

SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AMONG INDIAN YOUNG ADULTS DURING COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study aims at understanding the prevalence and the paramount significance of the abuse of social media and its' addiction during the present COVID-19. It also aims at understanding how accustomed or habituated people are, in terms of social media use.

Methodology: A survey was conducted on 204 young adults in India using the shortened version of Social media Addiction Survey (Sahin, 2018). Reliability and Validity Tests were conducted along with One Sample t-test to understand the effect that each item had on the use of social media among the participants.

Findings: Internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) is 0.896, and inter-item validity is significant at 0.01 level, i.e. at a 99% confidence interval. The majority of the participants are eager to use social media and be informed about the content shared by their respective groups. Most participants also tend to spend more time on social media when they are alone.

Study Implications: The paper suggests that the shortened version of the Social Media Addiction Scale is applicable for different populations irrespective of their age group and cultural backgrounds. However, further research indicated in the domain and field of social media in terms of addiction among more young adults is recommended.

Keywords: social media addiction questionnaire, young adults, COVID-19, the prevalence of social media use, social media addiction

Social Media Addiction Among Indian Young Adults During Covid-19

The internet has expanded to become a daily part of people's lives. For most individuals, it is a representation of informative tool and an opportunity to connect with others, socially. It also involves self-education, economic betterment, and freedom from shyness and paralysing inhibitions (Aboujaoude, 2011). The internet also enhances an individual's quality of life and their well-being, subjectively, for others, it leads to a state that represents the standard definition of mental disorders, according to DSM,

“A clinically evident behavioural or psychological ailment associated with present distress or with a significantly increased risk of suffering death, pain, disability or an important loss of freedom” (American Psychiatric Association, 2000)

Social Network Sites that involve Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and more, enable individuals to impact the decisions of others through a connected network. The physical reality and the virtual reality of the internet are not as different from each other since they are not unrelated anymore. Just as events in the real world influence the activities on the internet, the vice-versa also takes place most of the time (Louni & Subbalakshmi, 2014). As Shobhaa De (2020) rightly said,

“Untouched by the footsteps of migrant workers in the hot sun, we rant

on social media. Moreover, as always, what helps us to retain our sanity in moments like this are words. Our own words and words from loved ones but even more than that, words from gifted writers who spin stories out of universal experiences, from thoughts and ideas half-formed in our minds.”

Activity incentives originate from the inner emotional desire to participate in enjoyable activities in order to enhance a sense of belongingness. On the other hand, the origination of social incentives is from interactions with others that deem and perceive as rewarding. Several new sensory incentives involve the investigation for neoteric and factual information, and positive reinforcement which involves monetary funds and rewards are mere expectancies to achieve a familiar sort of commercial acquisitions. Particular to organisations as well as the use of technology is the concept of self-reactive incentives which involve the attempt to regulate dysmorphic moods such as depression and boredom (Eastin & al., 2006). Most research has focussed on three primary models of addiction. Addictions of different media involve a specific type of addiction in terms of behaviour in which chemical substance is absent (Marks, 1990; 2006).

Social Media Outbreak During COVID-19

The antecedent phases of the COVID-19 outbreak involved little factual information. Social Media content

creators churned out half-baked theories and blatant falsehoods. As has been observed in the past outbreaks, absence of reliable information coupled with an increasing death ratio resulted in panic, confusion and the suspension of critical thinking and fact-checking abilities. The panic eventually reached a point where the WHO released a 'massive infodemic' of COVID-19 misinformation. They leveraged similar tools causing the infodemic to quell it. However, it also created simple infographics and content and shared accurate information on their social media handles. Simultaneously, social networking platforms or sites like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and TikTok took upon themselves to clean up their sites. They used fact-checking agencies and AI-based tools to screen incorrect content and provide factual information (Parikh, Desai, & Parikh, 2020).

Significance of the Study

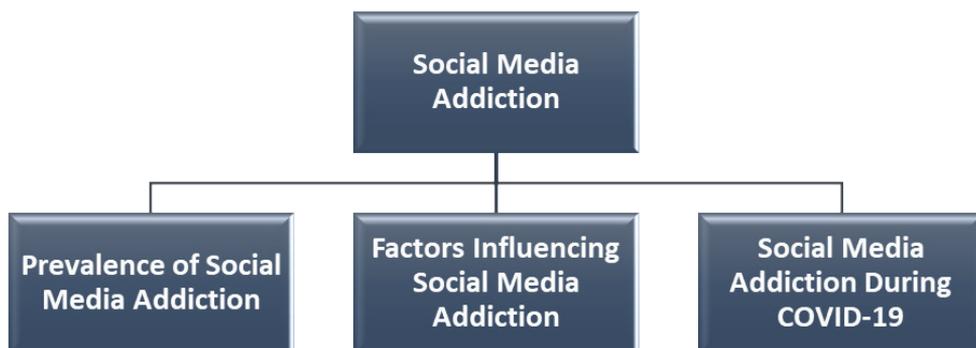
The study aims at understanding the prevalence and the paramount significance of social media abuse and addiction during the time of lockdown in the COVID-19 outbreak. Since most individuals are either working or studying from home, it is evident that each of them struggles with time management as well as multi-tasking. Most people are prone to reaching burnout solely because they worked extra hours and eventually began to undergo disorganised and disordered routines in their lifestyles. This study aims at understanding how accustomed or habituated people are, in terms of social media use.

Literature Review

Previous research studies have been conducted on media communication and indicated that most communication

Figure 1

Showing the categorisation of themes classified in the Review of Literature



technologies tend to provide an invisible shield which protects timid or shy individuals when they interact or participate in social situations (Yan, 2015). There are several research studies conducted in the field of addiction concerning social media. However, during the pandemic, i.e. COVID-19, individuals, all across the world, face difficulty and perplexities in optimal functioning daily. The classification of literature reviews depicted in the following themes:

Social Media has been a domain of study for the past several years, and the research has been quite dense. However, with the dense research studies in this domain, this paper must shed light on the prevalence of the matter. Therefore, referring to the map above, the division of themes of the related works of literature are based on the factors which primarily influence social media addiction among young adults.

Prevalence of Addiction Concerning Social Media

Several research studies highlight the prevalence of social media, and its addiction has proven significant. In order to shed light on the same matter, the following studies are reviewed based on its prevalence.

A recent research study by Leung et al. (2020, pp. 1059-1069) aimed to investigate whether specific scales were appropriate for use among individuals in Hong Kong and Taiwan. The scales included Smartphone

Application-Based Addiction Scale (SABAS), Internet Gaming Disorder Scale-Short Form (IGDS-SF9), and the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS), used among individuals in Taiwan and Hong Kong. The quantitative study involved different subsamples from Taiwan (n=336) and Hong Kong (n=306). It was indicative that the original unidimensional structures of SABAS, BSMAS, and IGDS-SF9 confirmed the factorial analysis through the same in both subcultures. The unidimensional structures of the BSMAS and IGDS-SF9 did not vary across the two Chinese cultural areas, i.e., Taiwan and Hong Kong, according to the results. The SABAS also established invariance of measurement after some model modifications.

Similarly, Turel et al. conducted a study in the year, (2018, pp. 84-88) which examined the distortion in time and the individual's participation in non-social media use tasks. The tasks involved cues concerning social media that consider the high risk of addiction in terms of social media. The study also aimed to understand the versatility of the at-risk v/s low/no-risk classification of the said distortion. The study concluded that the at-risk group portrayed compelling higher or ascending estimation of time bias and the low/no-risk group portrayed convincing lower or descending estimation of time bias. The bias characterised conclusive positive correlation with the scores of addition concerning the use of Facebook. It was also influential, during its combination

with estimates of self-reported use of Facebook, which increased in extent, in classifying people to the two categories.

Social Networks and social networking sites have been trending ever since the introduction of New Media in the community. Monacis et al. conducted a study in the year (2017, pp. 178-186) along the same lines of social media and social networking sites to shed light on the prevalence of its use. The study aimed at testing the Italian version's psychometric properties of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS). It also provides empirical data of 769 participants for the relationship between the styles of attachment and social networking sites addiction. The invariant measurement hence, entrenched and settled at configuring, exacting invariances, and metrics athwart age groups, and at configuring the levels of metric values across gender groups. Several indicators supported internal consistency. The theoretical associations between addiction to Social Networking Sites and styles of attachment was also generally supported. (Hawi & Samaha, 2016, pp. 576-586) also investigated the association between Social Media Addiction, Self-Esteem, and Life Satisfaction. The study attempted to provide and dispense to the information and peoples' understanding that was boosting and strengthening this phenomenon. The study examined the accord and conjunction between self-esteem, social media addiction, and the said satisfaction with

University students' lives. The results indicated that a singular determinant model of SMAQ had remarkable psychometric features and characteristics and altitudinous internal consistency. Also, the use of social media in terms of addictive behaviours adversely related to self-esteem, and the latter had a definitive and conclusive concordance with life satisfaction

Social Media scales have also proven to be an evident source of research material which The validation of the Social Media Disorder Scale by Eijnden et al. in the year (2016, pp. 478-487). It consists of symptomatic cessations to differentiate between discombobulated and high-appealing comfortable 2198 social media users. The results portrayed that almost all items of the short social media disorder scale demonstrated heightened awareness and exactitude. A few platforms involving social media users elicited a heightened danger than the rest. The discombobulated patterns of eating users altered and contrasted from comfort food users, specifically in the number of posts that they disseminated on social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp and Facebook.

Factors Affecting Social Media Addiction

Since the world debate on nature v/s nurture is ongoing since forever, the factors influencing each aspect of an individual's life depends on these two significant factors. However, comprehending the factors that play

an evident role in an individual's ability to be addicted or abuse social media depends entirely on the pattern part of the debate. The following are studies which focus on the various factors that have affected social media addiction in different contexts and cultures. Since the number of research studies involves similar themes, the researchers have analysed the studies based on critical themes.

In 2019, Lian et al. (pp. 22-29), (Zhou & Leung, pp. 1-17) and, (Mamun & Griffiths, pp. 628-633) studied the effects of social media on human life and its consequences on human health in terms of recognised social network sites (SNS)-game addiction and gratifications, aloofness, convenient disinterest, self-respect, and constant use of games on social networking sites. The studies independently conducted involved 342 and 300 participants, respectively. The results indicated the following predictors of social media effects on human life:

- i. Issues like fixation of online life and web-based life and the effect of online life on Indian youth and attempted to focus on how to defeat this dependence.
- ii. Desolation and convenient disinterest significantly anticipated the extent of the use of games on social networking websites and the heightened possibility of addiction
- iii. Male Social Networking Sites game addicts involved leisure activities, being aloof, disinterested

and excited by successfully conquering artificial or fake money and achievement as a sense of accomplishment

- iv. Self-esteem insignificantly predicted addictive behaviours towards the use of Facebook.
- v. The prevalence of Facebook Addiction was 39.7%
- vi. Being single and having less or no involvement in activities that pertained to physical fitness predicted the dangers of the rise in addictive behaviours towards using Facebook. It also disturbance in sleep, exposure to Facebook, and symptoms of depression.

In 2018, (Nayak, pp. 164-173) and (Durak, pp. 1-15) aimed to determine the effects of addiction, performance and adolescents' smartphone usage on their socio-demographic details. The studies aimed to examine the variables related to nomophobia. The studies individually conducted involved 429 high school students and 786 students, respectively. The results of their quantitative research studies included:

- i. Females tend to use smartphones more often than males.
- ii. The severity of the performance in male students portrayed as a result of the study
- iii. Excluding developmental changes and attitudes, female students were hardly affected by the effects of Smartphone addiction, unlike the male students who neglected

- work, felt anxious and lost control of themselves.
- iv. The adolescents' nomophobia levels were average
 - v. Noncommunication, a sub-determinant on the scale of nomophobia, was at the highest level.
 - vi. Addictive behaviours towards the use of social media also most significantly correlated with adolescents' nomophobia behaviour levels.
 - vii. Locus of control portrayed the least conclusive and definite association with nomophobia behaviour levels.

However, in 2017, studies from various researchers focused on assessing various social media platforms as predictors of differentiated behaviours of young adults and high school students. Shettar et al. (pp. 325-329) assessed the patterns of one social media network, i.e. Facebook and the participants' use of Facebook on loneliness. The study involved students from the Yenepoya University, i.e. 100 post-graduate students, and the results indicated that an additional one-fourth (26%) portrayed addictive behaviours towards the use of Facebook, and 33% determined a probability of showing addictive behaviours towards using Facebook. The existence of positive correlations associating the intensity of addictive behaviours towards Facebook and the extent of experiences of desolation and aloofness also portrayed.

Similarly, in 2017, (Ahmed & Sathish, pp. 21-42), Nagaddya et al. (pp. 187-193), (Longstreet & Brooks, pp. 73-77) and, Shensa et al. (pp. 150-157) also studied the influence of social media and social media games on differentiated behaviours. The studies conducted on adolescents and young adults involved 286, 280, and 207 students, respectively. The results that apart from the Combined Technology Acceptance Model and Theory of Planned Behaviour constructs Perceived Enjoyment, Flow and Social Network Intensity has a significant impact on Behavioral Intention and Use Behaviour towards Social Network Game. 68.9% of adolescents think messages, images, broadcasts with content deemed as pornographic or sexually shared/posted on online platforms in terms of social networking, varied in their sexual behaviour. Variables that mainly elucidated the amount of disclosure of the content on the social network platforms on the sexual behaviour of adolescents, that involved gender (male), use of social networking sites during holidays and using social sites for leisure activities. Life satisfaction has essentially vital impacts on generalised internet addiction and specific addictive behaviours towards social media. For individuals who are addicted, the existence of deep-rooted issues results in demoting and deteriorating their level of satisfaction and propulsive continuation of elevated addictive behaviours towards technologies involving the internet. PSMU was associated with an elevation in the

symptoms of clinical depression. The portrayal of an increase in the recurrence of the use of social media was also permanently related to a heightened syndrome of clinical depressive. PSMU mainly determined the association between SMU and depressive symptom.

Blackwell et al. conducted a research study in (2017, pp. 69-72) examining whether factors such as Neuroticism, Attachment Styles, Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), and Extraversion predicted the use of social media and addictive behaviours towards the same amidst young adults. FOMO has always been a topic of opaque research in several domains of studies. However, this particular study paved the way for readers and future researchers to understand the said factors as predictors of social media addiction and related misbehaviours. The results of the study concluded that younger age, neuroticism, and fear of missing out predicted the excessive use of social media amidst the said participants. Fear of missing out (FOMO) also anticipated addictive behaviours towards social media. Prevention and anxiety in terms of attachment also indicate the addictive behaviours towards the use of social media among participants.

In 2016, Shah et al. (pp. 24-26), Nath et al. (pp. 1-10), (Kircaburun, pp. 64-72) studied the conflict arising from adolescent and parent relationships, evaluate Internet addiction gains an accurate understanding of the pervasiveness, precautionary factors,

and harmful effects that frequently relate to the disorder. The studies also aimed at determining the unambiguous and indefinite impact of regular use of internet sources, addictive behaviours of social media and self-esteem to levels of depression among evaluated adolescents involved in the experimentation of a model. The study included high school students and young adults involving 188 medical students and 1130 adolescents, respectively. The studies conferred and concluded that cultural societies as similar to India, scurrying towards urbanisation and development which includes segregation between parents and adolescents over the use of the said sites as well as concerning monetary systems to independence and escort, as promoted by similar activities. The canvass also accentuates that the value-based systems and lifestyle play an essential role in finding solutions to similar conflicts. 46.8% of medical students resulted in an increased risk of Internet addiction due to expanded years of exposure to online platforms. Men were further prone to progress into an online relationship. Disproportionate use of the internet also resulted in inadequate and deficient administration in college and feeling dismal, worried, and clinically depressed. Social media addiction and self-esteem predict 20% of regular use of the internet. Clinical depression also remains correlated with self-respect and regular use of internet unambiguously. Similarly, addictive behaviours toward social media were affecting depression ambiguously.

Social Media Use and Addiction during COVID 19

The present COVID Crisis has played an essential role in disheveling the lifestyles of individuals regardless of culture and age. However, there has been a vast population that has found it easier to get accustomed to the new normal and the new lifestyle, whereas, the other half of individuals are still finding it hard to transition amidst the trying times. There have been several research studies which focussed on the effect of social media and media influences on individuals during the present COVID-19 situation. Most of them are solely due to understanding the effects of social distancing and determining the tampering effects of the same. The studies selected for this literature review consists of latest research studies conducted in the year 2020.

Allcott et al. (2020, pp. 629-676) focussed and aimed to study the acceleration and progression of social media that influenced anticipation about the possible communal benefits and concerns about sabotaging such as clinical depression, addictive behaviours, and political dissipation. In a randomised examination, the researchers found that making the participants' Facebook account inactive for a month before the 2018 U.S. midterm election influenced and resulted in a significant reduction in online activities, while an evident increase in offline activities involving viewing television privately and mingling with family and friends.

There was a reduction in news knowledge which is factual as well as a political stance-elevated perceptible contentment. There is a continual abatement in post-test results of using Facebook among respondents.

In China, Li et al. in the year (2020) conducted a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of social media posts that originated from Wuhan, Chinese from the online journal podium, Weibo during the initial stages of the pandemic, i.e. COVID-19. The collection of 115,299 WeChat posts during the period involved a mean of 2956 posts daily, implying a lowest of 0 and highest 13,587. The statistical analysis found a decisive and beneficial inter relationship between the statistic of Weibo posts and the aggregate count of disclosed cases from the city. It was roughly ten additional cases of COVID-19 per 40 online posts concerning social media. This size of the aftermath was also more compelling and essential than the measurement and monitoring for the remainder of China that Hubei Province in Wuhan. They believed when contemplating the estimated number of posts of Weibo to the occurrence of the amplitude of cases in Hubei. The interpretative analysis of 11,893 posts concurrently the first 21 days of the study period with COVID-19-related posts uncovered four forerunner classifications. It eliminated We Chat discussions about the dominant and outstanding originator of the endemic, altering hygienic and sanitation traits of the outbreak, the reaction of the

public to outbreak control and the responsible feedback measures. The results also provided acumen into the beginning and initiation of the outbreak. The basis of evaluation involved the statistical and interpretative analysis of data of Chinese social media in Wuhan City.

Since the catastrophe is dependent on the large-scale change of individual behaviour and several situations that are significant cognitive weights and stresses on individuals, acumen from the communal and developmental sciences assisted in aligning human behaviour based on recommendations of epidemiologists and public health experts. (Bavel, et al., 2020, pp. 460-471) focusses on pieces of evidence originating from a broad range of investigative topics that coincide with universality. It involves studies on deviating and directing threats, sociocultural influences an individual's behaviour, scientific communication, appropriately moral decision-making and leadership. The paper introduced three primary and essential factors that barricaded the path of precaution. The factors involved:

- i. Individuals being careless of the dangers they run.
- ii. It was also opposed to human characteristics for individuals to confine themselves and restrict their physical movements in timid isolation as a method of guarding others
- iii. People unintentionally manoeuvred

as an enduring danger to themselves and others.

The study provided visions that originated from the last century of work on the relevant topics in communal and developmental sciences that assists the officials of public health to anticipate the impingement and massive effect of the current pandemic.

(Roy, et al., 2020, pp. 1-15) conducted a research study during the current pandemic, that aimed to assess the amount of knowledge, behaviour, experiential anxiety, and personal needs of healthcare in terms of mental well-being amidst the adult Indian population. The conduction of the study involved the administration of a semi-structured questionnaire through an online survey study. A total of 662 responses were received. The study also concluded that The results indicated that an intermediate or piddling level of knowledge about the pandemic and sufficient knowledge about the behaviour towards COVID-19 portrayed the willingness of people to follow the guidelines of the government concerning quarantined lockdown and social distancing. The levels of anxiety levels were high. 80 % of the respondents were worried about the understanding of the pandemic. 72% of the participants emphasised on the absolute necessity to adopt the use of gloves and sanitisers. Difficulties in sleep patterns and paranoia about individuals amassing COVID-19 infection and the discomobulation relevant to social

media reported in 37.8 %, 12.5 %, and 36.4 % respondents, respectively.

There is an enormous aggregate of people vitiated by the COVID-19, which is expeditiously progressing worldwide, common apprehension and anguish among the general public inflated in several regions. Fear and worry have also risen in the eyes of society. Similarly, (Lin, 2020, pp. 1-21) conducted a study to shed light along the same lines. The findings indicated that the accurate reports or news and knowledge published on various online platforms, including social media, the angst and disfigurement tended to deteriorate. The Facebook event, "I am ok, you get the medical mask first" conveyed information of a pharmaceutical preventive, therapeutic mask, unnecessary for each individual. However, the superlative and ultimate effect of using the same masks results in abandoning them to those who genuinely need them. Depoux et al. in the year (2020, pp. 1-12) emphasised on the fact that information travels faster over online platforms, mainly social media and stampede and dismay spread among individuals was more rapid than the virus itself. The study aimed to highlight the impact of reporting in the media and the sentiments of the general public. The influence claimed regarding the decision making processes and the discontinuation of particular services in the public and private sectors, involved airline services which are usually unreasonable and asymmetric to the appropriate needs of public health. The constructed principle

resulted in images highlighted the physical aspect of the critical situation during COVID-19. It implied visual images of isolation and lockdown. The principle was associated with the community in terms of people and places, that bracketed and allied with the visual symbolism involving Chinese eating outlets, Chinese excursionists, and other encumbrances from Asia. It was preeminent in extensive and widespread disbelief and upheaval of racist discrimination.

(Kadam & Atre, 2020, pp. 50-62) also aimed to portray a record and narrative explanation of responses through social media and the general society to the pandemic that affected its medical jurisdiction regulations in India. India has over 350 million individuals who use social media regularly and a considerably large percentage or degree of who are unaware of fact-checking sources. The impact of social media effectively used to control Ebola. The acceptance of the Ebola vaccine and other vaccines recommended measures. These measures involved circumstantial and credible information system of sharing and an integrative and incorporating team of experts in gathering dossier and accurately interpreting from a series of online platforms concerning social media. The social media platforms helped to apprehend and appreciate peoples' perspectives and feelings and disclose initial signals of falsity and obfuscation.

Similarly, Gao et al. (2020, pp. 1-20) aimed to construe the popularity

and dissemination of two significant mental disorders, that involved anxiety and depression in association with the Chinese population. The study examines the same relationships with the exposure to online platforms concerning social media through quick assessments during COVID-19 outbreak. The study concluded that the significantly elevated prevalence of mental health problems was definitely and categorically associated with frequent exposure time concerning social media during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. The significance of anxiety, depression and the combination of the two found to be 22.6%, 48.3%, and 19.4% respectively, during COVID-19 pandemic in Wuhan, China. It also conferred that more than 80% of the respondents also self-reported being frequently exposed to social media.

Above all, the misinformation from social media and its effects on the population overall was quite significant. Therefore, to throw light on the same, Pennycook et al. in the year (2020), investigated why people believe and spread accurate content on the news about the pandemic, COVID-19. The study tested an intervention which intended to enhance the factuality of the content that people communicate on social media. Transversely, two studies involving more than 1,600 participants, the researchers imperatively found evidence and assistance for the interpretation and notion that individuals disseminate inaccurate and unreal news about COVID-19

in section or sectors because individuals unsuccessfully think sufficiently about the possibility of reliable content. There were two studies conducted. It conferred that participants were discriminating between certain and unreal news, primarily when individuals determine what they would publish or circulate content on social media, relevant to when individuals are questioned directly regarding the certainty of information. Participants who were engaged in more analytical thinking and had more excellent scientific knowledge also discerned in their beliefs. It found an uncomplicated indication and expression at the origination of the study. It meant questioning participants to assimilate the veracity and truthfulness of a non-COVID-19-related headline. It also implied more than doubled the level of true discernment in participants' sharing intentions.

Need for the Study

The primary need for this study is to understand the prevalence of attitudes of individuals in India towards social media addiction and to use social media, which has elevated due to the lockdown. The Literature reviews can be concluded and conferred with the fact that most studies focus on how individuals tend to use social media during the lockdown and pandemic, in order to understand and stay aware and updated with information, in some cases, misinformation. The paper also aims at validating and determining the reliability of the shortened version of

the Social Media Addiction Survey, used in this study.

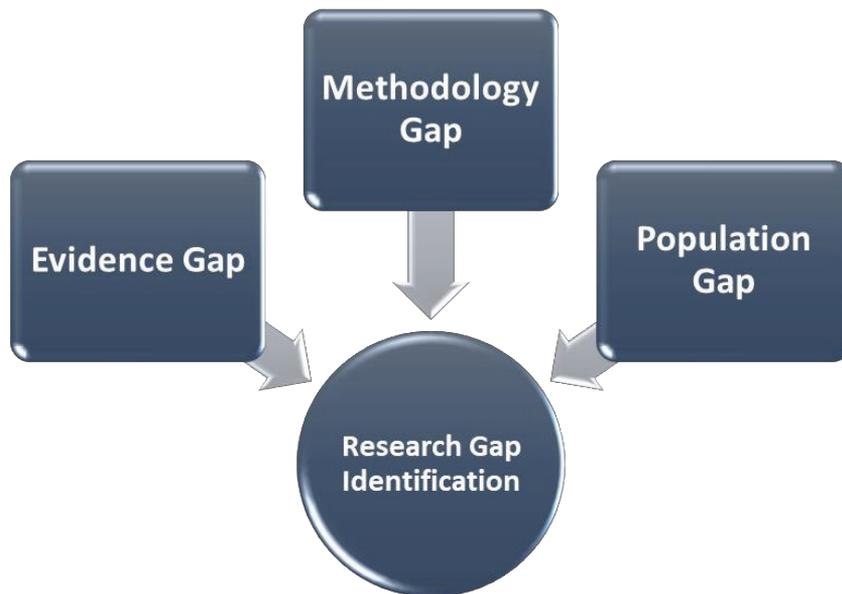
Research Gap Identification

- i. Evidence Gap, which implies that the findings from prior studies have also mentioned a significant influence in the use of social media among populations, perhaps, the results are contradictory when examined from a different perspective and more abstract perception.
- ii. Methodological Gap implies the necessity of a repertoire of methodologies in research studies to generate novel observations and acumen to avoid inaccurate results. Especially during the trying times

of the pandemic, which has influenced a massive population of individuals, the methodological gap in this research involves the lack of research studies determining social media addiction on Indian young adults. There are not enough research studies which determines the validation and reliability of the Social Media Addiction, Short Form Version.

- iii. Population Gap implies that the research concerning the inadequately represented population that remains under-researched in the evidence base or prior research. The recent literature has proved a population gap among the Indian Youth.

Figure 2
Research Gap Identification



Methods and Materials

Research Question

i. What is the prevalence and significance of the abuse of social media and its' addiction during the present COVID-19?

Participants

The participants chosen for this study were young adults of mixed gender between the ages of 18 to 30. The gender ratio included 44.3% (n=90) male respondents and 55.7% (n=113) respondents. The age groups divided into three groups namely, 18-22, 23-26 and 27-30; the percentage ratio included 25.6% (n=52) participants differed between ages 18-22; 41.4% (n=84) participants differed between ages 23-26 and 33% (n=67) participants differed between ages 27-30. All the participants' educational qualifications were from PUC or +2 to PhD. It found that 14.8% (n=30) participants belonged to a Joint Family, while the rest 85.2% (n=173) participants belonged to nuclear family background. All the participants were either familiar with or utilised a variety of online platforms for social media, i.e. Instagram, Facebook, SnapChat, Twitter, YouTube, and WhatsApp.

Tools and Measures

The data was collected online from a Google Form carefully curated by the researchers. The data collection process involved the following three forms:

Informed Consent Form

The informed consent form is a brief

introduction of the purpose of the study, along with the Terms and Conditions. Since all the participants were adults, the consent form also included the Confidentiality terms for ethical considerations.

Demographic Details Sheet

The demographic details form consisted of general contact information of all the participants such as Name, Age, Gender, Educational Qualifications, Occupation, E-mail, Phone Number, Marital Status, Type of Family, and the Social Media Platforms they are part. The social media platforms included in this sheet were YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. According to a survey by (Clement, 2020), an approximate of 2 billion internet users use social networks. This number has been increasing since mobile apps, and social networks through mobile phones are gaining traction.

Social Media Addiction Questionnaire

The Social Media Addiction Questionnaire originates from the Social Media Addiction Scale (Sahin, 2018). The questionnaire was used on the participants to understand their attitudes and behaviours towards using Social Media. The Social Media Addiction-Student Form is a 5-point Likert scale consisting of 29 items. These items involve four factors or determinants, i.e., practical problem, virtual tolerance, practical information and virtual communication. The analysis implemented statistically

indicated that the reliability and validity of the scale evaluate the addictions concerning social media of school students in high school, secondary school and in university. Internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) of the original scale was 0.93 for the entire scale and the respective values differing and extending from .81 to .86 for each of the determinants. The test-retest coefficient was 0.94.

However, for this study, the questionnaire was modified to fit the clinical settings of the Indian participants. The primary goal of the questionnaire is to determine or estimate and evaluate the levels of addiction among Indian young adults. The five-point Likert Scale in the 20-item questionnaire required participants to rank certain statements ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". Participants rate the frequency of each experience on the five-point Likert Scale with the following:

The five-point Likert Scale did not provide scores as referred to "1" implying "Strongly Disagree"; "2" implying "Disagree"; "3" implying "Neither Agree nor Disagree"; "4" implying "Agree"; and "5" implying "Strongly Agree". The reminder to the participants made that there were no right or wrong answers for their choice. The scale is aimed at understanding the attitudes and behaviours of participants towards social media use. It is conducted explicitly during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Procedure

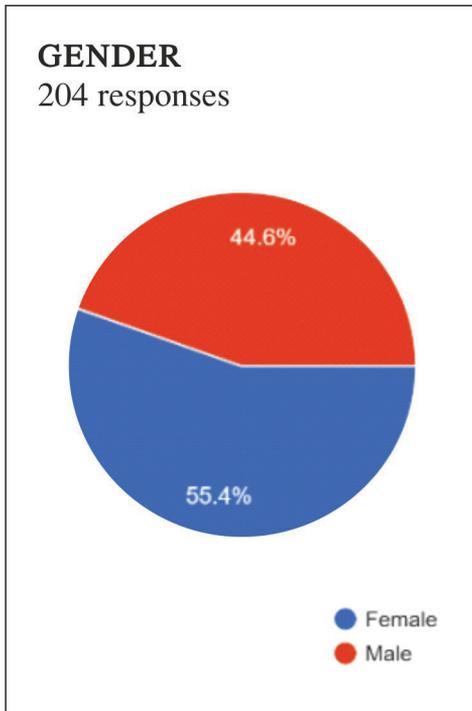
This study is a quantitative study which involves a survey method that was provided to participants of ages between the years 18 to 30 of age through an online platform using Google Form. The participants expected to read the consent form and acknowledge that they have understood the same. The participants filled in the demographic details sheet, which consisted of their primary and general information, post which the participants were required to answer the questionnaire. After submitting the form, a note from the researchers declaring that their responses will remain confidential and used for research purposes. The data was analysed using SPSS 21. The conduction of the reliability test, as well as the validity test, portrays the credibility of the questionnaire. Since the questionnaire is a short form of the original survey, the simple one-sample t-test conducted intends an understanding of the significance of each item concerning the 204 participants' responses.

Results

The study aims to understand the prevalence of attitudes of individuals in India towards social media addiction. Also, the participants' using social media has elevated with time spent, due to the lockdown using the modified version of Social Media Addiction Questionnaire by (Sahin, 2018). The study conducted on 204 young adults between the ages of 18

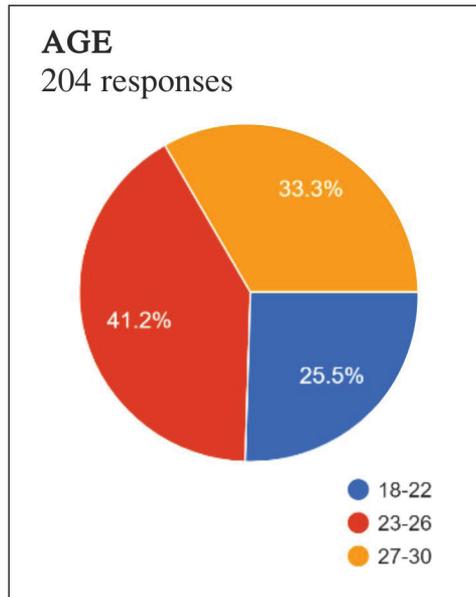
to 30 through an online survey method of data collection using Google Form. The demographics of the participants have been portrayed in the following pie charts, respectively:

Figure 3
The ratio of Gender of the 204 Participants



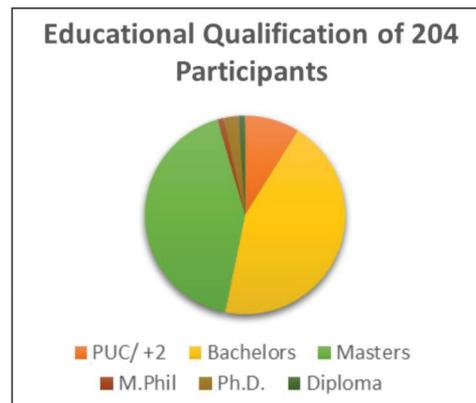
The age of the participants categorised into three groups, i.e. 18-22; 23-26 and 27-30, to have a clearer and systematised method of collecting data. The Age Ratio of the participants was as follows:

Figure 4
The ratio of Age of the 204 Participants



The educational qualification of the participants ranged from PUC/ +2 to PhD scholars. The ratio of the participants in this aspect is as follows:

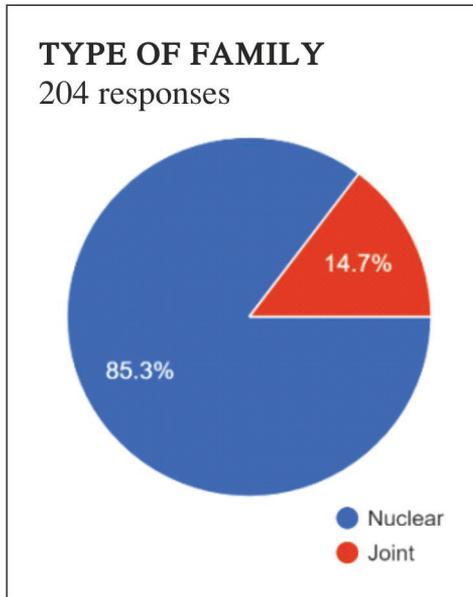
Figure 5
Showing the ratio of educational qualifications of the participants



The ratio of Type of Family of the 204 Participants

Figure 6

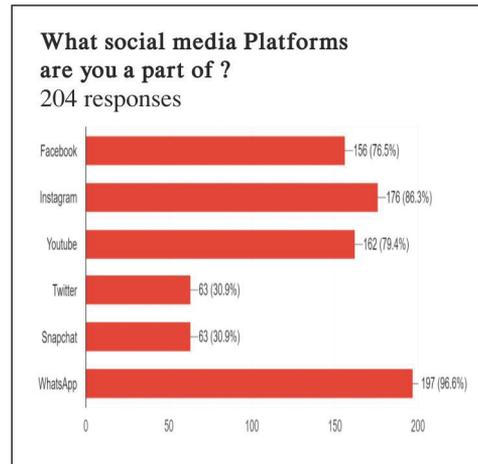
The ratio of Type of Family of the 204 Participants



The participants chose the number of Social Media Platforms that they use. The social media platform options provided to the respondents were Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Snapchat and WhatsApp. The graph of the ratio is as follows:

Figure 7

Showing the Social Media Platforms that the 204 participants are a part of



The researchers also conducted the Reliability and Validity Test. Inter-item validity was significant at 0.01 level, i.e. at a 99% confidence interval. The reliability of a test refers to how accurately and sufficiently a test measures what it should. Internal consistency coefficient, according to the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.896, as shown in the table below.

Table 2

The Reliability Statistics through the Cronbach's Alpha and the Number of Items in the Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.896	20

Source: Primary Source

To comprehend the attitudes of the participants towards Social Media and their addiction in using it during the lockdown, the researchers conducted one-sample t-test.

Table 3

One-Sample t-test with Test Value 3 and the significance of each item with the responses of the participants

Test Value=3				
Item of the Questionnaire	t	df	Sig (2 tailed)	Main difference
SMA1	5.471	202	.000**	.4089
SMA2	-1.444	202	.150	-.1281
SMA3	.995	202	.321	.0985
SMA4	-4.146	202	.000**	-.3941
SMA5	-10.543	202	.000**	-.8621
SMA6	-6.064	202	.000**	-.4778
SMA7	-19.459	202	.000**	-1.3448
SMA8	-8.645	202	.000**	-.7044
SMA9	-4.805	202	.000**	-.4187
SMA10	-3.906	202	.000**	-.3005
SMA11	7.731	202	.000**	.6355
SMA12	-2.653	202	.009*	-.2069
SMA13	-10.639	202	.000**	-.7980
SMA14	-14.547	202	.000**	-.9901
SMA15	-2.608	202	.010**	-.1970
SMA16	.385	202	.701	.0345
SMA17	11.528	202	.000**	.8424
SMA18	2.303	202	.022**	.1872
SMA19	-7.181	202	.000**	-.5862
SMA20	-5.389	202	.000**	-.4581

** 99% Confidence Interval (p < 0.01)

* 95% Confidence Interval (p < 0.05) Source: Primary Source

The table above portrayed every one of the twenty items in the questionnaire and compared with the level of significance level at a 99% confidence interval and 95% confidence intervals of the participants' responses. The table also represents the test value, i.e. 3, and the standard deviation to the participant's responses. As portrayed, the items "I look for internet connectivity everywhere so as to go on social media"; "Going on social media is the first thing I do when I wake up in the morning"; and "I notice that my productivity has diminished due to my social media use" are not significant to the test value of the participants' responses as the p values are 0.150, 0.321 and 0.701 respectively. This value indicates the other items in the questionnaire are significant to the participants' responses during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown.

As it is evident, the standard error of mean is inversely proportional to the t-value and therefore, the smaller the p-value. Similarly, in Table 4.0.2., the following items have proven to be significantly valid with most of the participants' responses concerning their t scores:

- i. The participants prefer friendships and interpersonal relationships in real life, as opposed to online or virtual relationships on social media, i.e. $t(202) = -19.459$, $p=0.000$
- ii. The participants do not feel unhappy when they are absent from social media over some time, i.e.

$t(202) = -14.547$, $p=0.000$

- iii. The participants remain uncompelled to depreciate or lessen the time they spend online, especially concerning social media platforms, i.e. $t(202) = -10.639$, $p=0.000$

- iv. A life beyond using social media remains meaningful for the participants, i.e. $t(202) = -10.543$, $p=0.000$

- v. They do not express themselves better with the people they contact through social media, i.e. $t(202) = -8.645$, $p=0.000$

- vi. They do not pass over their work sometimes to spend additional time on social media platforms, i.e. $t(202) = -7.181$, $p=0.000$

- vii. They refuse or withhold using social media when there are around people, i.e. $t(202) = -6.064$, $p=0.000$

- viii. They are not always active on social media to be well informed about what their kin and kith share, i.e. $t(202) = -5.389$, $p=0.000$

- ix. They do not necessarily want to be seen and heard on Social Media, i.e. $t(202) = -4.805$, $p=0.000$

- x. They do not necessarily perceive social media as an escape from their world, i.e. $t(202) = -4.146$, $p=0.000$

- xi. Some of them usually prefer communicating with people through social media, i.e. $t(202) = -3.906$, $p=0.000$

- xii. Social media activities do not

necessarily lay hold on their everyday lives, i.e. $t(202) = -2.653$, $p = 0.009$ xiii. Being on social media does not necessarily excite most of the participants, i.e. $t(202) = -2.608$, $p = 0.010$

xiv. The majority of the participants' tend to browse or scroll on social media platforms as they want to

beenlightened and versed about the content that their online groups share, i.e. $t(202) = 2.303$, $p = 0.022$ xv. Most participants are also ardent to visit social media websites and platforms daily, i.e. $t(202) = 5.471$, $p = 0.000$

xvi. Most participants spend more time browsing or surfing on social media platforms when they are unattended or isolated than around people, i.e. $t(202) = 7.731$, $p = 0.000$

xvii. A majority of the participants use social media to keep informed about generally what happens around them, i.e. $t(202) = 11.528$, $p = 0.000$

The researchers decided to conduct a t-test for each item in the said questionnaire to comprehend and understand the amount of effect or influence that each item has on the mean of the participants' responses and attitudes towards their social media usage.

Conclusion

This study conducted on mixed-gendered adults was between the ages of 18 to 30 years that includes

some of the participants being single, married or engaged. Their educational qualifications range from PUC/ +2 to PhD.

Inter-item validity was significant at 0.01 level, i.e. at a 99% confidence interval. The reliability of a test refers to whether a test legitimately measures what it should measure. The internal consistency coefficient, according to Cronbach's alpha coefficient, was 0.896. It can infer from the above results that the majority of the participants are eager to use social media, browse on social media platforms to be informed about the content shared by their social media groups. They also tend to remain exposed to the internet for a more extended period of time, especially on social media platforms when they are aloof, rather than when they are around people.

Implications and Suggestions

i. The shortened version or the short form of the Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS) in this study suggested using for different populations irrespective of age group and cultural backgrounds.

ii. There is further research suggested in social media addiction domain or field among young adults and adults.

Limitations of the Study

i. Due to the time constraint of the data collection, the sample limited to 204 mixed gendered adults, between the ages of 18-30. However, if

the study permitted extra time, several more participants could be added to enhance the reliability and validity of the questionnaire used in the survey.

ii. The mixed gendered adults inconsistently disseminated among the participants. Due to this, there

was bias concerning women participants being more than men. If there was uniformity in the gender ratio, gender could have been one of the moderating variables used in the study.

iii. The educational qualifications as taken part of the demographic

details of the participants, irregularly defined into several groups (6 groups) ranging from PUC/ +2 to PhD. However, if the participants were uniformly segregated based on their educational qualifications, the accuracy of educational qualifications being a moderating variable in the study would have been appropriate. iv. Most participants also suggested the researchers could have increased the age limit from 30years to 40 years to make the study more inclusive of more members and have a broader perspective on both, adults and young adults concerning the use of social media.

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