Youth and their Current Concerns – Social Work and Media as Tools of Intervention

H. Tkacova (Hedviga Tkacova)[1], M. Pavlikova (Martina Pavlikova)[2]

[1] Faculty of Arts and Letters, The Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Ruzomberok, SK

[2] Faculty of Arts, Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra, Nitra, SK

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E-mail address:

hedwiga.tkacova@gmail.com

Reprint address:

Hedviga Tkacova
Department of journalism, The Catholic University in Ruzomberok
Hrabovska cesta 1/A
034 01 Ruzomberok
Slovakia

Abstract:

Adolescents undergo numerous transitional life phases and processes that gradually shape them into adult members of society. These processes are more complex than they may appear, as they involve biological maturity and social and psychological development, which unfolds in close connection with the surrounding environment. During adolescence, young people experience physical maturation, identity formation, and establishing their value systems. At the same time, they face external pressures such as the need to fit in with peers, conflicts between personal values and societal expectations, and the demand to adhere to social norms. Social work interventions aim to help adolescents overcome barriers that may hinder their full participation in society while addressing their specific needs.

Using the qualitative research method of focus groups, this paper seeks to identify the current, specific concerns of adolescents. The discussion based on research findings highlights: 1) opportunities for social work interventions and 2) a reflection on the role of media in supporting social work in addressing adolescent concerns. The study of adolescents' current worries and the realities discussed in this paper gain significance not only regarding the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic but also in light of the ongoing war in Ukraine, both of which profoundly impact the youth under investigation.

Introduction to the topic

In this paper, the term "youth" refers to adolescent individuals—high school students aged 15–19 years, encompassing the period of middle and late adolescence (1). To provide their sociological characterization, it is essential first to consider the imprecise and diverse differences (biological, psychological, psychosocial, sociocultural, and others) among individuals within this age group (2,3). In other words, today's youth differ in their perspectives on the world and their future and, similarly, in the enthusiasm they engage in addressing public, societal, or global issues (4). These differences are shaped by their characteristics and the broader social and cultural context in which they grow up.

In today's social environment, recent years have seen numerous unpredictable changes, among which the most significant are the global COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing war in Ukraine. According to experts, the pandemic disrupted the daily lives of young people, introducing new challenges in areas such as education, socialization, and mental health (5,6,7,8). Even the post-pandemic period, as indicated by available research, continues to affect the emotional and psychological well-being of young people (9), increasing the pressure on their mental health (10) and contributing to a rise in loneliness (11). Additionally, the war in Ukraine, taking place near Slovakia's borders, has been reported by experts to impact the mental and emotional health of young people (12), their ability to manage emotions (13), cope with stress and uncertainty (14), and even influence how they perceive their future (15).

The outlined social contexts—the pandemic, the post-pandemic period, and the war in

a neighbouring country—create a complex social situation requiring a sensitive approach and targeted interventions. These should aim to help young people overcome challenges and personal fears, ultimately guiding them toward personal balance, resilience, and full participation in society.

Shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic and amid the ongoing war in Ukraine, research into how today's youth perceive the social situation is highly relevant. Through qualitative research, this paper examines the most significant concerns identified in the adolescent group (n = 12) using the Focus Group method. Based on the research findings, the subsequent discussion focuses on presenting opportunities for social work interventions and reflecting on the role of media in supporting social work in addressing adolescents' concerns. This paper's methodology is grounded in an interdisciplinary approach that considers insights from social work, media studies, psychology, and sociology. This enables the authors to bridge existing knowledge with practical experience, providing a comprehensive perspective on how social work and media can cooperate to address the current concerns of youth effectively.

Social functioning of adolescents as a challenge for social work intervention

Generally speaking, dynamic approaches can be utilized to support individuals with social assistance (16). Social work typically focuses on individuals in adverse life situations or harmful environments, addressing challenges that hinder their full development and integration into society. Social work becomes a key tool not only for

resolving the immediate issues faced by young people but also for shaping their ability to cope with challenges specific to their age group and social context. In other words, social work intervention with today's youth is significant because it purposefully considers and respects their differences, circumstances, and environments while simultaneously addressing their shared characteristics.

Several common characteristics of the social functioning of today's adolescents also pose a challenge for social work intervention, inter alia:

a) Adolescents are biologically on the path to adulthood but remain socially and economically dependent – Adolescents are in a phase where their bodies and brains are intensely developing, meaning they are biologically moving toward full adulthood. However, they remain socially and economically dependent on their immediate environment, often their parents. This dependency provides a "protective shield" from full responsibility for their lives but can also limit their ability to develop autonomy and self-determination. Social work can create support that helps young people navigate the transition from childhood to adulthood, addressing the concerns that arise during this transition.

b) Adolescents have limited responsibilities and a degree of carefree freedom – At this stage of life, young people typically do not yet have firmly defined (adult) social roles, such as parent, spouse, or employee. This situation provides them with relative freedom in decision-making, but it can also lead to feelings of insecurity as they face the pressure of shaping and securing their future. Social work interventions can support youth in finding a balance between freedom (without specific responsibilities) and responsibility.

c) Adolescents are in the process of social maturation – The adolescent period is crucial for shaping values, attitudes, goals, and behavioural patterns that individuals carry into adulthood. The socialization is influenced by various factors, primarily family, school, peer groups, and mass media (17). Social workers can assist young people in identifying and strengthening positive behavioural patterns that support their healthy personal and social development and, similarly, their increasingly mature socialization.

d) Adolescents actively perceive changes in their social position – Young people are aware of their gradual transformation from social recipients to active participants in societal affairs. However, this shift is not simple and can lead to feelings of tension or pressure from sudden responsibility. Social work methods provide support for youth in adapting to their new roles and expectations.

e) The influence of the immediate social environment on maturation – The process of social maturation in youth is heavily influenced by their immediate environment (i.g. the influence of family, school, first jobs, peer groups, or mass media). These factors collectively shape not only new experiences but also the value system of youth, their communication methods, and their ability to resolve conflicts. Social workers can identify critical aspects of these environments and their impacts while supporting young people in a positive development, especially if these environments are dysfunctional or even toxic.

f) Others.

The life situation of adolescents and the media

The media are an important source of interpretation of social reality (18), as they offer a variety of content types, have their own specific set of expressive tools, and contribute to shaping public life (19).

The influence of the media on the younger generation is undeniable, as the media shapes attitudes, values, and opinions from an early age (20). For adolescents, however, media play an even more significant role because this age group is among the most active users of modern technologies (21,22,23,24). Moreover, young people not only passively consume media content but also actively participate in creating their own media products (i.e., they actively create and share information in various formats—textual, visual, or audiovisual), which provides them with new opportunities for self-expression

and communication. This also allows adolescents to navigate the complex media landscape more effectively and reflect on societal events.

Adolescence is characterized by a search for identity, and therefore, young people often intuitively seek media that reflect their interests and needs. At the same time, they usually reject authoritative interference in what they consume, as such approaches do not respect their individuality. For them, the media represents a space for self-realization, finding role models, and integrating into social groups that have similar values or lifestyles. Social networks, streaming platforms, and interactive media provide adolescents with the opportunity to experiment with their identity in a relatively safe environment. Despite this, the relationship with media is often accompanied by risks, such as uncritical adoption of opinions, idealization of the world presented in the media, time-wasting, or exposure to inappropriate content.

The research observations in this age group are not positive either. According to a recent study, almost half of 15 to 20-year-olds spend more than 8 hours a day with a different media (25). They are also bombarded daily with hundreds of notifications on their smartphones (26). Over the long term, it has also been shown that using media is the leading activity for young people aside from sleeping (27,28,29,30). A vast amount of research also warns about the impact of media on the mental health of youth (31,32,33).

Moreover, while the media provide young people with entertainment, information, and education, they expose them to intense marketing pressure (34). Advertisements, social networks, video games, and content specifically created for teenagers make young people an attractive target group (35). This constant influx of stimuli and information often becomes a natural part of their lives, making it harder for them to recognize manipulation or critically assess the content they consume (36,37).

In this context, many other examples could be discussed. It is therefore not surprising that the media and their influence on children and adolescents are generally topics that meet with widespread negativity, addressing the need to "mitigate potential health risks and foster appropriate media use" (38, p.1) and/or "evidence-based health risks associated with unsupervised, unlimited media access and use by children and adolescents" (39, p.3). It is worth noting that the risks associated with new media use have recently prompted the emergence of many initiatives focusing on regulating internet content (40,41,42).

We can see that "the media bring a wide range of social influencing opportunities, both in positive and negative directions" (43, p.15).

Methodology

Research Design

This research aims to identify and analyse the most significant concerns of adolescents in the current social context. The research focuses on gaining in-depth knowledge about adolescents' experiences, opinions, and needs, with the primary data collection method being the qualitative Focus Group method.

Research Method and its Application – Research Process

The Focus Group method involves a small, pre-defined group of people based on demographic characteristics, who answer questions in a moderated setting (44). The method is considered effective in presenting the variation of viewpoints held within a population (45).

The Focus Group method is suitable for obtaining in-depth qualitative data because it allows respondents to freely express their opinions and experiences in an environment that supports open discussion. According to experts, it provides "finer and more natural feedback than individual interviews" (44) because "it utilizes mutual communication between the research participants" (46).

The interviews with 12 participants were designed as semi-structured interviews, lasting 90 minutes, and were conducted offline. After introducing the research goal and familiarizing the participants with the discussion rules, including ensuring anonymity, the topic of the interview was presented.

After the meeting, a summary of the discussion was provided, and the collected data was

confirmed by the respondents, including additional space for any individual comments or opinions.

The discussion was conducted empathetically to ensure a safe environment for expressing views.

Criteria for Selecting the Research Sample

The research took into account three criteria for selecting the research sample:
a) Age of respondents: 15–19 years;
b) Equal representation of both genders (6 boys and 6 girls);
c) Diversity of environment: respondents come from schools in various regions of Slovakia (urban and rural areas).

Data Analysis and Coding

The concerns and challenges faced by the adolescents studied were purposefully divided into six research areas during the interview:
1) Personal psychological concerns;
2) Concerns related to societal events (e.g., war, pandemic, etc.);
3) Concerns within the family environment;
4) Concerns in the school environment;
5) Concerns related to media usage;
6) Other concerns of adolescents.

The thematic analysis process involved data coding, identification of recurring themes, and categorization of key topics. The research took place in October 2024.

Results

Within the six research areas, the respondents expressed several concerns. The most common concerns were:

1) Own psychological concerns of adolescents

a) Feelings of inadequacy – Adolescents often experience uncertainty linked to comparing themselves to their peers and feeling that they are not good enough to achieve their dreams. Social media plays a significant role in deepening these feelings by exposing adolescents to idealized images of others' success. The respondents spoke about comparing themselves to others and about the "happiness of others". One respondent mentioned: "I always compare myself to others on Instagram and feel like their lives are better than mine. Their pictures often depress me because I don't go to the same places or have as many friends."

b) Fear of failure – Pressure to succeed in various aspects of life (school, relationships, sports performance, etc.) leads respondents to increased anxiety and concerns about not meeting the expectations of those around them. The greatest pressure is perceived by parents and peers. One respondent said: "I'm really scared that I won't be able to get good grades in my final exams because it's expected that I'll go to university. My parents are nervous about it and always remind me that without good results, I won't be able to make a good future for myself."

c) Loneliness – Many respondents feel lonely, despite being surrounded by people. According to the respondents, loneliness is heightened by misunderstandings and conflicts with parents, as well as by the "joyful statuses of friends on social media." One respondent shared: "Even though I have friends, I often feel like no one understands me. Sometimes I look at my friends' posts on social media, where they're smiling or having fun, and it makes me feel even more alone."

2) Concerns of adolescents related to current global events

a) The war in Ukraine – The surveyed adolescents express fear regarding the escalation of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, coupled with empathy for refugees. According to the respondents, the topic of war also affects the atmosphere in schools. One respondent said: "I'm really scared that the war could get closer to us. We keep talking about it at school, and I'm afraid that it could happen to us too."

b) The Third World War – The respondents express concerns about the escalation of global conflicts (such as in Ukraine, Gaza, and the relations between China and Taiwan). They fear for their social lives, education, future, and overall stability in the world. One respondent mentioned: "I'm worried that the

conflict between the USA and China could escalate into something more serious. I watch the news about the war in Gaza and also read about what's happening in Taiwan, and I don't know what's ahead of us."

3) Concerns of adolescents in the family environment

a) Escalation of family conflicts – Disagreements between parents and frequent conflicts with siblings are mentioned as sources of "everyday stress". There are also concerns about how to resolve these conflicts. One respondent shared: "My parents argue a lot, and I don't know how to help them. Sometimes I feel it would be better if they weren't together, but then I'm scared about what would happen to me and my siblings."

b) Financial "problems in the family – Some respondents express concerns about financial difficulties within the family. They feel uncertainty and fear for their future. One adolescent stated: "Sometimes mom and dad argue about money. I'm scared that we won't have enough money for everything we need, and that our lives will get worse."

4) Concerns in the School Environment

a) Academic Pressure – The demands to achieve high academic performance and the fear of failure are among the most commonly mentioned concerns. Respondents also fear unexpected situations that may impact their academic performance, such as deteriorating health, parental divorce, etc. Related to academic performance, doubts about their abilities and fears of failure arise: "I'm afraid I won't be able to get into university because I don't have enough time to study, and some subjects are hard for me", said one of the adolescents.

b) Peer Relationships – Adolescents in the research group speak about their integration into the peer group. They see having brand-name clothing, a high-quality smartphone, a laptop, and many friends on social media as essential to being "in." They also express concerns about bullying, even though they "don't experience bullying themselves, but

see it happening around them." "Sometimes I feel like I have to have brand-name things for others to accept me," says one respondent. Another adds, "At school, I see how some of my peers are laughed at because of how they look or what they wear."

5) Concerns related to media use

a) Excessive time online – Many respondents acknowledge the excessive time they spend daily on social media. They also feel they spend too much time watching series on Netflix, with the inability to stop after just one episode. One respondent shared, "I spend much more time on social media daily than I should. I watch one story, then another, and before I know it, it takes hours." Another adolescent added, "Sometimes I feel completely absorbed by what I see on Instagram. I don't even notice that I've been scrolling on my phone for two hours straight."

b) Online self-presentation and reputation – Respondents express concerns about their "image on social media". The pressure to present an idealized version of themselves online causes them stress and feelings of inadequacy. One adolescent explained, "Every day, I try to make my Instagram profile perfect, to look like I have everything under control, but in reality, I feel very drained, and I'm getting tired of it all."

6) Other concerns of adolescents

a) Lack of free time – The perception of constant performance pressure causes frustration within the research group due to the lack of time for relaxation or personal interests. One respondent shared, "I wake up in the morning, go to school, then to extracurricular activities, and in the evening, I have to study. Sometimes, I wish I had more time to relax or do what I enjoy." Another added, "It's true, even weekends aren't enough for me to recharge, and then Monday comes again, and the whole cycle starts... I hate Mondays!"

b) Uncertain future – Respondents express concerns about choosing the right school and future career opportunities. As one respondent put it, "I'm afraid I'll make the wrong

decision when choosing a school, and then it will be hard to find a good job. My parents constantly remind me that choosing the right school is crucial for my future." Additionally, there are some concerns about future pandemics and lockdowns. Adolescents in the research group agree that "The lockdown was too long, and although they had some good moments during it, they would rather not experience it again."

Discussion

In short, the research findings suggest that the twelve adolescents examined face many complex life situations that significantly affect their mental well-being. Among the most prominent concerns are feelings of inadequacy, often resulting from comparisons with peers on social media and the pressure to meet external expectations. These pressures are compounded by fear of failure, whether in school, sports, or relationships. Additionally, many adolescents feel lonely, despite being surrounded by people. Feelings of loneliness and isolation are deepened by misunderstandings from parents or the "perfect" posts shared by friends on social media.

In addition, respondents' mental health is also influenced by broader societal concerns, such as the war in Ukraine and the fear of escalating global conflicts, which threaten their sense of security. These concerns are further amplified by familial issues, primarily conflicts between parents, financial difficulties, and pressure from parents to achieve academically. In the school environment, adolescents experience fears of bullying and the need to fit in with their peer group (47) through social symbols such as brand-name clothing or modern technologies, particularly smartphones. Excessive use of social media, the need for online self-presentation, and the lack of free time further exacerbate their current sense of exhaustion and uncertainty. Together, these factors create a complex picture of the challenges adolescents face today.

In light of these findings, we want to consider the possibilities for social work interventions. Since new media, particularly social media, emerged as a significant factor contributing to adolescents' concerns, our next focus will be on reflecting on the role of media in supporting social work efforts to address adolescent anxieties.

Discussion on the possibilities of social work intervention

In considering the possibilities for social work intervention, we identify several key methods that social workers can use when interacting with adolescents. The following methods might be useful:

1. *Friendly conversations between the social worker and the adolescent* – These conversations can be focused on problematic topics (e.g., dysfunctional family environment, bullying in the school setting, replacing binge-watching series with meaningful leisure activities, loneliness, fear of failure, comparison with others on social networks, etc.) while aiming at collaborative thinking about alternative solutions that reduce or even eliminate the adolescent's current concerns. The social worker could work with the adolescent to find realistic ways to tackle these challenges—such as creating a stress management plan during preparation for finals or recommending healthy alternatives for online time.

2. *Individual psychosocial support for adolescents in difficult life situations or stages* – The social worker can provide adolescents with a safe space to express their feelings and concerns, helping them to understand their problems and strengthen their ability to cope with difficult situations. This form of support includes active listening, building self-confidence, and adopting strategies for stress management or conflict resolution. The intervention can be crucial in cases where adolescents face issues such as family conflicts, the loss of a loved one, bullying, loneliness, or academic pressure.

3. *Targeted leisure and developmental activities focused on life skills for youth* – Leisure and developmental activities, including experiential activities and programs focused on life skills help young people live a higher quality of life. Examples include learning to get along well with others, studying effectively, responsibly completing tasks, managing stress caused by living in a challenging

environment, etc. Organizing one's activities can also significantly reduce adolescents' concerns about the lack of free time.

4. *Organizing workshops and discussion forums (offline and online)* – The goal of social work activities is also prevention and preventive actions. While a young person's resilience is influenced by inherent traits (personality), acquired traits and skills significantly impact their perception and actions. The interaction between the social worker and the adolescent focuses on building resilience. Meeting content focuses on key topics such as maintaining physical and mental health, resisting peer pressure, avoiding manipulation, and refraining from risky behaviour.

6. *Family interventions and mediation* – Since family conflicts and financial problems are significant sources of stress, the social worker needs to support improving communication among family members (48, 49). Mediation can help parents and children identify and alleviate tensions. In the case of financial difficulties, providing families with advice about available social services and economic support options is appropriate.

7. *Prevention of social media addiction* – Social workers can organize programs aimed at reducing excessive use of social networks and electronic devices. A part of social media addiction prevention includes education on digital hygiene and, similarly, supporting a healthy lifestyle, which includes physical activity, adequate sleep, and regular offline communication.

Discussion on the role of media in supporting social work

Media play a key role in the lives of adolescents, as they not only provide information and entertainment but serve also as a platform for young people to build and express their identities. In the digital age, where access to media is nearly unlimited, young people are exposed to an intense influence of diverse content, which significantly impacts their mental well-being (50), wellbeing (51), values (52), opinions (53), behaviour (54), and social relationships (55).

Given these challenges, media can also serve as an effective tool for social workers, who can specifically address the concerns of adolescents identified in the research.

In addressing the concerns of adolescents, media can be an effective tool and aid for social workers. Empirical research and practice suggest that media are an integral part of the daily lives of today's adolescents (56), and many social work interventions cannot do without them. In addition to personal, friendly conversations between the social worker and adolescent or individual psychosocial support in difficult life situations or phases, other intervention possibilities in social work expand with media use. These interventions include leisure and developmental activities, experiential activities, workshops, discussion forums, and online meetings.

In the context of social work, it is essential to consider the risks and the potential of media as an auxiliary tool for intervention. In this regard, media can serve as:

1. *Support for education* – Spreading awareness and organizing preventive workshops or discussion forums focused on handling peer pressure, etc. Social workers can create interactive content or online campaigns to inform young people about managing their online time effectively and provide tools for coping with negative emotions related to the digital environment.

2. *Support for resilience* – Media can be used to build resilience against manipulation on social networks or address issues related to academic pressure. This helps address concerns such as fear of failure or loneliness, which are often exacerbated by intense exposure to idealized images of life on social media.

3. *Support for interpersonal communication* – In the online environment, where adolescents often feel lonely despite extensive networks of contacts, media can facilitate interactions and relationships. Social workers can organize online group meetings focused on building community and sharing experiences. Video calls or discussion platforms can be used to provide individual support, connecting with adolescents in their natural

environment and addressing their concerns about social isolation. Creating supportive online communities can also be an effective remedy for loneliness or shyness, which is significant during adolescence.

4. *Support for self-realization and entertainment* – Media can also support leisure and experiential activities that help adolescents reduce stress and strengthen their skills. Interactive games or creative online platforms can aid in developing life skills while providing a space to express individuality without the pressure to achieve "perfection", which many adolescents feel on social media. These activities can also help alleviate concerns about being judged by others.

5. *Support for mental health* – Social workers can use media to spread reliable information on managing anxiety and stress, organize online mindfulness courses, or encourage adolescents to practice digital hygiene. This approach can reduce concerns like fear of failure or constant comparison with others on social media, which are increasingly common issues among young people.

6. *Support for the family environment* – Social workers should promote improved communication within families where conflicts and financial issues pose significant stressors. Mediation can help reduce tensions among family members, and counseling on available social services can ease the burden on adolescents and their families. These forms of assistance can also take place online, which may facilitate positive decision-making regarding accepting help from a social worker. In this way, social workers can directly address adolescents' concerns arising from family problems.

7. *Support and prevention of media addiction* – Another important aspect is the prevention of media addiction. Social workers can organize programs focusing on the risk of excessive use of digital devices and social media, promoting a healthy lifestyle, physical activity, adequate sleep, and balanced offline communication. These programs can be valuable in reducing adolescents' concerns about their mental health due to exces-

sive use of technology, a phenomenon that experts have long warned about (57).

Conclusion

Adolescents share several common characteristics in their social functioning, yet they also represent a group marked by significant individual differences shaped by biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors. These common traits and differences influence their view of each other and, similarly, also their perspective on the world or its future, such as their perceptions of social, ecological, or global issues. Moreover, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and amidst the current war in Ukraine, research into the perception of the social situation—specifically the ongoing thoughts and concerns—of today's youth proves even more essential (58, 59).

Using a qualitative method, Focus Group, we aimed to identify the most significant concerns of adolescents within research sample. The adolescents most frequently expressed concerns that affect their daily lives. A sense of inadequacy, supported by idealized images on social media, leads to a decrease in self-confidence and an increase in anxiety. Fear of academic failure stems from the strong pressure to achieve success, primarily coming from parents and school. Family conflicts, such as frequent arguments between parents, cause adolescents long-term stress and feelings of helplessness. Concerns related to constant media use, especially excessive time spent online, are linked to an inability to control habits and feelings of frustration. These issues are exacerbated by the perception of a lack of free time, as adolescents face daily obligations, and in their words "without the opportunity for rest and regeneration".

Less frequent but still significant concerns include fear of failure, expressed as anxiety about not meeting expectations, and feelings of loneliness, often caused by misunderstanding from loved ones or the false portrayal of "happy lives" on social media. Financial problems within the family, experienced by some respondents, evoke feelings of uncertainty and concerns about maintaining living standards and family peace. In the school environment, adolescents mention the pressure to fit in with their peers, where material

symbols, such as branded clothing and smartphones, play a role. Concerning media, they feel stressed by the constant pressure to present themselves perfectly online. Lastly, the Focus group members also expressed uncertainty regarding future careers and employment, as well as concerns about new global challenges, such as future pandemics and global conflicts, which negatively impact their sense of safety and their overall perception of the future.

In the discussion section, we interpreted these concerns in connection with adolescents' life situations as challenges for social work interventions and considered them also as opportunities for media, which can be perceived as valuable tools in supporting social work in the examined issue (60, 61).

Social work interventions encompass a wide range of methods aimed at supporting adolescents in their everyday challenges. We believe that key approaches include friendly conversations, which provide space to address problematic topics and explore alternative solutions, and individual psychosocial support, which strengthens self-confidence and the ability to cope with difficult situations (59, 60). A crucial part of the intervention is also targeted leisure and developmental activities that enhance life skills and help young people effectively navigate challenging environments (62). The preventive nature of social work is reflected in organizing workshops and discussion forums that build resilience among adolescents and offer practical advice on maintaining both physical and mental health, coping with peer pressure, and preventing risky behaviours. Additionally, it is important to include family interventions and mediation, which help resolve family conflicts and financial difficulties. Social workers should support improved communication within families and provide advice on available social services in case of financial hardship. Finally, a key aspect is media addiction prevention, which involves educating on digital hygiene and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Programs focused on balanced media usage, physical activity, adequate sleep, and offline communication can improve adolescents' mental well-being (63, 64).

We are convinced that when considering social work interventions, which can significantly contribute to addressing adolescents' concerns and supporting their mental well-being, media support must also be part of the discussion. As emphasized earlier in the text, not only numerous studies but also our research findings confirm that new social media, particularly social networks, play a significant role in adolescents' lives, as well as in deepening their concerns, such as feelings of inadequacy, loneliness, or pressure to present oneself perfectly. However, social media not only represent a source of problems but—given their popularity among young people—also provide a space that could be effectively utilized for intervention and support. (65,66,67)

Moreover, media, as a communication tool, has the potential to become an active partner in social work, either through spreading awareness or creating supportive online communities. The reflection on the role of media in our contribution does not represent a marginal topic but an essential part of thinking about comprehensive adolescent support, which includes direct work in the field and, similarly, the strategic use of media to support social work interventions. In this way, we aim to emphasize that social work and media can form a synergy, enabling a more effective response to the challenges and concerns currently faced by adolescents (68, 69,70).

Acknowledgement

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