Academe *Journal of Education & Psychology* *ISSN: 2249-040X*
Volume-15, Issue-2, Year-2025 (July-December) *Peer Reviewed & Refereed Journal (IF: 6.25)*
PP: 270-275 *Journal Website www.academejournal.in*

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON MENTAL HEALTH: A STUDY ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Ramawatar Sah

Research Scholar, University Department of Psychology,

Lalit Narayan Mithila University Darbhanga

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to understand the mental health of college students and also to examine the role of social media in influencing mental health. With the influx of internet services for the common man, the use of social media coverage has enormously widened. Therefore, several researchers have studied the impact of social media and its applications on various aspects of our mental and physical health. This study was undertaken on 200 college students, comprising 101 male and 99 female students. A schedule was prepared containing the following tools for the data collection: a. Mental Health Scale developed by Sushma Telesara & Akhtar Bano in 2017. b. Social Networking Addiction Scale developed by Shahnawaz, Ganguli and Zou (2013). To measure the effect of social media usage and networking site addiction on the dimensions of mental health, Pearson's coefficient of correlation and multiple regression were computed. Results revealed that hours spent on social media sites were negatively correlated with all three dimensions of mental health, i.e., school, home, peer, and overall mental health. Similarly, all dimensions of networking site addictions, namely impulsivity, virtual freedom, and negative outcomes, were negatively correlated with school, home, and peer dimensions of mental health. The multiple regression analysis highlighted that only the impulsivity dimension emerged as a significant predictor of mental health. The findings underscore the growing concern about social networking addiction among young people, posing a significant challenge to our society's well-being. Failing to address this issue could lead to widespread mental health problems in our society.

Keywords: mental health, impulsivity, social media etc.

INTRODUCTION

This study was undertaken to understand the mental health of college students and also to examine the role of social media in influencing mental health. With the influx of internet services for the common man, the use of social media coverage has enormously widened. It is now influencing different spheres of our social lives. Particularly, youngsters spend several hours each day on social media sites like Messenger, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc. Therefore, several researchers have studied the impact of social media and its applications on various aspects of people's mental and physical health (Bartosik-Purgat, Filimon, & Kiygi-Calli, 2017).

As far as the number of social media users is concerned, it was estimated that there were 3.484 billion users in 2019, an increase of 9% every year (Newman et al., 2019; Kim, 2017). If we look at the gender distribution, we found a diversity in social media users worldwide in January 2020. It was observed that 38% of males were using Twitter and 61% were using Snapchat. Female, on the other hand, liked to use LinkedIn and Facebook. It is true that social media has become an important and integral part of several people's lifestyles. It has several positive and enjoyable advantages. At the same time, it can also lead to several mental health related problems. Previous research has pointed out that age did not play a major role in the

experience of mental health. However, gender played a significant role, i.e., females experienced more mental health problems than males (Iannotti et al., 2009).

According to WHO (2020), mental health is "a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn and work well, and contribute to their community". It is an essential component of health and well-being. It supports our individual as well as collective abilities to make proper decisions, build good relationships, and shape the desired world in which we live. It is vital to our personal and socio-economic development. Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a continuum. It is experienced differently by different people with varying levels of difficulty and distress. It is also possibly very different in social and clinical outcomes. People with poor mental health conditions are more likely to experience lower levels of mental well-being. However, it does not always happen.

Social media is a platform on which we provide prospects to improve our mental health by enabling social connections and friend support (Naslund et al., 2022). Furthermore, online interaction with people/communities can offer a space for deliberations regarding health situations, adverse life events, etc. It may lessen the sense of stigmatization and improve belongingness and apparent emotional support. Marciano et al. (2022), in a study, found that mutual friendships, gratifying social interactions, and humour on social media lowered stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, some studies have pointed out its detrimental effects on mental health.

Researchers have raised concerns that social media may lead to body image dissatisfaction and increase the risk of addiction and cyberbullying. Further, it may contribute to phubbing behaviours and negatively affect mood (Harriger et al., 2021; Chi et al., 2022). Excessive use has increased loneliness, fear of missing out, and decreased subjective well-being and life satisfaction (Valkenburg, 2022). Users at risk of social media addiction often report depressive symptoms and lower self-esteem (Bányai, 2017). The study on mental health as a result of the wider use of social media by youngsters is in an incessant stage, particularly in India. Barman et al. (2018) conducted a study on the use of social networking sites and the prevalence of anxiety and depression among the young population.

OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

The objective of this study was to measure a. the extent of the use of social media and b. the effect of social network addiction and its impact on different dimensions of mental health.

Methods:

Sample:

Data was collected on 200 college students, comprising 101 male and 99 female students. Their age range was 14 to 18 years. A purposive sampling procedure was adopted to select 200 samples.

Measures:

A schedule was prepared containing the following tools for the data collection:

a. Demographical Information:

It includes name, age, sex, class, SES, etc.

b. Mental Health Scale

The scale was developed by Sushma Telesara & Akhtar Bano in 2017. The scale consists of 54 items. It is meant for individuals from 14 to 20 years of age. The reliability and validity of the scale are very high.

c. Social Networking Addiction Scale

This scale was developed by Shahnawaz, Ganguli and Zou (2013). This scale is constructed to assess the intensity of the usage of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Chaton, LinkedIn, etc. and to determine its effect on daily life. The scale can be administered in individual or group settings. It consists of 106 items. The age range of the test is 14 to 18 years.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

To measure the effect of social media usage and networking site addiction on the dimensions of mental health, Pearson's coefficient of correlation and multiple regression were computed using SPSS 20 software. The results of Pearson's coefficient of correlations are given in Table 1 here. It states that hours spent on social media sites were negatively correlated with all three dimensions of mental health, i.e., school (r = -.433, p<.00), home (r = -.398, p<.00), peer (r = -.065, p>.05), and overall mental health (r = -.384, p<.00). Similarly, all dimensions of networking site addictions, namely impulsivity, virtual freedom, and negative outcomes, were negatively correlated with school, home, and peer dimensions of mental health. All the correlations obtained were found to be significant at the 001 level. It vividly reveals the fact that youngsters are nowadays using several social media sites and spending several hours. As a result, their mental health is badly affected. Recently, it has been widely seen that whenever the government has stopped social media sites for many days for other reasons, youngsters become upset in the absence of the internet.

Table-1

Correlations among hours of social media usage, dimensions of networking addictions and mental health

	School	Home	Peer	Mental Health
Hours spent on social media	-.433**	-.398**	-.065	-.384**
Impulsivity	-.579**	-.488**	-.369**	-.580**
Virtual Freedom	-.316**	-.346**	-.184**	-.346**
Negative Outcome	-.321**	-.285**	-.174*	-.319**
Social Network Addiction	-.561**	-.507**	-.346**	-.573**

To measure the effect of hours spent on social media and different dimensions of networking site addiction on mental health, multiple regressions were computed. The results are presented in Table 2. The obtained R and R2 values clearly state the fact that social media predicts 59% of mental health. The obtained f value is 26.426 which is highly significant. It also states that the regression model predicts mental health. When all dimensions of social networking addiction and hours spent on social media were entered into the equation to measure the relative predictive effect on mental health, it was observed that only the impulsivity dimension emerged as a significant predictor of mental health (B=-1.014, p<.000). it reveals the fact that impulsivity toward networking addiction leads to poor mental health.

Table-2

Multiple Regression analysis using effect of hours of social media usages and social networking addiction on mental health

R	R2	F	Coefficients	B value	Significance
.593	.352	26.426	Hours spent on social media	-.284	.865
			Impulsivity	-1.014	.000
			Virtual freedom	-.209	.364
			Negative outcome	-.937	.082

DEPENDENT: MENTAL HEALTH

The findings underscore the growing concern about social networking addiction among young people, posing a significant challenge to our society's well-being. The widespread allure of these platforms necessitates urgent attention to their impact on mental health. Failing to address this issue could lead to widespread mental health problems in our society. Numerous studies have linked excessive use of social networking sites, such as Facebook, with symptoms of depression. Some researchers have also noted a potential link between certain social networking activities and low self-esteem in young individuals. However, the relationship between social networking sites and mental health remains contentious, with research facing various challenges.

Studies have suggested a correlation between social networking sites and mental health issues like depressive symptoms, changes in self-esteem, and Internet addiction (Pantic, 2014; Kuss, 2011). Recent research by Hammad et al. (2023) found that 60.30% of respondents were addicted to social media, with a significant difference observed between social media addicts and non-addicts. Regression analysis further indicated that internet addiction could be predicted by factors such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to assess the impact of time spent on social media and addiction to social networking on the mental health of high school students in Madhubani town. The findings revealed that a significant portion of the study participants exhibited social media addiction, highlighting its integration into daily life for many individuals. This usage pattern among young people has raised concerns regarding mental health. There is a pressing need to regulate internet access to mitigate potential psychological issues. Consequently, public policy should emphasize empowering young people to manage their social media usage effectively to safeguard their emotional and mental well-being. This includes promoting a secure digital lifestyle and conducting seminars to educate students about the adverse effects of social media addiction on mental health. The study underscores the importance of raising psychological awareness regarding the risks related to social media addiction and its detrimental psychological impact, advocating for seminars and awareness sessions focused on addressing these issues among students.

REFERENCES

1. Bányai, F., Zsila, Á., Király, O., Maraz, A., Elekes, Z., Griffiths, M. D., ... & Demetrovics, Z. (2017). Problematic social media use: Results from a large-scale nationally representative adolescent sample. *PloS one*, *12*(1), e0169839.

2. Barman, L., Mukhopadhyay, D. K., & Bandyopadhyay, G. K. (2018). Use of social networking site and mental disorders among medical students in Kolkata, West Bengal. *Indian journal of psychiatry*, *60*(3), 340-345.
3. Bartosik-Purgat, M., Filimon, N., & Kiygi-Calli, M. (2017). Social media and higher education–An international perspective. Economics and Sociology, 10 (1), 181–191.
4. Chi, L. C., Tang, T. C., & Tang, E. (2022). The phubbing phenomenon: a cross-sectional study on the relationships among social media addiction, fear of missing out, personality traits, and phubbing behavior. *Current Psychology*, *41*(2), 1112-1123.
5. Hammad, M. A., & Awed, H. S. (2023). Investigating the relationship between social media addiction and mental health. *Nurture*, *17*(3), 149-156.
6. Harriger, J. A., Joseph, N. T., & Trammell, J. (2021). Detrimental associations of cumulative trauma, COVID-19 infection indicators, avoidance, and loneliness with sleep and negative emotionality in emerging adulthood during the pandemic. *Emerging Adulthood*, *9*(5), 479-491.
7. Iannotti, R. J., Janssen, I., Haug, E., Kololo, H., Annaheim, B., Borraccino, A., & HBSC Physical Activity Focus Group. (2009). Interrelationships of adolescent physical activity, screen-based sedentary behaviour, and social and psychological health. *International journal of public health*, *54*, 191-198.
8. Kim, J., & Kim, H. (2017). Demographic and environmental factors associated with mental health: a cross-sectional study. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, *14*(4), 431.
9. Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2011). Online social networking and addiction—a review of the psychological literature. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, *8*(9), 3528-3552.
10. Marciano, L., Ostroumova, M., Schulz, P. J., & Camerini, A. L. (2022). Digital media use and adolescents' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Frontiers in public health*, *9*, 793868.
11. Näslund, H., Grim, K., & Markström, U. (2023). User-led mental health service evaluation: the contribution of user-focused monitoring to recovery-oriented quality development. *Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Mental Health*, *10*(2), 189-202.
12. Newman, A., Obschonka, M., Schwarz, S., Cohen, M., & Nielsen, I. (2019). Entrepreneurial self-efficacy: A systematic review of the literature on its theoretical foundations, measurement, antecedents, and outcomes, and an agenda for future research. *Journal of vocational behavior*, *110*, 403-419.
13. Pantic, I. (2014). Online social networking and mental health. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, *17*(10), 652-657.
14. Shahnawaz, M. G., Zou, M., &Ganguli. N. (2013). Social Networking Addiction Scale (SNAS). New Delhi: Prasad Psycho Corporation.
15. Shahnawaz, M. G., Zou, M., &Ganguli. N. (2013). Social Networking Addiction Scale (SNAS). New Delhi: Prasad Psycho Corporation.
16. Telesara, S. & Bano, A. (2017.) Mental Health Scale, National Psychological Corporation, Agra.

17. Valkenburg, P. M. (2022). Social media use and well-being: What we know and what we need to know. *Current opinion in psychology*, *45*, 101294.

18. World Health Organisation (2020). Mental Health & Wellbeing.