**Participant Information Sheet**

**Researchers:**

This study is being conducted by a team of researchers from The Australian National University in the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health and Research School of Medicine and Psychology. The team is led by Oli Ahmed under the supervision of Professor Nicolas Cherbuin.

**Project Title:** Social media use, sleep, and mental health: The eMEDIATE study

**Ethics Protocol Number:** 2022/743

**General Outline of the Project:**

* **Description and Methodology:** The main aim of this research is to assess the relationships between social media use, sleep, mental health and wellbeing over time. A further aim is to explore the contribution of other factors that may play a role in these relationships.   
     
  This study is a longitudinal study, comprising an initial 20-30 minute survey, with three follow-up surveys at three-month intervals (nine months in total). You may be invited to participate in further follow-ups if you consent to be recontacted at the end of the study but this will be completely optional. In each survey, you will be asked a number of questions about your social media use, sleep habits, and mental health and wellbeing. We will also ask some questions about your circumstances such as age, gender, socio-demographics, health status and history, height, weight, and current treatment for depression and anxiety to determine how these factors may influence the relationships investigated and to get a more generalizability.   
     
  In order to contact you for the 3 follow-up surveys, which are part of the present study, and link up your data across the surveys, we will ask for your name and preferred contact (email and mobile phone number). This information will be held on secured Qualtrics servers (the online survey platform) alongside your survey responses. However, for archiving your personal details will be stored securely separately from the research data, and it will not be used for any other purpose or disclosed to anyone else.
* **Participants:** Participants will be a sample of approximately 500 Australian and Bangladeshi social media users aged 18 to 30 years who have been using social media for one year or more.
* **Use of Data and Feedback:**The results of the study will appear in scientific publications and research theses, as well as scientific conference presentations and academic seminars. The findings will also be shared via short videos over social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, etc.). Information about the study’s outcomes will be posted on The Australian National University website (https://nceph.anu.edu.au/research/projects/social-media-use-sleep-problems-and-mental-health-emediate-study) by December 2024 (approximately).

**Participant Involvement:**

* **Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal**: Your decision to participate in this research is entirely voluntary. You may decline to answer a question by choosing the "prefer not to say" option or moving on to the next question. You can leave the study at any point. You can also request that the already collected research data be deleted by communicating this wish in writing to the research team, otherwise we will assume you agree for it to be used in the research even you have only completed parts of the four surveys. You will be able to withdraw your data until the time the work is prepared for publication (approximately May 2024). If you miss the first or second follow-up survey, you will still be contacted for to participation in later surveys.
* **What does participation in the research entail?** In the first survey, you will be asked to complete a series of questions that ask about: (a) personal and demographic information (e.g., name, contact, age, gender, marital status); (b) social media use; (c) mental health (depression, anxiety, well-being); (d) sleep quality; (e) motives for using social media; (f) your experience of using social media; and (g) health status and history (e.g., health status, height, weight, current treatment/ management for depression and anxiety). The content of follow-up surveys will be similar.
* **Location and Duration:** The survey can be completed online in a location of your choosing, anywhere within Australia or Bangladesh. The study is a longitudinal study, comprising an initial 20-30 minute survey, with three follow-up surveys at three-month intervals, equating to a total time commitment of 80 – 120 minutes over nine months. While we recommend each survey to be completed in a single session, it will be possible to resume where you left off should you have to stop. It is also possible you will be invited for further follow-ups if you accept to be recontacted at the end of the study.
* **Risks:** The questions we ask about mental health and sleep may cause feelings of discomfort. If you feel distressed by any of the questions, please discontinue the survey and contact relevant support services in your area. **These may include your GP or a mental health support service, or community services like Lifeline on 13 11 14.** Please note that although low the risk of data breach via data interception or cyberattack can never be completely excluded. However, both the Australian National University and Qualtrics have strong data security protocols to ensure data security.
* **Benefits:** The main benefit of the study is likely to consist in advancing our knowledge of how social media use may impact sleep quality and mental health. While it is unlikely that taking part in the study will directly benefit participants, they may indirectly benefit through greater awareness in the community of the potential impact of social media use on mental health and wellbeing. Moreover, the findings will be shared via social media, and other outlets and thus may enhance participants’ understanding of how their use of this technology may be impacting their health and sleep. In addition, the findings of this study are intended to be of practical use to health professionals, policy makers and other stakeholders. Benefits from our improved understanding will therefore flow broadly to the Australian and Bangladeshi communities, with potentially specific implications for clinical practice and global mental health policy.
* **Implications for Participation:** Participation in this study will have no substantive implications since it is not related to coursework and/or employment requirements and participants will be free to discontinue the study at any time without any negative consequences.

**Exclusion criteria**:

* **Participant Limitation:** Participants must: (a) be aged between 18 and 30 years old; (b) have used social media for more than one year; (c) live in Australia or Bangladesh, and (d) be able to read and write in English/ Bangla well enough to complete the survey.

**Confidentiality:**

* **Confidentiality:** Your responses will be protected as far as the law allows. The information you provide will be kept confidential and de-identified. Your identity information will be stored separately from other data and only the research team will have access to the files containing your identity information. The data you provide will be used only for research purposes.   
      
  Any theses and scientific publications arising from the study will not include any identifying information about participants. The data may be made available to other scientific researchers, including researchers not on the original research team and new research students who wish to undertake additional analysis of the data that is consistent with the original aims of this project. The data may also be made available without any identifying information in a scientific repository as if often required. In data made available to other researchers or via scientific repositories, and in theses and scientific publications, individual participants will be referred to only by a participant code (e.g. random number-letter string, such as Zky789nS2, or a number, such as "participant 1").

**Privacy Notice:**

The ANU Privacy Policy is available at <https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_010007> and it contains information about how a person can:

* Access or seek correction to their personal information;
* Complain about a breach of an Australian Privacy Principle by ANU, and how ANU will handle the complaint.

**Data Storage:**

Your identity data and de-identified data will be stored separately on ANU databases. Identity data will be stored in a password protected file and restricted access folder and will be only accessible by the research team. The personally identifying data will be deleted at the conclusion of the study, unless you have provided your consent to be recontacted for future follow-up/ research. The de-identified data will be kept for at least 5 years and potentially indefinitely for research purposes. Your data will also be stored on the Qualtrics server during the data collection but will only be used and accessible by the research team.

**Queries and Concerns:**

* **Contact Details for More Information:**

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**Ethics Committee Clearance:**

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol 2022/743). If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

Ethics Manager  
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee  
The Australian National University  
Telephone: +61 2 6125 3427  
Email: [Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au](mailto:Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au)