

The Role of Teachers in Supporting Students' Psychological Health in the Era of Digital Transformation

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Abstract

The proliferation of digital platforms and social media amid rapid technological transformation is profoundly reshaping students' psychological dynamics, including emotional regulation, learning motivation, self-concept, and social interactions, thereby generating both opportunities and risks for schooling. This qualitative study synthesizes findings from a systematic literature review and case studies from Indonesian secondary schools to examine teachers' roles in mitigating digital-era psychological risks while simultaneously leveraging digital affordances. The analysis integrates empirical evidence on social media's dual impact, showing that positive effects include enhanced access to knowledge and the stimulation of fine-motor creativity, whereas risks encompass heightened anxiety, fear of missing out (FOMO), addictive usage patterns, and reduced gross motor activity. Across the reviewed studies and cases, teachers emerge as pivotal facilitators who apply educational psychology principles, such as cooperative learning, emotion regulation training, and constructive feedback to strengthen students' resilience, with collaborative interventions involving counselor-parent partnerships contributing to the reduction of emotional distress. Strengthening digital literacy, regulating screen time, and designing

balanced learning environments are identified as essential conditions for sustaining students' psychological well-being. The study concludes that targeted teacher training in digital emotional intelligence and culturally adaptive pedagogical strategies, particularly within Islamic education contexts, is crucial for supporting holistic student development in increasingly hyper-connected educational ecosystems.

Keywords: Teachers' Role; Psychological Well-Being; Digital Transformation; Social Media; Secondary School Students

INTRODUCTION

The era of the digital revolution has changed almost every aspect of human existence, including education (Pertiwi & Sihotang, 2023). The rapidly developing field of information and communication technology offers a number of advantages for obtaining and sharing information (Mylabathula et al., 2023). Social media is one of the most significant outcomes of this development. Especially for the younger generation growing up amidst the digital boom, platforms like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Twitter have now become an essential part of everyday life (Saleh, 2023). Social media allows students to express themselves, interact with others, and seek information in addition to being a communication tool (Syahraini et al., 2024). They can expand their social networks, access various educational resources, and foster creativity through digital materials using social media. However, excessive social media use can also have negative impacts on psychological development, including stress, identity crises, and digital addiction (Ichsan, 2019).

The changes induced by social media on learners are dynamic and complex, rather than static, arising from multifaceted interactions between internal factors—such as intrinsic motivation, emotional regulation, and self-concept—and external elements in the ever-evolving digital social environment. These psychological dynamics emerge from intense exposure to rapid and massive virtual content, leading students to experience emotional fluctuations, cognitive mindset shifts, and transformations in moral convictions (Twenge & Campbell, 2019). In the era of digital transformation, learners must adapt swiftly to technological advancements; however, despite the ease of connectivity and information access, balancing digital and physical realities remains a profound challenge. Social media addiction, for instance, disrupts academic concentration, undermines face-to-face social

interactions, and triggers psychological issues like social anxiety and fear of missing out (FOMO), as evidenced in recent empirical studies (Orben & Przybylski, 2019a).

Given that adolescence represents a critical phase of character development, self-identity formation, and social exploration, in-depth research on students' psychological dynamics in the social media era is imperative. Social media platforms profoundly shape adolescents' self-perception and social reality construction, where exposure to others' idealized self-presentations can distort body image, erode self-esteem, and elevate depression risks. Meta-analyses indicate that excessive social media use correlates with diminished psychological well-being, particularly among vulnerable youth susceptible to digital peer pressure (Levy & Schiller, 2021).

With a more comprehensive understanding of these psychological elements, educators, parents, and educational institutions can design holistic, evidence-based guidance strategies to balance digital literacy benefits with mental health safeguards. Such approaches include embedding digital media education in the curriculum, fostering self-regulation skills, and fostering multi-stakeholder collaborations to mitigate risks. Ultimately, contemporary educational paradigms must evolve to address these dynamics, ensuring digital transformation serves as a positive catalyst for students' holistic development (UNESCO, 2021).

Several previous studies have highlighted the crucial role of teachers in supporting students' psychological health in the era of digital transformation. Sakila (2024) found that teachers play a role in creating a conducive learning environment, detecting early disorders, and providing emotional support, while schools need prevention and collaboration programs. Zhang and Cao (2025) demonstrated that mind technology effectively optimizes teachers' roles in building students' mental health during pandemic online learning, as evidenced by improved pre- and post-test scores. Siu et al. (2021)'s study revealed that teacher empathy significantly improves student engagement and mental health outcomes through engagement mediation. Marianty et al. (2025)'s study emphasized that teacher digital literacy reduces educational anxiety and improves well-being, with AI as a positive moderator. Saboor et al. (2024) found that administrative support and teacher digital literacy reduce burnout in virtual teaching, thus indirectly supporting student health. Finally, Arifin and Yusuf (2025) demonstrated a strong correlation ($R=0.751$) between teachers' emotional intelligence and digital literacy with teaching performance conducive to student psychological well-being.

This study aims to examine how social media influences the psychological dynamics of students in the era of digital transformation. It specifically focuses on the ways in which virtual interactions can alter students' emotions, behaviors, and self-perceptions. By comprehensively understanding these issues, the research seeks to identify effective educational and psychological strategies that enable students to engage with social media in a prudent, productive, and morally aligned manner, consistent with national moral and educational values.

METHODS

Research methods refer to a systematic set of methods, principles, and procedures that guide the research process to address scientific problems (Creswell, 2013) efficiently. This study adopted a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the insights, meanings, and perceptions related to teachers' roles in supporting students' psychological health in the era of digital transformation—the research design integrated library research and case studies to produce a comprehensive analysis.

Library research was conducted through systematic document analysis of primary and secondary sources, including textbooks, reputable scientific journal articles, and research reports related to student mental health, digital pedagogy, and the role of teachers (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). Meanwhile, case studies focused on one or more representative cases in Indonesian schools implementing digital transformation, using data collection techniques in the form of comprehensive documentation of the dynamics of teacher and student roles. Observations were conducted over several months to capture the dynamics of interactions between teachers and school staff.

Data analysis followed a thematic approach, including transcription, open and axial coding, and source triangulation to ensure validity and reliability (Rosidah et al., 2023). Results are presented descriptively and narratively, with direct quotations to illustrate the findings, providing a holistic picture consistent with the research context and study objectives.

RESULTS

Psychological Dynamics in Students

Psychology, as a broad social science discipline, systematically examines human behavior and mental processes through rigorous empirical testing, critical scrutiny of public claims, and theory-building grounded in scientific evidence. This approach distinguishes psychology from pseudosciences like astrology by emphasizing replicable methodologies such as experimentation, longitudinal observation, and meta-analysis (Mansyur, 2020). In the educational context, psychology plays a central role in human resource development, particularly for learners, by integrating cognitive, affective, and social principles to support psychological well-being amid digital transformation disruptions (Syahraini et al., 2024).

School students, especially adolescents, undergo complex psychological transformations alongside their cognitive and social maturation. Internal factors such as self-confidence, intrinsic motivation, and anxiety dynamically interact with cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling), and social dimensions, collectively shaping students' perceptions of their learning environment (Zeb et al., 2025). In the digital era, identity exploration intensifies through personal interest and competency probing via online platforms, while peer interactions—both in-person and virtual—yield diverse emotional experiences that often trigger self-awareness, confusion, and cyberbullying risks (Nevin, 2022).

These phenomena necessitate sensitive pedagogical interventions to prevent mental disorders like adolescent depression since the pandemic. Academic success and student engagement heavily depend on social support from classmates, teachers, and parents, which acts as a buffer against psychological stressors (Ichsan, 2020). Social support theory indicates that these networks enhance motivation by fulfilling needs for autonomy and competence, while reducing emotional dissatisfaction and learning despair. In the digital transformation context, teachers' roles as facilitators integrating emotional support with digital tools yield up to 25% improvements in academic performance, per meta-analytic studies (Trenerry et al., 2021). Thus, strengthening this support is essential for holistically building students' psychological resilience.

Academic success and overall well-being are profoundly interconnected with mental preparedness, particularly through the cultivation of stress management skills that bolster resilience against academic adversities. Effective emotional regulation reduces the incidence of interpersonal conflicts in classroom settings, as individuals with strong self-control are

less prone to escalations. It is further supported by structured life skills training and counseling programs, where collaborative efforts between educators and psychologists enable early interventions. Routine psychological monitoring ensures swift problem resolution, preventing minor issues from escalating into barriers to learning (Bell et al., 2020). Empirical evidence from a meta-analysis underscores that such interventions can enhance emotional intelligence, directly correlating with improved academic performance and reduced behavioral disruptions.

Students' holistic development hinges on their capacity to recognize and regulate emotions, a skill that can be systematically enhanced through targeted educational exercises. Adolescence, characterized by hormonal fluctuations, often triggers emotional volatility and behavioral impulsivity, manifesting as mood swings and attentional deficits that impair learning processes. A deeper understanding of these dynamics is essential for designing rigorous interventions, as untreated emotional distress exacerbates academic pressures, prompting students to seek social validation as a coping mechanism. Family involvement plays a pivotal role in fostering emotional stability, providing a foundational support system that extends into school environments. Research in school-based emotional learning programs demonstrates that integrating family-oriented components increases students' emotional competence, leading to sustained improvements in self-efficacy and interpersonal relationships (Chapman, 2024).

In resource-constrained educational contexts, such as those in developing regions, the imperative for safe school environments where students can freely express emotions becomes even more critical. High academic stress often amplifies adolescents' need for peer approval, heightening vulnerability to conflicts and mental health challenges if unaddressed. Collaborative strategies, including teacher training in emotional literacy and peer support networks, mitigate these risks while promoting long-term well-being. Longitudinal studies confirm that schools implementing comprehensive socio-emotional programs see a 15-20% reduction in stress-related absenteeism and a corresponding rise in graduation rates (Adesope et al., 2017). Ultimately, prioritizing mental readiness not only elevates individual achievement but also cultivates resilient learning communities.

The Influence of Social Media on Student Psychology

Social media platforms are digital environments that prioritize user presence, enabling engagement in diverse activities, collaboration, and content sharing. As online facilitators, they strengthen social bonds and user interactions by transcending geographical barriers, allowing real-time communication and community building (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). This connective power offers both positive and negative effects: on one hand, it provides rapid, expansive access to information and social networks, fostering self-expression, emotional support, and interpersonal relationships that can enhance mental well-being (Naslund et al., 2020). For example, users often find validation and belonging in online communities, which mitigates feelings of isolation.

However, the dual nature of social media demands cautious use, as its benefits for mental health are counterbalanced by risks such as cyberbullying, misinformation, and addictive behaviors that exacerbate anxiety and depression (Orben & Przybylski, 2019b). Despite these challenges, when harnessed purposefully, social media serves as a catalyst for mental health promotion through peer support groups and awareness campaigns. Research highlights how platforms like Facebook and Instagram enable emotional catharsis and coping mechanisms, particularly during crises, underscoring the need for digital literacy to maximize positives while minimizing harms (Naslund et al., 2020).

In educational contexts, social media amplifies learning by granting access to vast educational resources, expert networks, and collaborative opportunities, empowering students to co-construct knowledge and engage socially (Greenhow & Lewin, 2026). Students connect, network, and communicate seamlessly, shaping their cognitive development and participatory skills—evident in tools like Twitter for real-time discussions or YouTube for tutorials. Empirical studies confirm that guided integration of platforms such as WhatsApp or LinkedIn boosts critical thinking and peer learning, provided educators emphasize ethical usage to avoid distractions (Manca & Ranieri, 2013).

Negative material can lead to anxiety and harsh self-comparison. Higher levels of anxiety, hopelessness, loneliness, and low self-esteem are associated with excessive use. These issues are exacerbated by exposure to negative content and constant comparison with others. Fear of missing out (FOMO) is a syndrome that often leaves people feeling anxious and self-conscious. FOMO is a psychological condition where people experience anxiety about missing out on valuable experiences that others are having. Students who experience

FOMO feel as if they are behind others when it comes to news, fashion, or anything related to social media regarding the latest information or trends. As a result, they end up using social media excessively in an attempt to stay up-to-date (Taswiyah, 2022). Some social media sites, such as Facebook and TikTok, have been linked to higher rates of addiction and poor academic performance. The potential for cyberbullying significantly impacts students' mental health, as they can use social media to attack one another personally. Maintaining a balance between the digital world and reality is crucial. Excessive social media use disrupts study and rest time (Munawaroh & Ichsan, 2024). Constant notifications break focus while studying because gadget dependence triggers sleep disorders and chronic fatigue.

Digital platform-based learning ignites students' motivation by transforming passive consumption into interactive, gamified experiences that align with their digital-native preferences, fostering autonomy and intrinsic drive through personalized content delivery and real-time feedback (Selwyn, 2016). Teachers can harness social media for dynamic discussions, collaborative task-sharing via tools like Google Classroom or Discord, and peer-to-peer knowledge construction, which enhances engagement and deepens understanding beyond traditional classrooms. However, digital literacy emerges as a cornerstone competency, equipping students to critically evaluate information amid rampant misinformation—skills like source verification and algorithmic bias recognition prevent superficial learning and promote analytical thinking (Panda & Kaur, 2024). Parental guidance plays a pivotal role in cultivating a positive digital ecosystem by modeling responsible use, co-creating family media plans, and reinforcing boundaries that nurture emotional resilience alongside academic growth.

To sustain these benefits, implementing screen time limits—such as the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendation of 2 hours daily for recreational use—ensures a healthy balance between focused learning and restorative breaks, mitigating risks like digital fatigue and sleep disruption (Hill et al., 2016). Regular evaluation of usage patterns through tools like screen-time trackers or student self-reflections allows educators and families to refine management strategies dynamically, optimizing effectiveness while addressing individual variances in self-regulation (Ginzel, 2021). This holistic approach, grounded in socio-technical frameworks, not only amplifies learning outcomes but also prepares students for lifelong digital citizenship in an interconnected world.

DISCUSSION

Social Media on Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor Domains in Student Psychology

Academic achievement is significantly predicted by participation in learning activities, which encompass behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects. Academic success is positively correlated with higher levels of engagement (Miao et al., 2025). Social media can be both a source of knowledge and a learning distraction in the cognitive domain. While students' cognitive schemas can be expanded with quick access to a variety of materials, constant notifications have the potential to distort attention and disrupt memory encoding. Educational psychology is recognized worldwide as essential in teacher preparation programs. It emphasizes the importance of good teaching at all levels and is a curriculum requirement evaluated on teacher licensure exams. Students learn how to quickly switch between things through digital multitasking, but often at the expense of deep mental understanding. Therefore, maximizing students' cognitive processes should be a goal of social media management in educational settings (Hasan et al., 2022).

Engagement with social media profoundly influences students' learning motivation and emotional self-regulation, presenting a dual-edged sword where negative exposures like cyberbullying and derogatory comments trigger psychological stress, diminished intrinsic motivation, and increased anxiety (Nafiati, 2021). Conversely, positive content and virtual support networks bolster self-esteem, emotional engagement with academic tasks, and affective bonds, as users seek validation through like-seeking behaviors that, when fulfilled, reinforce a sense of belonging in online learning communities (Nurjadid et al., 2025). This phenomenon underscores the need for affective adaptation in digital environments, where emotional intelligence skills—such as self-awareness and self-regulation—enable students to balance social affirmation with emotional pressures, mitigating risks such as chronic dissatisfaction from unmet validation needs. Interventions promoting digital emotional literacy, including mindfulness apps and guided online discussions, are essential for fostering affective stability and sustained academic drive (Mitsea et al., 2023).

Social media's interactive features also shape the psychomotor domain by enhancing gross and fine motor coordination through technology-driven activities, yet they carry risks of sedentary overuse. Creating artistic content, such as laboratory demonstration videos or instructional films, demands precise hand-eye synchronization, sequential motor planning,

and dexterous device manipulation, thereby enriching fine motor repertoires and practical learning skills (Greenhow et al., 2019). However, addictive scrolling and repetitive touchscreen gestures contribute to reduced physical activity, impairing gross motor fitness, posture, and overall endurance—effects exacerbated during prolonged screen sessions that displace outdoor play. Empirical studies reveal that excessive digital immersion correlates with diminished motor proficiency in youth, highlighting the tension between virtual engagement and physical vitality.

To optimize psychomotor benefits, gamified learning platforms integrate light physical movements with educational content, such as motion-based apps (e.g., Pokémon GO adaptations for science quests), promoting high-motivation skill development while countering monotony-induced decline (Hamari et al., 2014). This balanced design hinges on adaptive digital activities that blend cognitive stimulation with physical prompts, ensuring social media augments rather than supports holistic motor growth. Regular assessments of usage patterns, coupled with hybrid interventions such as device-integrated movement breaks, empower educators to harness these tools effectively for psychomotor advancement.

The Role of Teachers in Educating Students about Psychological Health

Teachers play a pivotal role in fostering students' mental growth within school environments, nurturing personality development and social values by acting as mentors and facilitators (Saifunnur et al., 2025). Educational psychology equips educators with essential knowledge to understand learning processes, integrating cognitive, emotional, and social elements that influence student outcomes, thereby enabling tailored, efficient teaching methods (O'Donnell et al., 2025). This expertise allows teachers to decode individual learning styles, anticipate barriers like anxiety or motivation dips, and design interventions that promote holistic growth. For instance, by applying principles from Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, teachers scaffold emotional and cognitive challenges, transforming classrooms into supportive spaces where students thrive academically and personally.

Blending organized theoretical knowledge with flexible classroom practices, educational psychology empowers students to build competencies while fostering personal and professional development. Insights from interviews with guidance counselors (*Guru BK*) at *SMP Badan Perguruan Indonesia* reveal four key school programs: first, fostering collaboration between counseling teachers and homeroom advisors to address student issues and enhance self-understanding through collaborative learning, which boosts

socialization skills and enables early behavioral observation for swift emotional interventions (Saifunnur et al., 2025). The second program involves seminars on psychology for students and teachers, featuring experts like psychologists and doctors to demystify mental health. These initiatives prevent emotional escalation and cultivate proactive mental resilience.

The third program emphasizes creating psychologically balanced learning environments through stress modeling and conflict resolution demonstrations, where teachers serve as exemplars in resilience-building, offering practical exercises that provide positive feedback and elevate student self-esteem. Professional teacher training amplifies this capacity, ensuring educators integrate affective support seamlessly (Aithal & Aithal, 2024). Educational psychology's core aim—to enhance teaching and learning—merges in-school and out-of-school approaches with psychological concepts, promoting interactive methods like small-group discussions that create safe spaces for sharing experiences and emotional engagement.

Active teacher involvement drives the success of psychological guidance, with lesson plans embedding character development to facilitate emotional investment in learning. Continuous monitoring assesses guidance impacts on mental well-being, supported by school management for sustainability. The fourth program highlights building supportive environments via ongoing evaluation, ensuring pedagogical strategies synergize with psychological principles, affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains for balanced growth (Álvarez-Sánchez et al., 2024).

This holistic synergy, enriched by collaboration among teachers, psychologists, and parents, produces effective school atmospheres. Empirical evidence underscores that such integrated approaches reduce behavioral issues by 20-30% and improve academic engagement, preparing students for lifelong well-being (Durlak et al., 2011). By prioritizing digital emotional literacy and adaptive practices, schools mitigate modern stressors, guaranteeing comprehensive development.

CONCLUSION

This study elucidates the intricate interplay of internal factors (self-efficacy, motivation, anxiety) and external influences (family support, peer dynamics, school environment) in shaping students' psychological dynamics, exacerbated by adolescent

hormonal shifts that necessitate structured psychosocial interventions to sustain emotional stability and academic focus. Regular monitoring and interdisciplinary collaboration between educators and psychologists emerge as pivotal for designing responsive, preventive counseling programs that foster resilience. Social media exerts a dual impact across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains: while rapid access to educational content enriches knowledge schemas and fine motor skills via creative production, persistent notifications and FOMO phenomena risk attentional fragmentation, heightened anxiety, and diminished gross motor activity. Integrating digital literacy and screen-time management into curricula is thus imperative to harness educational affordances while mitigating psychological risks. Teachers, as psychological facilitators, optimize outcomes through cooperative learning, emotion regulation training, and affirmative feedback, bolstered by partnerships with counselors and parents to cultivate supportive ecosystems. This pedagogical-psychological synergy yields holistic, adaptive school climates that sustainably maximize student potential. Future research should longitudinally evaluate tailored interventions in diverse cultural contexts, including Islamic education settings, to refine these strategies amid evolving digital landscapes.

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