



SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AND DEPRESSION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the social media addiction and depression among college students. The investigators used normative survey method for the study. The sample consists of 1100 college students in Karur District, Tamil Nadu, India. Stratified random sampling technique has been used for the selection of sample. The college students completed the social media addiction scale (Sahin, 2018) and depression scale. T test and one way ANOVA was employed to find out the significance of difference between college student's social media addiction on depression. Results revealed that the female students are more depressed and addicted to social media than male students. There is a low positive relationship between social media addiction and depression among college students.

Keywords: Social Media Addiction, Depression and College Students.

INTRODUCTION

Depression is one of the major mental health problems worldwide, especially among young adults. According to World Health Organization (WHO), more than 264 million people suffer from depression. Depression can cause the infected individuals to suffer greatly in their everyday life and it mainly affects their daily routine activities such as studying, working and household chores, whereas the severe level of depression can lead to suicide.

Social media defined as 'websites which allow profile creation and visibility of relationships between users' has become one of the common leisure activities among its users. Now, almost half of the world population (49 %; 3.80 billion) actively uses social media and these numbers are rapidly swelling every day (Kemp, 2020). Although social media provides a range of benefits and opportunities as just mentioned above, concerns have been raised about its excessive usage globally (Baccarella et al., 2018). The excessive or addictive use of social media defined as 'a behavioral addiction that is characterized as being overly concerned about social media, driven by an uncontrollable urge to log on to or use social media, and devoting so much time and effort to social media that impair other important life areas'(Hilliard, 2019). On the other hand, evidence suggests that using social media can adversely affect its users' mental health, mainly the young

generation (Glazzard & Stones, 2016). Other studies reported that the excessive use of social media among young adults is associated with mental health problems, e.g. depression, anxiety, stress, and self-esteem (Seabrook et al., 2016).

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Social media use has been overwhelmingly increasing in India, involving especially the youth population. Since college students contribute a significant proportion of the productive life age of our country, their involvement with internet overuse or addiction may lead to significant adverse consequences such as psychological and physical problems leading to academic decline. Although many studies have been conducted regarding social media addiction in India, nevertheless, not much has been studied in the state of Tamil Nadu in this regard. Hence, the present study was chosen to explore the levels of social media addiction among college students and their relationship with depression.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the level of social media addiction and depression among college students.
- To find out whether there is a significant difference in the mean scores of social media addiction and depression among college students with respect to their gender, age, locality and type of social media used.
- To find out whether there is a significant relationship among social media addiction and depression among college students.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of social media addiction among college students with respect to their gender, age, locality and type of social media used.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of depression among college students with respect to their gender, age, locality and type of social media used.
3. There is no significant relationship among social media addiction and depression among college students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The investigators used normative survey method to study the relationship between social media addiction and depression among college students.

Sample and Sampling Technique - A total sample of 1100 college students was taken up for the present study. It consists of 10 arts & science colleges, 15 engineering colleges and 4 B.Ed colleges in Karur district. Stratified random sampling technique is used for the selection of sample. The stratification has been done on the basis of their age, gender, locality and type of social media used.

Tool - The investigator has used the following tools for collecting the data. (a). Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS) developed and validated by Dr. Sahin (2018). It consists of 29 items and 4 sub dimensions. All of the items in the scale are positive. Each item is scored using a five point likert scale, (1 = "Never" to 5 = "Always"). (b) Depression Scale developed and validated by the investigator. The scale contains 14 items with five point Likert scale ratings. All of the items in the scale are positive.

Data collection - For the data collection, the investigators visited personally the 29 colleges in Karur district and collected the data from the respondents. The data were collected with the help of the adopted tool. The tool was distributed to the college students and the investigators assured that their responses would be kept

confidential and used for research purpose only. Clear instruction was given to enable them to give their response meaningfully. The gathered responses were scored.

Statistical Analysis: - The data collected were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential analysis. The statistical techniques-‘t’ test and ANOVA were employed for the analysis and interpretation of the data.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Table – 1

Level of Social Media Addiction and Depression among College Students

Variables	Low		Average		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Social Media Addiction	33	3	891	81	176	16
Depression	165	15	873	79	62	6

The above table – 1 show that, out of 1100 college students, 3 % of them have low level of social media addiction, 81 % of them have average level and 16 % of them have high level of social media addiction. Similarly 15 % of them have low level of depression, 79 % of them have average level and 6 % of college students have high level of depression.

Hypothesis 1:- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of social media addiction among college students with respect to their gender, age, and locality.

Table - 2

Difference in the mean scores of social media addiction among college students with respect to their (a) gender, (b) age and (c) locality.

Variables	Categories	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	Level of Significance
Gender	Male	616	95.57	13.891	2.439	S*
	Female	484	97.50	11.712		
Age	19-21yrs	693	95.56	14.258	2.873	S*
	Above 21 yrs	407	97.88	10.395		
Locality	Rural	649	96.38	12.912	0.113	NS
	Urban	451	96.47	13.157		

***significance at 0.05 level**

The Table – 2 shows that the calculated “t” value for gender (2.439) and age (2.873) are greater than the table value (1.98). Hence the null hypothesis-1(a) and (b) are rejected at 0.05 level. It means, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of social media addiction among college students with respect to their gender and age. The table further reveals that the calculated “t” value for locality (0.113) is less than the table value (1.98). Hence the null hypothesis-1(c) is accepted at 0.05 level. It means, there is no significant difference in the mean scores of social media addiction among college students with respect to their locality.

The mean scores of female students (M=97.50) are greater than male students (M=95.57) which indicates female students have high level of social media addiction than male students. Further, students who belong to above 21 years old have high level of social media addiction (M=97.88) than those who belong to 19-21 years old (M= 95.56). While comparing the mean scores of rural and urban students in their social media addiction, urban students have high level of social media addiction (M=96.47) than rural students (M=96.38).

Hypothesis 2:- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of depression among college students with respect to their gender, age, and locality.

Table - 3

Difference in the mean scores of depression among college students with respect to their (a) gender, (b) age and (c) locality.

Variables	Categories	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	Level of Significance
Gender	Male	616	37.94	8.315	2.567	S*
	Female	484	39.20	7.721		
Age	19-21yrs	693	38.51	8.899	0.095	NS
	Above 21 yrs	407	38.46	6.460		
Locality	Rural	649	39.06	8.160	2.809	S*
	Urban	451	37.68	7.900		

***significance at 0.05 level**

The Table – 3 shows that the calculated “t” value for gender (2.567) and locality (2.809) are greater than the table value (1.98). Hence the null hypothesis-2(a) and (c) are rejected at 0.05 level. It means, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of depression among college students with respect to their gender and locality. The table further reveals that the calculated “t” value for locality (0.095) is less than the table value (1.98). Hence the null hypothesis-2(b) is accepted at 0.05 level. It means, there is no significant difference in the mean scores of depression among college students with respect to their age.

The mean scores of female students (M=39.20) are greater than male students (M=37.94) which indicates female students are depressed than male students. Further, students who belong to 19-21 years old have high level of depression (M=38.51) than those who belong to above 21 years old (M= 38.46). While comparing the mean scores of rural and urban students in their depression, rural students have high level of depression (M=39.06) than urban students (M=37.68).

Hypothesis 3:- There is no significant difference among the mean scores of social media addiction and depression among college students with respect to their type of social media used.

Table – 4

Significance of difference in the mean scores among (a) social media addiction and (b) depression among college students with respect to their type of social media used

Dimensions	Type of Social Media	N	Mean	SS _b	SS _w	df	F Value	Sig
Social Media Addiction	Facebook	414	95.32	1292.57	184637.22	4, 1095	1.916	NS
	Whatsapp	302	96.29					
	Twitter	204	97.16					
	Instagram	144	98.51					
	Others	36	97.56					
Depression	Facebook	414	37.58	874.051	70868.917	4, 1095	3.376	S*
	Whatsapp	302	38.79					
	Twitter	204	40.05					
	Instagram	144	38.39					
	Others	36	38.06					

(*significance at 0.05 level)

The above table - 4 reveals that the calculated 'F' values for shyness (3.376) is greater than the table value (3.02) at 0.05 level. Hence, the formulated null hypothesis 4 (b) is rejected and there is a significant mean difference in the depression among college students with respect to the type of social media used. The above table further shows that the calculated 'F' values for social media addiction (1.916) is less than the table value (3.02) at 0.05 level. Hence, the formulated null hypothesis 4 (a) is accepted and there is no significant mean difference in the social media addiction among college students with respect to the type of social media used.

Hypothesis – 4: There is no significant relationship among social media addiction and depression among college students.

Table – 5

Relationship among social media addiction and depression among college students

S.No	Variable	Social Media Addiction
1.	Depression	0.235**

(**significance at 0.01 level)

The above table – 5 shows the correlation coefficient of social media addiction depression among college students. It is revealed that there is a low positive relationship between social media addiction and depression among college students.

FINDINGS

- ❖ Out of 1100 college students, 16 % of them have high level of social media addiction.
- ❖ Out of 1100 college students, 15 % of them have low level of depression, 79 % of them have average level and 6 % of college students have high level of depression.
- ❖ Female students (M=97.50) are highly addicted to social media than male students (M=95.57).
- ❖ Students who belong to above 21 years old have high level of social media addiction (M=97.88) than those who belong to 19-21 years old (M= 95.56).
- ❖ Urban students are having high level of social media addiction (M = 96.47) than rural students (M = 96.38).
- ❖ Female students (M=39.20) are highly depressed than male students (M=37.94).
- ❖ Rural students have high level of depression (M=39.06) than urban students (M=37.68).
- ❖ College students who are using twitter (40.05) are more depressed than who are using whatsapp (38.79), instagram (38.39), others (38.06) and facebook (37.58).
- ❖ There is a low positive relationship between social media addiction and depression among college students.

CONCLUSION

Social media has immense benefits if used with discretion. Social media is pervasive and has infiltrated numerous areas of activity including government, business, commerce, education, and information technology. The harmful effects of social media may have profound consequences for young persons. This area requires continued research globally so that not only the harmful effects are identified but also prevention and treatment is explored. Technology is here to stay. We have to learn to optimize its use and coexist.

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