Relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Emerging Adults

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Abstract- Social Media is a form of digital technology that allows us to share information through the internet using various devices such as computers and mobiles. Emotional Maturity is an individual's ability to manage and understand their emotions. Emerging adults is the term used to describe people who are neither adolescents or adults; this includes those between the ages of 18 to 29. This stage in life is characterized by transitions- leaving home for further education, jobs, getting married, and having children. Through the study, we aimed to understand the relationship between Social networking addiction and Emotional maturity among Emerging adults. The Hypothesis of the Study is, "There is a Significant Relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Male Emerging Adults" and "There is a Significant Relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Female Emerging Adults." The Social Networking Addiction Scale (Shahnawaz M & Usama Rehman, 2020) and the Emotional Maturity Scale (Singh & Bhargava, 1999) was used for data collection. The Pearson Correlation coefficient was applied to find the relationship between Social Media Addiction and Emotional Maturity. The results of the study are discussed in the main article.

Keywords: **social media, emotional maturity, emerging adults**

INTRODUCTION

Social Media is a digital technology that allows us to share information using computers and the internet. Social media allows users to share photos and videos, blog, game, form social and business networks, and much more. On an individual level, social media is used to keep in touch with our loved ones, follow up on celebrities, media houses and other interests. For the past few years, individuals have begun to use social networking sites like LinkedIn to network career opportunities. Social media is crucial for businesses to promote their brand, engage with their customers and find new ones. There are many types of Social Media, they include Social Networks such as Facebook and Twitter, Media Sharing Networks such as Instagram and YouTube, Discussion Forums such as Reddit and Quora, Bookmarking and Content Curation Networks such as Pinterest, Consumer Review Networks such as TripAdvisor, and Blogging and Publishing Networks.

Social Media has proved to be beneficial to us in several ways yet, it poses a multitude of issues that include excessive Addiction and addiction, self-image issues and cyberbullying. Social Media Addiction is a rising problem worldwide- affecting a large number of teenagers and young adults. Masthi et al. (2018) conducted a Comparative Study on Social Media Addiction and Health Status among Students Studying in Pre-University Colleges of Urban Bengaluru and found that the prevalence of social media addiction was 36.9% among users, distributed equally among Private and Government PUs. Dhammathattariya et al.(2021) found that Happiness, Tolerance, Interpersonal Communication and Narcissism influence Social Media Addiction among High School students in Thailand. Masthi et al. (2018) found that gender, anxiety, personal habits, junk food consumption and selfitis were independent risk factors for developing social media addiction.

Social Identity Model of Deindividuation Effects is a theory of communication that explains social media behavior and why people are drawn to these online networking platforms. The model explains how the behavior of a group changes when anonymous. The model explains that this mechanism of anonymity on social media that allows individuals to post offensive or inflammatory content could contribute to addiction.

Uses and Gratifications Theory suggests that people are motivated to seek out forms of media to satisfy their psychological and social needs. The theory encapsulates motivations for social media Addiction and explains the threat of addiction. This theory suggests that users are consistently looking for their social media presence to have an effect such as gaining attention.

According to the APA Dictionary of Psychology, emotions are a complex reaction pattern, involving experiential, behavioral, and physiological elements, by which an individual attempts to deal with a personally significant matter or event. Emotional maturity is defined as a high and appropriate level of emotional control and expression (American Psychological Association). Kakkar A. (1999) concluded that the family environment plays a significant role in the emotional maturity of children during their adulthood. Rajeshwari & Raj (2017) found that emotional maturity akong students differs significantly due to different environmental factors. Jobson (2020) found that factors such as age, gender of the participants, type of family and sibling had no association with emotional maturity.

Evolutionary Theory of Emotion proposed that emotions evolved because they were adaptive and helped in survival and reproduction. Emotions motivate people to respond quickly to stimuli in the environment which aids in survival.

The James-Lange Theory of Emotion is a physiological theory of emotion which suggests that emotions occur as a result of physiological reactions to events. According to this, we feel emotions in response to physical reactions.

Emerging adults is the term used for individuals between the ages 18 to 29. This stage in life is characterized by major changes or transitions such as leaving home for further education, jobs, getting married, having children and so on. This stage brings forth several psychosocial problems that young adults have to deal with. Psychologist Jeffrey Jensen Arnett described five features that make emerging adulthood distinctive- identity explorations, instability, self-focus, feeling in-between adolescence and adulthood, and a sense of broad possibilities for the future. Tremolada et al. (2016) found that emerging adults utilize adaptive coping strategies like active coping, planning, instrumental support, emotional support, positive reframing, humor, acceptance and religion and maladaptive coping strategies such as venting, self-distraction, self-blame, denial, behavioral disengagement and substance use.

METHODOLOGY
Problem
To assess the Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Emerging adults.
Aim
To study the relationship between social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Emerging adults.
Specific Objectives
The Objective of the research study is as follows:
To study the relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Male Emerging Adults.
To study the relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Female Emerging adults.
Hypothesis
H1: There is a significant relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Male Emerging adults.
H2: There is a significant relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Female Emerging adults.
Variables
Variable 1: Social Networking Addiction
Variable 2: Emotional Maturity
Operational Definitions:
Emerging adults: Group of individuals falling under the age category of 18 to 24 years. This stage in life is characterized by major transitions such as leaving one's childhood home, pursuing a college degree or beginning a career.

Social Networking Addiction: It is the maladaptive use of Social Networking sites that can cause various psychological and behavioral problems in individuals. It is characterized by excessive use of the sites, anxiety when unable to access or use the sites and a tendency to rely on the sites for comfort.

Emotional Maturity: A high and appropriate level of emotional control and expression (American Psychological Association). An individual that is Emotionally Mature can deal more effectively with their environment, have a good understanding of their emotions and know how to keep their composure in various situations.

Research Design
The present research used a correlational research design, a type of non-experimental research wherein a researcher assesses the statistical relationship between two variables without manipulating them. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r), is used for assessing a linear relationship between two quantitative variables. The correlation reflects the strength and direction of the relationship of the variables. Correlation research allows researchers to generalize the findings to other populations. Correlation however, does not equate to causality. That is, one cannot conclude that there is a cause and effect relationship between the variables examined just through correlation.

Sample
The study was conducted on a group of <u>100</u> Emerging adults of the age group of 18-24 years.
Sample Description
The sample of the present study includes emerging adults, both male and female emerging adults from all over India.
Sample Size
A sample size of <u>100</u> emerging adults. <u>50</u> Male emerging adults and <u>50</u> female emerging adults were included in the study.
Sampling Method
Data was collected using non-probability sampling such as, convenience sampling and snowball sampling methods.

INCLUSION CRITERIA:
Participants must be between the ages of 18 and 24 years.
Participants must have Social media account

Participants have social media at least for 2 to 3 years.
Participants must use the social media account 2 to 3 hours per day
Participants knows to read and write English

EXCLUSION CRITERIA:
Participants who do not fall in the age range of 18-24 years.
Participants who have Psychological issues and undergoing any therapy

Tools for Data Collection
Socio Demographic Data Sheet:
Participants were asked to fill in a socio-demographic datasheet seeking information such as their name, age, sex, details related to their family, education qualification, number of hours they use social media accounts, whether they check social media accounts in the night, and how long. Reliability was 0.88.

Social Networking Addiction Scale:
The Social Networking Scale by Shahnawaz and Rehman (2020), consisting of 21 items on a 7-degree Likert scale was to assess the extent to which the respondents suffer from social network addiction. Each question presented options such as Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree and Strongly Agree. A score of 1 was given to Strongly Disagree, a score of 2 for Disagree, a score of 3 for Somewhat Disagree, a score of 4 for Neither Agree nor Disagree, a score of 5 for Somewhat Agree, a score of 6 for Agree and a score of 7 for Strongly Agree. The total score can range from 21 to 147 and any score above a total of 84 signifies Social Networking Addiction.

Emotional Maturity:
The Emotional Maturity Scale by Singh and Bhargava (1991) is a self-reporting five-point scale. The scale consists of 48 statements in question form, which can be answered using options such as, Very Much, Much, Undecided, Probably and Never. A score of 5 was given to the answer Very Much, a score of 4 for Much, a score of 3 for Undecided, a score of 2 for Probably and a score of 1 for Never. A score of 52-80 is interpreted as extreme Emotional Maturity, a score of 81-88 is interpreted as Moderate Emotional Maturity, a score of 89-106 is interpreted as Emotional Immaturity, a score of 107-240 is interpreted as Extreme Emotional Immaturity. The reliability of the scale was 0.75 by test-retest method and validity was 0.64.

Process for Data collection:
Emerging adults (as described above) were contacted using non-random, convenience and snowball sampling methods. Data collection was done entirely through online mode using Google Forms to collect socio-demographic details of the participants, as well as to administer the Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity scale. The consent of the participants and the purpose of the study was described in the first section of the Google Form. Data was collected from a total of 145 participants comprising both male and female participants.

Procedure for Data Analysis:
The data has been collected and entered in the SPSS. The descriptive statistics was analyzed. The Pearson Product moment correlation method was used to find the relationship between the Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Emerging adults.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS
The aim of the research study was to determine the relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity in Emerging Adults. The hypothesis stated that "There is a significant relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Male Emerging adults" and
"There is a significant relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Female Emerging adults".

The sample (n=100) included males (n=50) and females (n=50) between the ages 18-24 studying or working in India. The inclusion criteria for the study were age (18-24), gender (males and females), qualification (sample must include only those who are literate) and regular use of Social Media accounts. Exclusion criteria included those who were suffering from a psychological illness and those who were seeking therapy for the same. A total of 145 responses were received, 63 male respondents, 81 female respondents and 1 Other respondent. Using the inclusion criteria, 50 male and 50 female responses were selected for the analysis. 82 of the 100 participants were Students, 17 were Working professionals and 1 was Not Working. Of the sample, 77% reported living in Urban areas, 18% in semi-urban areas and 5% in rural areas. 45 respondents were living in PG and 55 were living with parents. 93 respondents reported using Instagram, 49 were using Facebook, 6 were using Snapchat and 7 were using Twitter.

Data collection was done using Google Form which was based on the Social Networking Addiction scale (Shahnawaz and Rehman) and the Emotional Maturity Scale (Singh and Bhargava). The Google Form was shared and circulated on WhatsApp and Instagram. Data collected was scored and analysis was done using SPSS.

DISCUSSION

Social Networking Addiction is a rising problem in society, especially among Emerging Adults. Emotional Maturity of an individual is seen as a predictor of addiction. That is, those who are found to be Emotionally Immature are more prone to addiction. Sani et al(2019) found that people with severe addiction to social networks had lower scores in terms of general emotional maturity and its subscales compared with those with moderate addiction to social networking. Meena and Paliwal (2022) found that the adolescents who were addicted to social media were not emotionally mature. Singh & Nagar (2019) conducted a study to determine the relationship between internet addiction with emotional maturity in high school students between the ages 15-18.

Table 1- Shows the mean and standard deviation for Female responses

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EMS Total score	118.44	23.923	50
SNA Total score	71.24	22.318	50

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation values for the Emotional Maturity scale and Social Networking Addiction Scale for Female responses. As seen, for the EMS scale, the mean value of 118.44 and a standard deviation value of 23.923 is obtained. For the SNA scale, a mean value of 71.24 and a standard deviation score of 22.318 is obtained.

Table 2- Shows the mean and standard deviation for Male responses

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EMS Total score	120.18	23.797	50
SNA Total score	64.94	21.703	50

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation values for the Emotional Maturity scale and Social Networking Addiction Scale for Male responses. As seen, for the EMS scale, the mean value of 120.18 and a standard deviation value of 23.797 is obtained. For the SNA scale, a mean value of 64.94 and a standard deviation score of 21.703 is obtained.

Table 3- Shows the correlation (r value) and significance for Female responses

Correlations

		EMS Total score	SNA Total score
EMS Total score	Pearson Correlation	1	.345[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.014
	N	50	50
SNA Total score	Pearson Correlation	.345[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	
	N	50	50

Table 3 shows the correlation value and significance value of the total score of Female respondents. As seen in the table, the correlation between Emotional Maturity and Social Networking Addiction for Females is determined to be 0.345 which is interpreted as Low Positive Correlation. The significance value is determined to be 0.014 which shows that the correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4- Shows the correlation value and significance of the results for Male responses

Correlations

		EMS Total score	SNA Total score
EMS Total score	Pearson Correlation	1	.336[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.017
	N	50	50
SNA Total score	Pearson Correlation	.336[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	
	N	50	50

Table 4 shows the correlation value and significance value of the total score of Male respondents. As seen in the table, the correlation between Emotional Maturity and Social Networking Addiction for Males is determined to be 0.336 which is interpreted as Low Positive Correlation. The significance value is determined to be 0.017 which shows that the correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

As per the data acquired using the Emotional Maturity Scale, 67 respondents were found to be Extremely Emotionally Immature while 4 were found to be Extremely Emotionally Mature. There are five dimensions on the scale- Emotional instability, Emotional Regression, Social Maladjustment, Personality Disintegration and Lack of Dependence.

As per the data acquired using Social Networking Addiction Scale, 24 respondents were found to be addicted to social media while 76 were found to be not addicted. The scale is measured on 6 dimensions which include Salience, Mood modification, Tolerance, Withdrawal, Conflict and Relapse. Slight gender based differences were noted. Results from the Emotional Maturity Scale showed that 32 females and 35 males were found to be Extremely Emotionally Immature, 14 Females and 9 Males were found to be Emotionally Immature, 2 Females and 4 Males were found to be Moderately Emotionally Mature and 2 Females and 2 Males were found to be Extremely Emotionally Mature. Results from the Social Networking Addiction Scale showed that 13 Females and 11 Males were found to have Social Media Addiction and 37 Females and 39 Males were found to not have Social Media Addiction.

CONCLUSION
The hypothesis which states that "There is a significant relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Male Emerging adults is thus accepted.
The hypothesis which states that, "There is a significant relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Female Emerging adults" is thus accepted.

LIMITATIONS
The sample is limited to a specific cultural population.
 The sample could is limited to a certain age group (18-24 years).

SUGGESTIONS
The sample could include a larger, more diverse population.
The study can be used to examine psychological well-being of Emerging Adults.
The study can be used to create effective intervention programs for Emerging Adults struggling with Social Networking Addiction.
The results of this study can be used to develop an intervention to reduce the Social Media Usage and help to increase the Emotional Maturity of Emerging Adults.

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