

Digital Detox And Mental Health: Addressing Digital Connectivity Issues Among Gen Z

Dr. D Mythili¹, Ms. C Ranganayaki², Dr. A Senthil Kumar³, Ms. M Sri Soundharyaa⁴

¹ Assistant Professor, Department Of Mba, Sri Ramakrishna College Of Arts & Science, Coimbatore. Orcid Id: 0000-0002-7200-7995. Email: mythili@srcas.ac.in

² Assistant Professor, Department Of Mba, Sri Ramakrishna College Of Arts & Science, Coimbatore. Orcid Id: 0009-0005-6404-5480. Email: ranganayaki@srcas.ac.in

³ Assistant Professor – Bsc Cstda, Sri Ramakrishna College Of Arts & Science, Coimbatore.

⁴ Assistant Professor – Bsc Cs With Cyber Security, Sri Ramakrishna College Of Arts & Science, Coimbatore.

Received: 20th Feb, 2026; Revised: 4th Mar, 2026; Accepted: 25th Mar, 2026; Available Online: 10th Apr, 2026

Abstract

Being the first born into a fully digital world, generation z faces a set of challenges peculiar to the dependence on technologies. Although the digital access opens up unparalleled possibilities of communication, learning, and entertainment, excessive time and presence on screens are associated with adverse effects on the mental health of individuals, causing stress, anxiety, and the loss of face-to-face communication in the real world. The idea of digital detox is based on the fact that such adverse effects on mental health require purposeful disconnection with digital activity. Digital detox, the intentional attempt to cut on technology has become a vital tool towards helping people create a balance in their minds. Solving the issue of the overwhelming presence of social media, gaming, and online workplace environments, gen z will be able to develop healthier lifestyles, become more focused, and build healthier relationships in real life. This discussion will delve into the psychological impact of hyper connectivity, the advantages of digital detox protocols and the actual measures that can be employed to establish and maintain a balanced digital lifestyle.

Keywords: Na

How To Cite This Article: Mythili D, Ranganayaki C, Senthil Kumar A, Sri Soundharyaa M. Digital Detox And Mental Health: Addressing Digital Connectivity Issues Among Gen Z. *Int J Drug Deliv Technol.* 2026;16(27s):858-861. Doi: 10.25258/ijddt.16.27s.96

Introduction

The digital devices are an indispensable part of the communication, working, education, and entertainment process in the world of hyper-connection. Nevertheless, the continuous screen time (especially smartphones, social networks, and streaming sites) has brought up the question of how mental and physical health can be harmed by excessive use of digital devices. It has given rise to such an idea as a digital detox, the purpose of which is a conscious and temporary abandonment of digital devices to alleviate stress and improve concentration and balance in life. A digital detox may take several hours up to days and is typically seen as a solution to overcome digital fatigue, improve face-to-face communication, and become more mindful. With more people becoming aware of the price of screen addiction, digital detox behaviors are becoming increasingly popular as one way to reboot and reassert control over the use of technology.

Being the first generation that has spent its entire life in the digital era, the generation Z is characterized by

unlimited access to technology and the web. Gen Z since their early childhood has been interwoven with smartphones, social media platforms, and instant messaging, which have influenced their communication patterns/style and their way of learning and their identities. Even though digital connectivity provides more access to information and networks than ever before, it also has a set of challenges. Lots of Gen Z face the problem of digital fatigue, cyberbullying, online harassment, and the pressure to have a perfect digital look. The diffuse nature of online and offline life may cause a state of increased stress, disturbed sleep, and lack of concentration. Moreover, the fear of missing out (FOMO) and always being socially compared with the help of such platforms as Instagram and Sharechat have been associated with the development of anxiety and depression. Such problems underscore the effect of digital connectivity on mental and emotional health of the Gen Z in a complex way, thus it is essential to seek healthier, more mindful digital behaviors.

Digital Detox And Mental Health: Addressing Digital Connectivity Issues Among Gen Z

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the Impact of Digital Connectivity on Mental Health Among Gen Z
2. To assess Awareness and Perceptions of Digital Detox
3. To evaluate different digital detox methods and their effectiveness in improving mental health.

Review of Literature

A vast body of literature has created a correlation between the negative mental health outcomes and the use of digital media in excess. The authors of the articles reviewed by Shah (2024) and Islam (2021) noted that compulsive usage of digital platforms, particularly among teenagers and young adults, is linked with a higher prevalence of anxiety and depression. These compulsive habits are usually fueled by some psychological aspects like the feeling of missing out (FOMO) and the need to seek social validation at all times (Orta, 2020). Lopes et al. (2022) also explained that the mental distress could be associated with social comparison, cyberbullying, and sleep disruption, all the frequent outcomes of excessive use of social media. On the same note, Gorissen (2019) and Altaf Dar et al. (2023) also highlighted that, despite the social networking sites playing a vital role of socialization, identity building, and the like, issues of addiction have severe consequences to the mental health of the youth.

The article by Kamila and Arianti (2024) represents a systematic literature review about the influence of a digital detox on the mental health of active users of social media. The analyzed study used the results of 2019-2024, and the conclusion was made that digital detox (reduced screen time, social network avoidance), resulted in significant changes in anxiety, depression, stress, and the quality of sleep. Nevertheless, the research also indicated that the results were mostly dependent on personal online behavior and mental adaptation. This strengthens the argument that gen Z users require specific detox strategies since they are heavy users of online platforms.

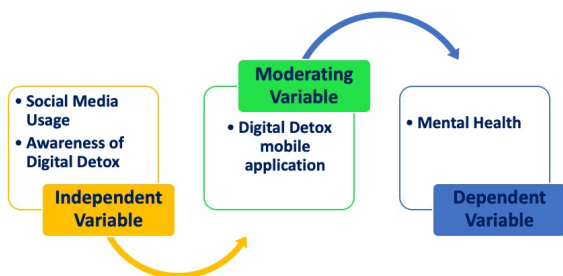


Figure1: Conceptual Background of Digital Detox and Mental Health

Research Methodology

The research took the descriptive research design to examine the effects of digital connectivity on the mental health of Generation Z and assess the effectiveness of digital detox practices on the promotion of psychological well-being. The study was conducted to find out the tendencies of using social media, knowledge, and awareness of digital detox, and the perceived effects of detox interventions on mental health outcomes. Primary and secondary data have been used to carry out an extensive analysis. Primary data were gathered by use of a structured questionnaire that was administered to a sample population of 129 people comprising of students both rural and urban, hostellers and day scholars. The sampling method was purposive sampling, and the sample was inclusive to the target population, the Gen Z who are active social media users. The secondary data was collected by use of scholarly journals, research articles and credible databases to base the theoretical foundation and contextual insight of digital detox and its psychological implication.

Data Analysis

Table No: 1 Age and Social Media Usage

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	134.923 ^a	150	.806
Likelihood Ratio	143.050	150	.644
Linear-by-Linear Association	.045	1	.833
N of Valid Cases	129		

The above table shows there is no significant relationship between age and the Social Media Usage of Respondents ($p > 0.000$), this implies that student age does not influence on Social Media Usage.

Table No: 2 Age and Perception of digital detox

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	128.010 ^a	115	.192

Digital Detox And Mental Health: Addressing Digital Connectivity Issues Among Gen Z

Likelihood Ratio	119.197	115	.376
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.021	1	.312
N of Valid Cases	129		

From the above table it is understood that there no significant relationship exist between age and Perception of digital detox of Respondents ($p=0.192$), this implies that there is no relationship between respondents age and Perception of digital detox.

Table No: 3 Social Media Usage on Mental Health

		SmUsage	MentalHealth
SmUsage	Pearson Correlation	1	.629**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	129	129
MentalHealth	Pearson Correlation	.629**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	129	129
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).			

From the above table it is inferred that the calculated value .629 depicts a positive relationship. In the 2tailed significant value, 0.00 shows the correlation is significant where the standard alpha value is 0.05 ($\alpha=0.00$ where $\alpha<0.05$). Hence the Social Media Usage and Mental Health of Respondents significantly had a positive correlation.

Table No: 4 Social media usage between hostellers and day scholars

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
SmUsage	Equal variances assumed	.746	.389	2.163	127	.032	.39114	.18081	.03334	.74893
	Equal variances not assumed			2.322	30.409	.027	.39114	.16844	.04733	.73494

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare social media usage between hostellers and day scholars. The results showed a statistically significant difference, $t(127) = 2.163, p = .032$. Hostellers ($M = 3.85, SD = 0.69$) reported significantly higher social media usage than Day Scholars ($M = 3.46, SD = 0.77$). The mean difference was 0.39 units, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from 0.03 to 0.75, indicating that this difference is meaningful. Therefore, we conclude that hostellers use social media significantly more than day scholars.

Managerial Implications

- The results show that the impact of social media on mental health and its use are strongly positive, thus we will promote the use of screen-time tracking applications, mindfulness exercising, and frequent offline activities to protect the mental well-being of the students.
- Since the digital detox apps demonstrate a beneficial impact on mental health, they should be promoted with the help of campus campaigns and included in the student wellness programs.
- Given that the hobbies are negatively associated with the use of social media, then form hobby groups, sports, and cultural events as a way of automatically restricting the hours spent on the internet.
- It is also found out that hostellers are much more active on social media than day scholars, hostel-specific offline activities, recreational activities and screen-free days can be used to curb over-usage.
- As location is a strong factor affecting the perception of digital detox, make campaigns location-specific: urban students can be offered stress management and balance tactics, whereas rural students may be oriented

Digital Detox And Mental Health: Addressing Digital Connectivity Issues Among Gen Z

on the balanced connectivity and offline interactions.

Conclusion

The social media today is a part of the contemporary digital realm that has defined the lives of students and their communication, learning and interaction with the outside world. Although it has many positive aspects, such as connectivity, the information and creative expression opportunities, overuse of it may cause issues related to mental health and the overall well-being. Digital detox is a notion that has also become a valuable solution to the establishment of a balance between the online and offline life. Through a deliberate act of limiting screen time and intentional offline experiences one is able to regain their focus, increase their productivity and become emotionally healthier. The consciousness and uptake of digital detox measures is increasingly relevant to students in dealing with academic stresses and remaining rational.

References

- Alanzi, T., Alqarni, A., Alzahrani, S., & Alghamdi, A. (2024). Effects of digital detox interventions on anxiety and depression among young adults: A quantitative meta-analysis. *Journal of Mental Health and Digital Behavior*, 18(2), 145–162.
- Altaf Dar, I., Qureshi, M. A., & Khan, N. (2023). Social networking addiction and its psychological consequences among youth. *International Journal of Adolescent Health and Development*, 15(3), 201–215.
- Bhattacharya, S., & Raghuvanshi, S. (2019). Digital detox and self-regulation: Emerging mental health strategies in the digital era. *Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Science*, 7(1), 25–38.
- Chaoyang, L., & Jinkai, W. (2021). Smartphone features and technostress: Examining moderating role of digital detox. *Technology and Society Review*, 29(4), 311–328.
- Cervigón-Carrasco, J., Martínez, R., & López, G. (2024). Short-term digital detox and its effects on emotional well-being among young adults. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 9, 101276.
- El-Khoury, R., Haddad, A., & Mansour, R. (2021). Digital disconnection and its impact on psychological well-being: Evidence from university students. *Cyber Psychology Studies*, 6(1), 45–59.
- Gorissen, S. (2019). Youth identity formation in the age of social networking: Risks and opportunities. *Youth and Media Journal*, 12(3), 102–119.