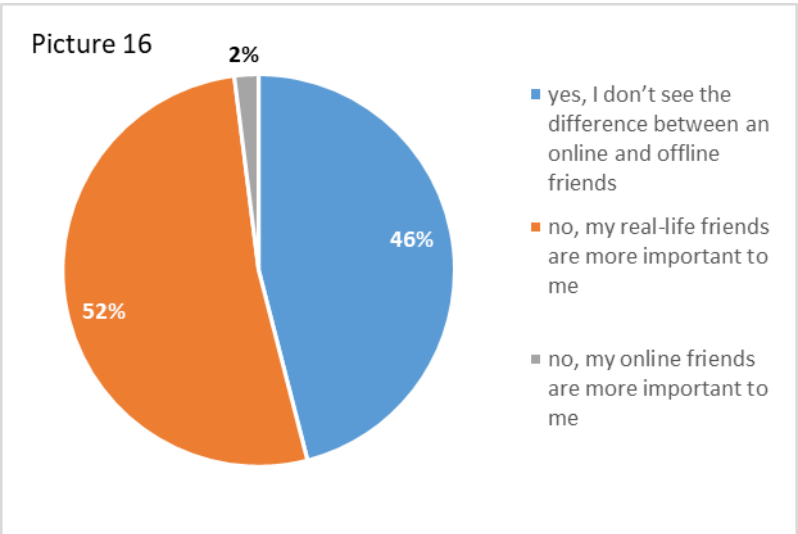
Majority of respondents – 54% - met their online friends on social media, and 23% chose an option “in an online game” (pic. 15).



Question 16.:

Do you feel like your online friends are equal to your friends in real life?

For this question, majority of the respondents – 52% – decided that their offline friends are more important than those online. 46% confirmed, that their offline friends are equal to those online, and only 2% prioritize their online friends (pic. 16).



Additional open question 17:

If you chose a “no” answer in previous question, could you explain why you chose it?

This question was non-mandatory, fixating a low response rate, which only 24 answers eligible.

The respondents seem to answer even if they chose a „yes“ answer in question 16.

- Answers from those who chose “no, offline friends are more important”:
 - *„I feel like better to spend some time with a real friend and get in some trouble“*
 - *„I know my offline friend in real life, and I can trust them because I know them personally“*
 - *„Because I communicate with my real life friends more and trust them more“*
 - *„Real world is more important than online“*
 - *„Because I’ve had hundreds of online friends were coming in and out, but in real life I have stable friends with whom I’ve lived for quite some time, and they are a priority to me“*

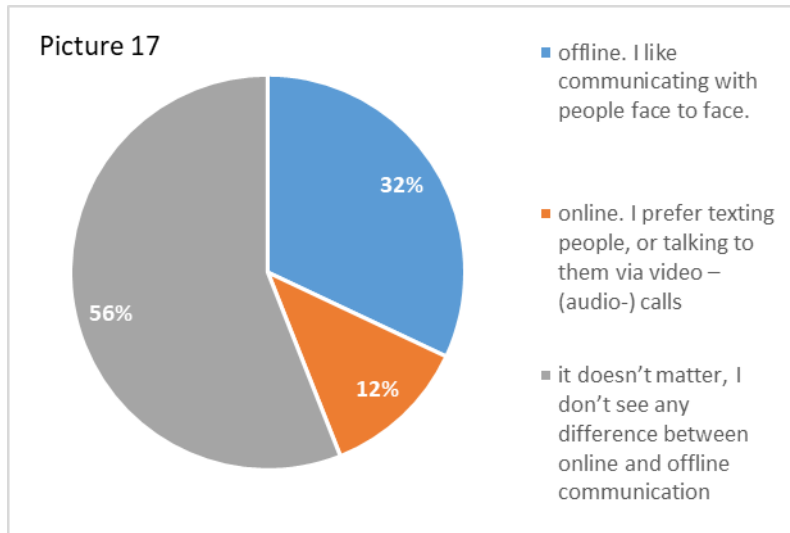
- Answers from those who chose “yes, I don’t see the difference between online and offline friends”:
 - *„Because with online friends we talk about the same things as with offline friends“*
 - *„Because both friends are humans, and it’s not necessary to meet someone in person to communicate (it would’ve been a nice bonus”*
 - *“Because online friends are as good as offline friends”*

- Answers from those who chose “no, online friends are more important”:
 - *„Because I trust my online friends even more, than my offline friends“*
 - *„Can I have an option „I don’t have friends in real life?“*

Question 18.:

How do you prefer communicating with your friends/family/ acquaintances?

More than half of the respondents (58%) don't see any difference between offline and online communication, while 32% prefer offline communication (pic. 17).



We're going to come back to the Question 19 in a few paragraphs and focus on Questions 21 and 22 for now.

These are additional open questions, meant to gather some additional insight on positive influences of social media and open a further discussion.

Additional open question 20:

Have you ever learned a practical skill you could use in real life from social media? What was it?

These question received around 50 eligible responses, with the majority saying a definite „yes“ to learning new skills on social media. Cooking, drawing and English language were the most popular answers, with cooking being included in almost every response.

- *„For example, I learned how to look up various tasty recipes etc. And also to learn elements, dance tricks. I also learn English from social media because I follow many English-speaking bloggers, and I love watching movies and series in original language“*
- *„I learned how to cook and do manicure“*

- „Yes, different ways to make pretty picture and videos“
- „I learned what inspires me and what my strong sides are“
- „I learned how to make breakfasts, various lifehacks“
- „Various exercises, cooking“
- „Drawing, language, and many other things“

Additional open question 21.:

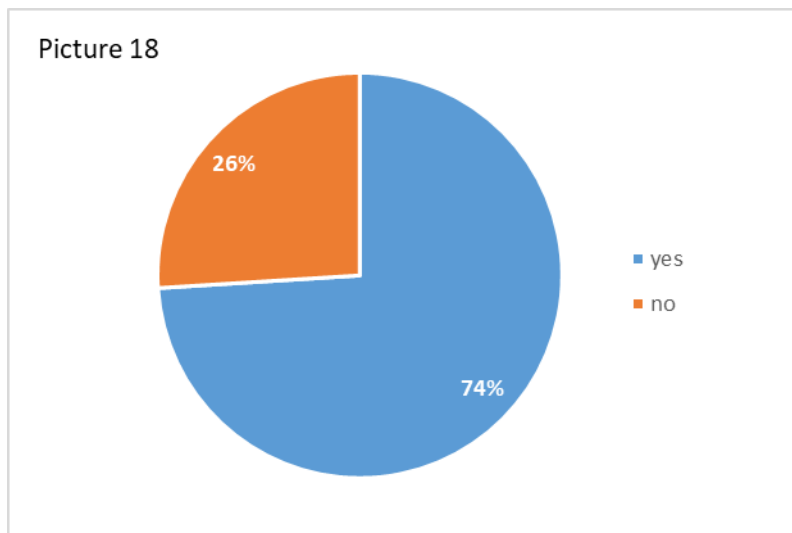
Have you ever created something artistic and posted it on social media (ex. drawings, writings, video edits, etc.)? Type in yes or no, if yes – please elaborate.

58 out of 100 respondents gave a definite “yes“. The content mentioned was mostly drawings, fanfiction, video edits, photographs, dance videos, cooking, and gameplay.

Additional closed question 19.:

Have you ever encountered any unwanted 18+ content online?

The topic of inappropriate content on social media was not covered in this work, however it is a topic that should be studied further, as 74% of the respondents answer „yes“ to this question (pic. 18).



5. Application of the obtained data on hypotheses and discussion

Referring to the results received from the conducted survey, we can confirm or deny earlier stated hypotheses and answer the research questions.

***Main hypothesis 1.:** Young teenagers spend a lot of time on social media unsupervised, actively engaging in posting and reacting to content.*

This hypothesis has been checked via survey questions 1 to 7. Young teenagers between the ages of 13 to 15 tend to use various social media platforms, such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook. TikTok is most used platform among young teenagers, followed by Instagram and YouTube. According to the survey, young teenagers spend at least 3,8 hours on social media daily, with the majority acknowledging their problem of spending too much time online and seeing it as negative. Based on the results from question 5, only 6% of parents actively supervise their children's social media, while 62% don't control it at all. Young teenagers tend to make posts on social media, although the majority doesn't have any regular posting schedule and shares a post at least once every month. The posts are made from teenagers' personal accounts, openly.

Therefore, the survey has confirmed the first main hypothesis of this work.

An interesting result occurred in question 7, as it turned out majority of teenagers don't seem to value the anonymity social media offers them that much. It also raises additional concerns regarding the safety of children aged 13 to 15 online.

***Main hypothesis 2.:** Social media negatively affects mental health of young teenagers, specifically via social comparison.*

***Secondary hypothesis 1:** Influencers have a big impact on young teenagers.*

These hypotheses have been checked via questions 8 to 13. Based on the survey, 72% of young teenagers follow online trends. When asked if they have ever compared themselves to people, they've seen online, the majority has answered "no". This result, however, seems to be unreliable, as it can be hard for a respondent to consciously answer whether they have, or have not been comparing themselves to other people. Out of the respondents that answered "yes" the negative feeling after comparison was mentioned more often. As expected, the respondents felt less confident, less satisfied with their achievement and lives. However, the positive effects, such as getting inspired by someone, were mentioned as well.

Based on the additional responses from questions 20 and 21, it seems like many young teenagers has learned beneficial skills from social media, and are motivated to share their creative content online, improve and grow.

As for the influencers, based on the survey results, most respondents either wanted to become influencers in the past, or still have that goal. More than a half of respondents have made social media account specifically for the purpose of becoming an influence, however only 2 of the respondents have achieved that goal. From these data we can draw a conclusion, that a career of an influencer seems attractive to young teenagers, and they are influenced to attempt building it as well. However, when asked if the responders consider themselves to a part of an influencer's fandom, 52% has given a negative answer.

To conclude, the way social media influences children between ages of 13 to 15 has to be studied more in depth, as both negative and positive effects of social media have been uncovered via research. The scale of influencers' impact on respondents also remains questionable. The main and secondary hypotheses have been partially confirmed by the research, and further, more detailed study is needed for drawing more reliable results.

Main hypothesis 3.: *Young teenagers today make friends online and don't see the difference between online and offline communication.*

This hypothesis has been checked through questions 14 to 18.

According to the survey, 76% of respondents have online friends, with the majority meeting them on social media. However, young teenagers seem to value their real-life friends more than their online friends. When asked to elaborate, the respondents mentioned "trust" often, meaning that they are still careful around people they're met on the internet. However, the gap between the options of seeing your online/friends and equals and valuing your offline friends more is only 6%. There is a need to monitor how the situation will develop in the future, and whether the gap will keep closing as social media become more and more advanced, taking a bigger part in our daily lives.

Another interesting result was that majority of respondents don't see any difference between online and offline communication with people they know. 56% chose the no difference option, 32% preferred offline communication and 12% preferred online communication. While establishing the theoretical base for the research, it has been noted that "*online communication is mostly an extension of offline friendships*". Within this research we were able to confirm this

statement, as there is a big percentual difference between answers “I don’t see the difference between my online and offline friends” vs. “I don’t see any difference between online and offline communication”.

In conclusion, the third main hypothesis has been confirmed to be true in general. Children between 13-15 commonly make friends online, however they still prioritize their real-life friendships. As for the communication, online and offline types are seen as equal.

6. Conclusion

In the first part of this bachelor’s thesis, I have covered the historical context on social media, their types, and their general influences. The second part of the work focused on studying the influences of social media on children aged 13-15 through paper research. After laying down the basic premise for the research of the work and drawing up the main hypotheses – the quantitative survey has been carried out on the relevant research sample. 100 respondents have completed the questionnaire. Afterwards, the results have been gathered and analysed, as well as applied to the previously stated hypotheses. These were mostly confirmed, however a further, in-depth research is in need to fully study the issue.

“Penetration of digital issues into everyday lives of children and their families, along with the associated hyperreality, is likely to continue to grow as a concern.” (Gray, Phippen 2017 p.102)

Technology continues to develop, and it’s very important to implement new policies and approaches to make sure children learn how to use the online, how to stay safe, and how to process the information they see on daily (Gray, Phippen 2017).

“Using social media becomes a risk to adolescents more often than most adults realize. Most risks fall into the following categories: peer-to-peer; inappropriate content; lack of understanding of online privacy issues; and outside influences of third-party advertising groups.” (O’keeffe, Clarke-pearson 2011 p.800)

Social media continues to grow and spread, new aspects of their influences are uncovered continuously, and it is our responsibility to make sure we know how to work with the changes and create a safe environment for future generations.

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Bachelor's thesis summary

SCHVÁLENO

Institut komunikačních studií a žurnalistiky FSV UK Teze BAKALÁŘSKÉ diplomové práce	
TUTO ČÁST VYPLŇUJE STUDENT/KA:	
Příjmení a jméno diplomantky/diplomanta: Tsyhannyk Oleksandra	Razítko podatelny: 
Imatrikulační ročník diplomantky/diplomanta: 2019	
Fakultní e-mail diplomantky/diplomanta: 96506865@fsv.cuni.cz	
Studijní program/specializace: Marketingová komunikace a PR, denní studium	
Název práce v češtině: Vliv sociálních sítí na rozvoj dětí ve věku 11–14 let	
Název práce v angličtině: The influence of social media on the development of children aged 11 to 14	
Předpokládaný termín dokončení (semestr, akademický rok – vzor: ZS 2022/2023) (diplomovou práci je možné obhajovat <u>nejdříve</u> šest měsíců od schválení tezí) LS 2022	
Základní charakteristika tématu a předpokládaný cíl práce (max. 1000 znaků): <p>The main objective of this bachelor's work is to understand the influence of social media on the mental health of children aged 11 to 14, as well as research and analyse the ways and consequences of the frequent use of the internet technology. It will be exploring its impact on such aspects as the child's self-esteem, their perception of the environment and the outside world, as well as understanding the influence of social media on child's way of thinking and inner development. The study will include a theoretical part to better understand history and general outlines of social media, as well as defining and describing various specific online platforms (Tiktok, Instagram, etc.). The second part will include practical research and its analysis, as well as the possible implementations of the work's conclusions.</p>	
Předpokládaná struktura práce (rozdělení do jednotlivých kapitol a podkapitol se stručnou charakteristikou jejich obsahu): <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Introduction2. Understanding Social Media (<i>this part defines social media as a whole, and provides the background of it's creation and development</i>)<ol style="list-style-type: none">2.1 History of social media2.2 Types of social media2.3 The significance of social media in the modern world3. Influence of social media on children aged 11-14 (<i>this part defines the hypotheses to be proven and analysed within the study</i>)<ol style="list-style-type: none">3.1 Impact on self-esteem3.2 Impact on the perception of outside world3.3 „No teenage phase“ phenomena3.4 Childhood to Adulthood with social media	

4. Practical research
 - 4.1 The goal of research
 - 4.2 The methods of research
 - 4.3 Representative sample
 - 4.4 The analysis of gained results
 - 4.5 Implementations
5. Conclusions

Vymezení zpracovávaného materiálu (např. konkrétní titul periodika a období jeho analýzy):

When writing this bachelor's work I will be referencing relevant literature (*see list below*), as well as using international open sources for finding relevant articles on the topic (*Google Scholar, Google Books, Research Gate etc.*). I will be referencing academic works stored on the local online platforms as well (*UKAŽ, online libraries and catalogs of Czech Universities and libraries*).

I will be conducting the quantitative research via a questionnaire; the results of it will be analysed afterwards.

Postup (technika) při zpracování materiálu:

The practical part will be concluded via quantitative research and the following analysis of it. The research will be carried out on the representative sample (children 11 to 14 years old), first and foremost via a questionnaire, containing both closed and open questions.

Základní literatura (nejméně 5 nejdůležitějších titulů k tématu a způsobu jeho zpracování; u všech titulů je nutné uvést stručnou anotaci na 2–5 řádků):

1. **GRAY, Sandra Leaton a Andy PHIPPEN. Invisibly blighted: the digital erosion of childhood. London, [England: UCL IOE Press, 2017 - 2017, 1 online resource (127 pages) : illustrations. ISBN 1-78277-198-0.**

This book talks about the future and development of children that are growing up under a burden of modern technology. This book helps readers think more deeply about what it means to be a child in the digital world today.

2. **GENNARO, Steve a Blair MILLER. Young people and social media: contemporary children's digital culture. Wilmington, DE: Vernon Press, 2021 - 2021, 1 online resource (xlix, 405 pages) : illustrations, map, charts. ISBN 1-64889-320-1.**

This book explores the practices, relationships, consequences, benefits, and outcomes of children's experiences with, on, and through social media by bringing together a vast array of different ideas about childhood, youth, and young people's lives.

3. **SHELDON, Pavica. Social media: principles and applications. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2015 - 2015, 1 online resource (143 p.). ISBN 0-7391-9264-7.**

Principles and Applications thoroughly examines social media in interpersonal, mass-mediated, educational, organizational, and political settings. Sheldon provides a must-have survival tool for communication, psychology, and social media scholars.

4. **HJORTH, Larissa a Sam HINTON. Understanding social media. Second edition. Los Angeles: Sage, 2019, ix, 220 stran : ilustrace ; 24 cm. ISBN 978-1-5264-2596-6.**

This book provides a critical conceptual toolbox for navigating the evolution and practices of social media. It explores the key themes and concepts, going beyond specific platforms to show you how to

place social media more critically within the changing media landscape.

5. VALKENBURG, Patti M. a Jessica Taylor PIOTROWSKI. Plugged In: How Media Attract and Affect Youth. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018, 1 online resource (341 pages) : illustrations. ISBN 0-300-22809-0. Dostupné z: doi:10.12987/9780300228090

This book presents an illuminating study of the complex relationship between children and media in the digital age. Now, as never before, young people are surrounded by media—thanks to the sophistication and portability of the technology that puts it literally in the palms of their hands.

Diplomové práce k tématu (seznam bakalářských, magisterských a doktorských prací, které byly k tématu obhájeny na UK, případně dalších oborově blízkých fakultách či vysokých školách za posledních pět let):

KNAPOVÁ, Jana. Internetové sociální sítě jako součást systému sociálních vztahů u dětí školního věku. Diplomová práce (Mgr.)--Univerzita Karlova. Filozofická fakulta, 2012, 2012, 99 s.

MENCLOVÁ, Kateřina. Internet, sociální sítě a rizika s nimi spojená pro děti staršího školního věku. Praha, 2020. Bakalářská práce. Univerzita Karlova, Pedagogická fakulta, Katedra pedagogiky. Vedoucí práce Váchová, Alena

Datum / Podpis studenta/ky

14.03.2022

TUTO ČÁST VYPLŇUJE PEDAGOG/PEDAGOŽKA:

Doporučení k tématu, struktuře a technice zpracování materiálu:

Případné doporučení dalších titulů literatury předepsané ke zpracování tématu:

Potvrzuji, že výše uvedené teze jsem s jejich autorem/kou konzultoval(a) a že téma odpovídá mému oborovému zaměření a oblasti odborné práce, kterou na FSV UK vykonávám.

Souhlasím s tím, že budu vedoucí(m) této práce.

Mgr. Tereza Ježková, Ph.D.

Příjmení a jméno pedagožky/pedagoga

.....
Datum / Podpis pedagožky/pedagoga

TEZE JE NUTNO ODEVZDAT VYTIŠTĚNÉ, PODEPSANÉ A VE DVOU VYHOTOVENÍCH DO TERMÍNU UVEDENÉHO VE VYHLÁŠCE ŘEDITELE INSTITUTU, A TO PROSTŘEDNICTVÍM PODATELNÝ FSV UK. PŘIJATÉ TEZE JE NUTNÉ SI VYZVEDNOUT V SEKRETARIÁTU PŘÍSLUŠNÉ KATEDRY A NECHAT VEVÁZAT DO VÝTISKU DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE.

TEZE NA IKSŽ SCHVALUJE GARANT PŘÍSLUŠNÉHO STUDIJNÍHO PROGRAMU.

List of attachments

Attachment 1.:

Questionnaire „The influence of social media on children aged 13 to 15“, all questions immediately translated to English

Welcome page

Hello,

My name is Oleksandra Tsyhannyk, I am a student at Charles University in Prague. This survey is a part of my final bachelor's thesis "*The influence of social media on the development of children aged 13 to 15*".

Before answering the question, please read this short guide:

1. This survey is completely anonymous
2. There is *no correct answer* in this survey
3. This survey contains 23 questions and takes no more than 15-20 minutes
4. The definition of "social media" does not include messengers such as Viber or WhatsApp

By completing this survey, you consent to the processing of data from your answers.

Thank you for your time! :)

1. Are you registered on any social media websites? Which ones?

Select one or more answers

- a) Instagram
- b) Facebook
- c) YouTube
- d) Twitter
- e) TikTok
- f) I am not registered on any social media
- g) Other: [please list your other social media]

2. Which social media platform do you use the most?

Select one answer

- a) Instagram
- b) Facebook
- c) YouTube
- d) Twitter
- e) TikTok
- f) I don't use social media
- g) Other:

3. How much time on average do you spend on social media daily?

Select one answer

- a) under 1 hour
- b) 1-2 hours
- c) 3-4 hours
- d) 5+ hours

4. Do you feel like you spend a lot of time on social media?

(open answer)

5. Do your parents control or check on your social media?

For example - what you post, what you like, who you text with etc.

- a) no, my parents don't control my social media
- b) my parents follow me on social media, but they don't have access to my social media profiles
- c) yes, my parents have access to my profiles and check my social media regularly

6. How often do you make posts on social media?

Post - it can be a TikTok video, and Instagram post or Story etc.

- a) I don't make any posts
- b) Sometimes, less than once a month
- c) Regularly, more than twice a month

7. Do you make posts openly (as yourself) or anonymously?

Anonymously - your name, face, age is not in the post or anywhere in your profile; openly (as yourself) - your age, name and face are visible in your profile.

- a) both, mostly anonymously
- b) both, mostly openly
- c) only anonymously
- d) only openly
- e) I only have private/closed social media profiles

8. Have you ever wanted to become an influencer?

Influencer = a youtuber, tiktok, blogger etc. with at least 1,000 subscribers

- a) yes, it's my current dream
- b) yes, in the past, but not anymore
- c) no
- d) I am an influencer

9. Have you ever tried starting your own blog/youtube channel, tiktok account, etc.?

Influencer = a youtuber, tiktok, blogger etc. with at least 1,000 subscribers

- a) yes
- b) no

10. Do you consider yourself to be a part of some influencer's fandom?

Influencer = a youtuber, tiktok, blogger etc. with at least 1,000 subscribers

- a) yes
- b) no
- c) I am not sure

11. Have you ever compared yourself to people you've seen online? How did it make you feel?

For example, compared to influencers, other children your age on social media etc.

- a) no, I never did
- b) yes, it made me feel good about myself
- c) yes, it made me feel bad about myself

12. If you chose answer "yes" in previous question, could you explain why you chose it? Why did it make you feel good/bad about yourself?

if you chose "no" - type it in

(open answer)

13. Do you follow any online trends?

For example - in fashion, music, movies, etc.

- a) yes, I follow the online trends
- b) no, I am now familiar with online trends

14. Do you have online friends?

Online friends = friends you've met on the internet

- a) yes
- b) no

15. Where did you meet your online friends?

Select one or more answers

- a) I don't have any online friends
- b) On a social media
- c) In an online game
- d) Other

16. Do you feel like your online friends are equal to your friends in real life?

Select one answer

- a) yes, I don't see the difference between an online and offline friends
- b) no, my real-life friends are more important to me
- c) no, my online friends are more important to me

17. If you chose a "no" answer in previous question, could you explain why you chose it?

if you chose "yes" - type it in

(open question)

18. How do you prefer communicating with your friends/family/ acquaintances?

Select one answer

- a) Offline. I like communicating with people face to face.

- b) Online. I prefer texting people, or talking to them via video – (audio-) calls
- c) It doesn't matter, I don't see any difference between online and offline communication

19. Have you ever encountered any unwanted 18+ content online?

Select one answer

- a) yes
- b) no

20. Have you ever learned a practical skill you could use in real life from social media? What was it?

For example - drawing, cooking, learned a foreign language etc.

(open answer)

21. Have you ever created something artistic and posted it on social media (ex. drawings, writings, video edits, etc.)? Type in yes or no, if yes – please elaborate.

For example - art, fanfiction, video edits etc.

(open answer)

22. How old are you?

Select one answer

- a) 13
- b) 14
- c) 15

23. You are a...

Select one answer

- a) boy
- b) girl
- c) I prefer not to answer