



Narcissistic Personality, Social Media and Mental Health in Early Adulthood

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between social media, narcissism, and the mental health of young adults. It was hypothesized that there is likely to be a relationship between narcissism, social media usage, and mental health in early adulthood. A correlation research design was used to collect data (online) from (N= 160) university students (male =31; female=129) with the age range of 18-25 years (M=19.58, SD=5.27). The sample was recruited by using a convenient sampling technique from different private sectors universities. Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS-SF), Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ), and 16 items pair of narcissism were used to collect data. Patient Health Questionnaire introduced by Robert, Janet, and William. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis showed that mental health is positively correlated with social media whereas narcissism is negatively correlated with mental health. Implications show that seminar is very important for awareness about mental health and excessive social media usage. Results show that using hours of social media is significantly predicts mental health. Virtual problems, virtual communication, virtual information social media significantly correlated with mental health. Moreover, there are no gender differences in social media and mental health. So our hypothesis is proved. Our results contradicted the results of previous research which showed a relationship between Narcissism, Social Media, and their impact on mental health.

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1. Introduction

Social media is an electronic platform enabling its users to socialize beyond the borders without any physical mobilization and territorial limitations (McGrath, 2013). The recent era of COVID-19 has legitimately realized the significance of internet technologies especially social media (i.e. web-based forums, applications, websites, etc.). Social media, being a considerable part of modern lifestyle, has its multifold impacts upon its users and society. Recent researches have witnessed different effects of social media on physical and mental health, social activities, social behavior and patterns etc (Thoits, 2016). Depending upon the objectives, it is realized that besides its positive uses and values, there are also certain adverse effects of social media. People use it to stay close with friends and family. In recent times, a rapid shift of number of social media users is observed because of advancement of mobile technology and easy access to internet. Social media allows the users to prepare their

virtual portfolios, containing information and images, and to further share their feelings, thoughts, routines, and emotions (Chassiakos et al., 2016).

With the emergence of usage of social media, researchers have observed various effects of excessive use of social media depending upon the personality types of the users. As different types of personality responses differently and follow traits independent from the others, therefore, the impact of the social media usage can also be affecting users depending upon their personal type and traits (Kim, Lee, & Na, 2017). Thus, in this study, basic objective of this study is to observe and to evaluate the effects of it over users having narcissistic personality and also to determine the relationship between social media use and how it affects mental health.

The Objectives of the study is to examine the relationship between social media and neuroticism in early adulthood, to examine relationship between social media and mental health in early adulthood and to examine the neuroticism and effect of social media on mental health in early adulthood.

2. Narcissism and Narcissistic Personality

As to the origin of the term "narcissism", it is traced back to Greek Mythology (i.e. Narcissus) – which refers a man refusing all lovers and ultimately, falls in love with his own reflection as cursed by their gods (Konrath, Barcellos, & Mansilha, 2007). DSM includes narcissistic personality disorder based on the psychoanalysis and therefore, DSM-5 provides the criterion to diagnose the same as substantial weakening in personalities and relational functioning and several compulsive traits indicating that the subject is magnificent, superficial, and attention-seeking (American Psychological Association, 2014).

Social media affects its users, as people share their selfies, images and other people praise them by making comments on their posts and images. Recent studies have established that it has increased narcissism. People like to be admired and praise by others. They feel themselves special and like to live in world of fantasy. So, we can say that people who like to be admired by other people or feel superior themselves, they become more arrogant and prouder. It can increase self-esteem, as people feel more confident and their skills improve, and their abilities increases. They found more opportunities and have a platform where they can express their feelings.

They find more friends their social circle increases and when they share their thoughts, other people also exchange their feelings. In this way, usually people found solutions to their problems (Mathieu, 2003).

3. Social Media

Social media has websites and other sharing applications that we use to create and share our thinking and feelings in social networking (Lexico, 2019). Moreover, a very popular web-based forum for jargons provides that 'social media is a computer-based technology through that we share ideas, thoughts, and information with friends and communities (Dollahide, 2019).

3.1 Social Media Use

People use social media forums for personal and professional purposes. It has been merged in the social development of the world and therefore, helping to promote the idea of the globalization. Even in the early year of recent decade, using social media was observed among the maximum time-consuming recreational activities (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). Digital 2020 Global Overview Report provided that in the recent age of information technology almost 60% of the population of the world is using internet and almost 3.8 billion people are the social media users, which are reasonably a higher ratio of all internet users sufficient to prove the significance of the social media. The Report also revealed the that 'Filipin' is the country with highest rate of social media users spending number of hours on daily basis and 'Japan' being the country with lowest rate of social media users. Facebook and YouTube are considered world's most used social platforms with billions of users who are interacting and socializing around the globe on daily basis for sharing of information (Abdulahi, Samadi, & Gharleghi, 2014).

It was true that in recent years social media has very important impact on minds as mobile technology has also developed and playing an important role in shaping social media. As with the development of these devices it is now very easy and we can use many apps anywhere everywhere. People use social media to share their valuable opinions as they want others to confirm and appreciate their thoughts. In this way they get sense of fulfillment by interacting with different people in different parts of the world (Sawyer, 2018).

Facebook users are increasing day by day as a quarter of world's population is using Facebook. Now people are more aware, political crimes, happenings and personal experiences are shared and people get awareness. They find solutions as they share their personal problems and guide each other (Kaplan, Moll, & Violante, 2018). Cyber bullying; it is very attractive and teenagers find fun by misusing this platform as people spread rumors and if they have some personal grudges', they can destroy other's reputation, even people blackmail other to get some advantage.

Lack of privacy Misuse of information, stalking, theft but usually it is because of because of one's own carelessness and mistake as people share their personal data of pictures or things which should be avoided should not publish publically. People with negative minds can misuse that information and can create problems for others (Johnson, 2019).

How its effect relationship? People become so much addicted to this that they spend much time on social media that they neglect their close relationships, they unconsciously neglect family, close friends and it create distance between them.

3.2 Psychological Impacts of Social Media

Various studies have found strong relationship between extensive use of social media and depression, self-harm, anxiety, and other mental illness. As people meet new friends, having different abilities, background, and some of them can be richer or have better IQ level or may be status. When they share their experience with other it can promote negative feelings. People can feel depressed and start comparing their lives and lifestyle with others. Therefore, sometimes, it may become harmful and they feel envy and jealous about others. In this way, social media may leave impacts for mental disturbance or create psychological issues with its users (Benoit, Jansson, Smith, & Flagg, 2018).

As social media allows its users to connect with their loved ones including friends and followers, to communicate their emotions, connote their whereabouts, and also share their snapshots, etc. (Savci & Aysan, 2018), therefore, it basically allows a user to spontaneously express themselves through social media (Grau-Expósito et al., 2019). It is observed that the unwarranted and obsessive use of social media may affect the personality traits of the users (Andreassen, Pallesen, & Griffiths, 2017). Therefore, sometime people using media are observed having an addiction of social media tending to envisage egotistical personality trait and self- admiring activities (Biolcati & Passini, 2018; Malik & Khan, 2015; Şafak & Kahraman, 2019; Sung, Chang, & Liu, 2016).

3.3 Social Media and Mental Health

It has been observed and explained by the various studies that social media has considerable impact on user's mental health. Besides various positive aspects and benefits, there are several negative aspects of the social media are under observation. There are different recent studies witnessing the powerful link of excessive social media use causing depression, isolation, anxiety and other negative thoughts. Results of most of the studies have corroborated that social media can cause raise tendency of narcissism and ultimately, affect adversely the mental health of its users. In a study of undergraduates, active participation of the student having narcissistic personality in social media was also noticed (Mehdizadeh, 2010). Being narcissist, one like superficial relationships and social media allows its users for making such trivial and meaningless friendships with people having different race, nationality, gender, etc. Social media also enables to create user profiles projecting oneself to the way he wants, and it usually encourages users having narcissistic personality (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2017).

3.4 Research Gap

The literature on narcissism personality, social media and mental health has generated mixed results. In certain researches the finding was the same as in the indigenous researches and western researches. The indigenous researches report that in the pandemic of COVID-19 people show very anxiety on social media but after COVID-19 people feel relief from the fear. Social media and its websites become a meaningful way to build relationship with others. Some studies show that relationship between conversation and professionals who share health related helpful information. People share their issues on social media and professionals give service to them. Females become more addicted on social media than adolescents. Studies show relationship between social media complexity and situational factors. Studies also show significant relationship between body observation and eating disorder. Researches support narcissism, social media and its impact on mental health. People use social media but only 51.1 % people share information on social media. Adolescents and young adults did not prefer the way to share medical information on social media. They mostly share their snaps, mood wellbeing snaps. Indigenous researches show that people mostly face barrier of unreliable information on social media and professionals face barrier of lack of skills. People become narcissistic because of rejection. Narcissism, Facebook flow and Facebook addiction are significantly positively correlated. Narcissism has negative relationship with empathy and forgiveness. Social media has significant relationship on mental health.

The usage of social media is increasing day by day, especially during the lock down in COVID-19 (Gillani, Shafiq, Ahmad, & Zaheer, 2021; Nabity-Grover, Cheung, & Thatcher, 2020). Young adults who cannot move freely and meet their friends are locked in their homes. This leads to frustration which is released on social media. Making tik-tok videos and uploading it relax them and reduces their frustration (Castaldo, Venturini, Frasca, & Gargiulo, 2021). The reason behind this topic or we chose this topic because we were interested to know that how social media is affecting our life, and is it only narcissism which effects the mental health.

4. Methods

Correlational research design was used to study the relationship between use of social media, narcissism personality and mental health. Sample of 160 participants was selected by using convenient sampling technique. Age (M= 21.5; SD=2.0) female (M=23.4; SD=1.3). Unmarried, young adults age (18-25) only university or college students were selected for this research purpose. Students having any disability were not included. As the origin of the term "narcissism", it is traced back to Greek Mythology (i.e. Narcissism) which refers a man refusing all lovers and ultimately falls in love with his own reflection as cursed by their goals (Konrath et al., 2007).

Social media has websites and other sharing applications that we use to create and share our thinking and feelings in social networking (Lexico, 2019). Moreover, very popular web-based forum for jargons provides that social media is a computer-based technology through that we share ideas, thoughts, and information with friends and communities (Dollarhide, 2019).

Various studies observed and explained that social media has considerable impact on users' mental health. Beside various positive aspects and benefits, there are several negative aspects of social media are under observation. There are different recent studies witnessing the powerful link of excessive social media use causing depression, isolation, anxiety and other negative thoughts. In a study of undergraduate's active participation of the student having narcissistic personality in social media was also noticed (Mehdizadeh, 2010).

4.1 Assessment Measures

Consent form was taken from participants before collecting data. They were explained all about their rights about confidentiality. Demographic information sheet included age gender, department, semester, program, CGPA, birth order, no. of siblings, do you use social media, if yes how many hours you use in a day? What kind of media you use the most (Facebook, WhatsApp etc.), device, purpose, do you have friends? If yes how many? No. of friends on social media, meet your relatives? if yes how much?

4.2 Narcissistic Personality Inventory 16

Ames, Rose, and Anderson introduced NPI 16 scale in 2006. It is a double statement scale. It has 16 items in pairs. Participants have to choose one according to their wish. Its reliability was high internal consistency.

4.3 Social Media Addiction Scale

Sahin developed this SMA-SF in 2018. Our second variable is social media. It is a Likert Scale. It has total 29 items. Responses are in form of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree. The weight age is strongly disagree 1, disagree 2, neither disagree nor agree 3, agree 4 or strongly agree 5. Its reliability was high internal consistency.

4.4 Patient Health Questionnaire

Kroenke, and Williams developed Patient Health Questionnaire scale in 1990s. It is a Likert Scale with 9 items. Our third variable was mental health. We used PHQ scale to assess mental health. Responses are not at all is 1st option, several days 2nd option, more than half the days 3rd option, nearly every day is 4th option.

4.5 Procedure

Permission was taken from respective author to use scales through emails. Due to COVID-19 it was not possible to collect data physically. Google form was created to collect data. A written informed consent was taken from participants before filling data and their confidentiality was ensured. All three questionnaires with demographic sheet were administered verbally and response rate was 100% after the data collection.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

Following ethical consideration were kept in mind while conducting research i.e. Permission to use scale from respective authors and Permission from concerned authorities before data collection. Informed consent from participants before data collection. Confidentiality of participants was maintained. There is right to withdraw from the participation at any time.

5. Result

The present study was conducted to investigate the relationship between narcissistic personality, social media and mental health in early adulthood. A sample (N=160) of University students was taken. The steps involved in data analysis;

The Cronbach's alpha was used to find out the reliability of the scales; Pearson Product Correlation Moment analysis was used to assess the relationship between personality and relationship structures linear regression analysis was run to predict the impact of personality and relationship structure on academic achievement.

The reliability coefficient of Narcissistic Personality, Social Media Addiction and Mental Health is used. All the scales Cronbach's alpha reliability showed the high internal consistency. Table 2 indicates Pearson product moment correlation between Social Media and Mental Health, using hours of social media, do you have friends, meet relatives, VtolSMA, VcomSMA, VprobSMA, and VinfoSMA. Results also indicates that do you have friends, meet relative have negatively significant relationship with Mental Health. VtolSMA have positive significant correlation with Mental Health. VcomSMA, Vprob, Vinfo have also negatively significant correlation with mental Health.

Gender, birth order, siblings, kinds of social media, device and sumpNP have positively significant relationship with number of social media friend. Mental Health has highly positive significant relationship with social media. Hence proposed hypothesis that social media have positive correlation with mental health has been proved.

The result showed that using social media for hours was highly significant predictor of Mental Health. Having friends and meeting relatives negatively predict the mental health whereas virtual tolerance positively predicts the mental health, which proves the hypothesis.

Table 1: Reliability coefficient of the study variable Narcissistic Personality, Social Media Addiction and Mental Health (N=160)

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>	Range
NPI	5.37	3.23	.71	0-16
SMA	83.13	21.99	.92	29-145
Vtol	15.88	4.92	.75	5-25
Vcom	25.14	7.15	.77	9-45
Vprob	23.87	8.98	.89	9-45

Note: M=mean, SD= standard deviation, α= Cronbach’s alpha, NPI=Narcissism Personality Inventory, SMA= Soial Media Addiction, Vtol= virtual Tolerance, Vcom=Virtual Communication, Vprob=Virtual Problem

Table 2: Correlations Analysis of the Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.Age	-											
2.bordercat	.15	-										
3.usinghoursofSM	-.14	.03	-									
4.device	.03	-.02	.08	-								
5.douhavefrnds	-.08	-.02	.09	.18*	-							
6.meetrelatives	-.19*	-.07	-.05	-.07	.13	-						
7.vtolSMA	-.20**	.08	.24**	.08	-.07	-.08	-					
8.vcomSMA	-.06	.15	.19*	.02	-.23**	-.16*	.64***	-				
9.vprobSMA	-.13	.17*	.22**	.01	-.26**	-.17*	.71***	.77***	-			
10.vinfoSMA	-.03	.095	.14	.04	-.14	-.13	.397***	.55***	.54***	-		
11. NP	-.07	.24**	.002	-.17*	-.13	-.09	.06	.299***	.31***	.11	-	
12. PHQ	-.07	-.01	.23**	.02	-.20*	-.27**	.43***	.33***	.39***	.21**	.004	-

Table 3: Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Mental Health (N=160)

Predictors	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>β</i>
Constant	9.28**	2.77	
Using hours of SM	.21*	.11	.14
Do you have friends	-3.43*	1.68	-.15
Meet Relatives	-4.08**	1.35	-.21
Virtual Tolerance SMA	.36**	.11	.34
R			.53
R²			.28
F			8.46***

Note. **p*<.05, ***p*<.01, ****p*<.001

6. Conclusion

The purpose of the existing research was to examine the relationship between Narcissistic Personality, Social media addiction and Mental Health in young adults. Results showed that using social media for hours significantly predicted the mental health. Meeting relatives and having friends negatively predict the mental health. Virtual tolerance positively predicted the mental health.

Not meeting relatives can cause problems in mental health. Virtual problem, Virtual communication, virtual information social media significantly correlated with the mental health. The other discovery clearly showed that mental health was not correlated with device, purpose whereas it is correlated with using hours of social media. Narcissism personality showed that birth order categories was significantly correlated (Eckstein & Kaufman, 2012). The result approved the hypothesis. Results showed that there were not gender differences in social media and narcissism. Narcissist personality has self-publicity tendencies in them. They like to be appreciated and appraisals at every picture. For likes and positive comments they start using filters. They believe photos with faces receives more likes and comments (Bakhshi, Shamma, & Gilbert, 2014). Filtering techniques these days increases the rating. Likes and comments increases the audience (Bakhshi et al., 2014). Unsuccessful individuals start body shaming in jealousy. Due to social media young adults ignore their relatives, and family functions.

Young adults these days are more indulge in social media. Spent their whole day while scrolling and pass their time like this. These behaviors of adults are problematic for their self and their mental health. A lot of people suffer from depression and unaware of what problem they are going through. Students reveal the usage of social media Instagram by showing their

self, cool and creative (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). There was positive relation between coolness and social media (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). These days current use of social media increases the demand of creativity. Self-promotion helps attention-seeking behaviors and socializes self-objectification (Boursier, Gioia, & Griffiths, 2020). Scholars increasingly focus on narcissism and its relationship with social media. Usually males are involved in photo tagging (Dhir, Pallesen, Torsheim, & Andreassen, 2016). Narcissism is a predictor of selfie practices (Weiser, 2018). Physical appearance reinforces the selfie sharing activities. Social media these days are on top. Sharing selfie on social media and then checking the likes and comments after every hour or minutes is harmful for mental health. Not getting enough likes or audience attracted to the post can cause mental health problems. Compare to the low narcissism researchers showed the high narcissism individual take more selfie and more involved in self-promotion (Sanecka, 2017). It would be more interesting to explore psychopathological factors of selfie (Barry, Sidoti, Briggs, Reiter, & Lindsey, 2017). Finally, the findings have clinical implications because they clearly show the need for a broader focus on body concerns. The use of body images appears to be pivotal in social media-related practices and content, among women as well among men. Confirming the relationship between narcissism and variables concerning societal attitudes about appearance, expressed by carrying out social media-related practices (Barry et al., 2017). Grandiose narcissism was associated with posting more selfie and experiencing more positive affects when taking selfie (McCarthy et al., 2018).

Findings are limited to the people, the participants from a particular geographical region sharing same socioeconomic background. Married and discovered people were not included in this research. Only students from private sectors were included. Sample was unequal because female participants are in majority. In future research, other variables could have been added like loneliness. Frustration or neglecting of family can investigate these Variable to find more information. Different age groups can be taken to investigate impact of social media on mental health. Seminars are very important organizing seminars and campaign for awareness about positive and negative effects of media use, and how can we get benefits and how it can help us to improve our mental health.

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