Social Media Usage (Smu), Loneliness and Social Isolation: A Relational Study of University Students

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Abstracts

As social media sites are constantly growing, we believe that technology is an important component of today's student life, where social media have many positive effects there are some negative impact such as increasingloneliness and social alienation among youth.The respondents in this exploratory research were chosen at random (N=100, males=51 and females=49) who are enrolled incollege(s) anduniversity of district Okara.This study revealed that social isolation and loneliness are significantly different across the use of social media. This study found that youth involved in extreme use of social media are suffering from loneliness and social isolation. The study suggests that youth should be decreasing the use time ofsocial media on daily basses

Keywords: Isolation, self-esteem, melancholy, technology, social networks

Introduction

Mobile phonesare one of the most usable communication devices in the modern world and social media is a major communication media in these days. It is an online platform of networks which people use to create social networks or social relations with other people of the world. They also use social media for sharing personal or career interests, different activities, backgrounds or real-life relations, etc. The impact of social networks on youth is significant. Many people are using their laptops, tablets, computers and smart phones to getting access on for social media.There is a storm of information on our palms and under our thumbs. It is often difficult to decide where to click and where not to clickbecause one touch of can take you to a new world, where after spending a few moments, when you come back to your world, the mystery unfolds that many hours have passed here. In this electronic age

where everything is becoming part of the screen with lightning speed, emotions, feelings and thoughts have also become a part of electronic pages. It seems that the language of the generation expressing their feelings with the help of emojithat has lost the sparkle of the real words. A person suffering from selfishness and hypocrisy also suffers from loneliness in the list of five thousand friends.

According to Nicholson (2009The lack of social contact that can lead to loneliness is known as social isolation. It occurs when you are cut off from your regular social networks. A condition in which a person lacks a sense of togetherness, lacks social connection with others, has a limited number of social contacts, and has difficulty maintaining meaningful and quality relationships. Nowadays, social media has evolved into an addiction that affects everyone. Many teens and adults all around the world use social media platforms. Spending more time on social media might substitute for face-to-face conversation, making people feel isolated. Exposure to such highly idealised images of peers' lives may elicit sentiments of jealousy and the mistaken belief that others live better and more successful lives, exacerbate social isolation.

Objectives of the Study
1. To look at the influence of social media on young people's social life.
2. To investigate the relationship between social media and loneliness and social isolation.
3. To look at the elements that lead to social isolation in young people who use social media.
4. To look at the consequences of social media addiction on young people's daily life.

Research Questions
- Is there a link between social media and social alienation among teenagers?
- What are the elements of such a relationship?
- What elements in social media contribute to youth social alienation?
- What are some possible solutions to this dilemma?

Literature of Review
A research on the influence of social media on college students was undertaken by Wang et al. (2011). The researchers conducted survey study on undergraduates and graduate students from Johnson & Wales University. Many college students use social media extensively which affects their efficiency and grades.Hampton et al. (2011) conducted research on core networks, social isolation, and new media. This study was quantitative. The researchers found that there was no change in social isolation and uses of social media, but somehow social isolation was increased in last few years due to social media.

Shabir et al. (2014) investigated the social media's influence on youth. The author conducted this study on youngsters (15-30) of Bahawalpur City. This was survey type research. The researchers found that Youngsters on social media share immoral pictures and video clips which have a harmful impact on society and social groups. Anti-religious posts and links are causing divisions within committees. Negative use of social media is spoiling relations between different countries.Baecker et al. (2014) conducted research on technology to reduce

social isolation and loneliness. This research was quantitative. The researchers explored that social media was the biggest cause of social isolation and it makes people depressed.

McCord et al. (2016) conducted a Research on What are the most popular social networking platforms among college students? This study was quantitative research conducted on college students, both males and females. The researchers found that social networking site i.e.,Instagram is the most used, followed by Snap Chat and Facebook.Gok (2016) conducted research on social media's influence on students, their education, and their habits, the authors conducted this research on 18-20 years of students. This was quantitative researchthat explored that social networking sites are having a positive and negative effect on students' lives. Many students waste their time on such useless websites which having a negative effect on their education and their habits.

Kircaburun (2016) performed a self-esteem research. In Turkish teens, daily internet and social media addiction were found to be predictors of depression. The author conducted this research on 12-18 years students in southern Aegean Turkey. The researcher used the quantitative method. The researcher found that social media addiction is having an indirect effect on adolescents. It increases depression and lowers self-esteem among adolescents.Levenson at al. (2016) conducted a study Sleep disturbance in young adults is linked to their usage of social media. The authors conducted this research on young adults ages 19-32. This was quantitative research. The researchers discovered that growing social media use is disrupting young individuals' sleep patterns, harming their physical health and well-being. Twenge, Martin and Spitzberg (2016) conducted a study on the Digital media's rise, television's decline, and print's (near) collapse. The researchers conducted this research on middle and high school students of grade 8th, 10th and 12th. This was quantitative research. The researchers found that with the advent of digital media since the 2000's, Young people are spending more time on social media than on traditional media. The tendency of children to read books is rapidly declining.Jan, Soomro and Ahmad (2017) conducted a study on social media's effect on self-esteem. The authors conducted this research on students from institute of business management. This was quantitative research. The study identified a strong link between social media use and self-esteem. Excessive media use might result in low self-esteem.

Primack et al. (2017) investigated the use of media platforms and feelings of social isolation in young adults in the U.s.This study was quantitative. The authors explored that the adults which were the users of social media, were more socially isolated or victim of isolation.Sabti, Singh, and Jha (2017) did a study on the influence of social media on society at large and teens in particular. This was quantitative research. The author found that social media impacts on health sectors, education sectors, markets, people's behaviors and activities. The rate of cybercrime has increased due to social media which is becoming the sign of danger for the society.

Hunt at al. (2018) conducted a study on limiting social media decreases loneliness and depression. The authors conducted this research on undergraduate students at University of Pennsylvania. This study was quantitative research. The authors explored that people who used social media less often have less loneliness and anxiety.Marker, Gnambs and Appel

(2018) conducted researchon the relationship between academic achievement and online social networking. The researchers used quantitative method on this research. The researchers found that adolescents' lives have become more dominated by social networking sites. Keles, McCrae and Grealish (2020) conducted research on the Depression, anxiety, and psychological distress are all influenced by social media. The authors conducted this research on 13-28 years of adolescent. The researchers found that Social media usage is causing anxiety, loneliness and depression among adolescents.Doolan (2019) Conducted research on the link between using social media, loneliness, and social isolation. This research was quantitative. The author founded that constantly use of social media was a highest ranking reason of social isolation of the persons.

Twenge, spitzberg and Campbell (2019) conducted research on Adolescents have less social interactions with their peers in person.. This was quantitative research. The researchers found that the use of social media is creating alienation among adolescents. The children are present in social groups but using social media they do not communicate with each other which is causing loneliness.Atarodi, Rajabi and Atarodi (2020) conducted research on Young teenagers' cell phone use and social alienation. The authors conducted this research on college students. This was qualitative and quantitative research. The study explored that mostly teenagers misuse technological applications. The excessive use of mobile phones technology is causing social alienation among users especially teenagers.

Nesi (2020) conducted a study on the influence of social media on juvenile mental health. The author conducted this research on adolescents. This was quantitative research.The researcher found that the Adolescents' mental health is being impacted by their usage of social media.Meshi and Ellithorpe (2021) conducted research on the There is a distinction between social support obtained in person and social support received through social media. This study was quantitative. The researcher founded that actual social sustenance was taking the association among difficult Use of social media and mental health.

Methodology

This study used quantitative approach. The students in district Okara were selected as the population of the study using following inclusion criteria:

- The student should be studying in higher secondary or undergraduate program
- The student may be of public or private college/university
- The student may belong to any region of the county but [s]he must be studying in District Okara.

The study used simple random sampling to approach the selected sample size of 100 respondents (25 respondents from each selected college or university). The study use face to face interview schedule for data collection in the field survey. A 20-item UCLA The respondents' subjective emotions of loneliness were measured using a loneliness scale, as well as feelings of social isolation. The despondences ate each Statement as O= ("frequently feel this way"), S ("Occasionally feel this way"), R ("I rarely feel this way"), N ("I never feel this way"), coded as 1 = O to N = 5.

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Results

Table 1

Frequency and percentage distribution of the demographic variables

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
15-19	34	30.6
20-24	66	59.5
25-29	11	9.9
Gender		
Male	51	45.9
Female	60	54.1
Residence		
Urban	37	33.3
Rural	73	65.8
Education		
illiterate	2	1.8
Secondary	2	1.8
Higher	107	96.4

Table 1 comprised the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents' demographic variables. The table showed that the highest percentage of the respondents (59.5%) belong to the age groups of 20-24 years. The lowest percentage of the respondents (9.9%) belong to the age group of 25-29 years. The table also showed that the highest percentage of the respondents (54.1%) female participants. The male percentage of the respondents was 45.9%. The table showed that the highest percentage of the respondents belongs to rural area (65.8%). However, 45.9% of the respondentsbelongs to urban area.

Table

One Way Analysis of Variance of Isolation and Loneliness of students by use of social media

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	*p*
	Between Groups	94.237	3	31.412	7.215	.000
Isolation	Within Groups	461.481	106	4.354		
	Total	555.718	109			
	Between Groups	494.648	3	164.883	4.802	.004
loneliness	Within Groups	3639.543	106	34.335		
	Total	4134.191	109			

Table 2 comprised the results of the One-Way analysis of variance. The table showed that the isolation is significantly different across the use of social media, $F(3, 109)=7.215$, $p=0.000$. The table also showed that the loneliness of the youth is significantly different across use of social media, $F(3, 109)= 4.802$,$p=0.004$.

Table 3

One Way Analysis of Variance of Isolation and Loneliness of students by time of use of social media

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Isolation	Between Groups	62.411	3	20.804	4.470	.005
	Within Groups	493.307	106	4.654		
	Total	555.718	109			
loneliness	Between Groups	1580.975	3	526.992	21.879	.000
	Within Groups	2553.216	106	24.087		
	Total	4134.191	109			

Table 3 comprised the results of the One-Way analysis of variance. The table showed that the isolation is significantly different across the time of use of social media, $F(3, 109)= 20.804$, $p=0.005$. The table also showed that the loneliness of the youth is significantly different across time use of social media, $F(3, 109)=21.879$, $p=0.000$.

Discussion

The goal of this study is to determine the link between social media use and juvenile social alienation. Previous research has primarily focused on the positive benefits of social media, leaving gaps such as whether social media fosters social isolation. The primary goal of our research is to narrow this gap.

Siddiqui& Singh (2016) stated that social media provides platform to youth to get connected and also helpful for getting information and career objectives. Many students who are uninterested in class fear that they would be unable to express themselves on a regular basis. They have easy access to social media to share their opinions. Teachers can publish information about their classrooms, homework assignments, extracurricular activities, and school events via social media, which will be extremely beneficial to them.Because social media is so widely used, educators may teach students about digital citizenship and how to utilize the internet to be more productive.

People become envious of some people they feel are superior or better-off than them when they spend more time on Facebook and see other people's sites. According to Walther and colleagues, the majority of individuals use Facebook to keep up with what's going on in other people's lives and to criticise others based on information obtained on their accounts.Walther at al.(2008). However, such usage of social media is not promoting interconnectivity as it is surging the loneliness and isolation among youth because they used to connect with others virtually that depletes the real life. Whaite et al. (2018) and Primack et al. (2017) concluded that social media usage increasing social isolation among youth. The findings of this study supported their findings. On the contrary, the virtual popularity has also been considered as one of the indicators of connectivity.

According to BBC news study (2013), youth and students make for 67 percent of Facebook users (a well-known social media portal), illustrating that youth and students place a higher value on social media contact. Negative social media usage occurs when students participate

in unethical behaviour on social media platforms, such as posting meaningless content and releasing images that are harmful to national dignity and regard. (Sekho, 2013). Some scholars argue that the internet, not only social networking sites, has an influence on people's self-esteem. (2006) (Valkenburg, Peter, and Schouten).

Conclusion

The prime objective of the study was to explore the contributing role of the usage of social media to the social isolation of the youth. The study measured the differences of the selected variables across the social media use. It was explored that the use of social isolation and loneliness is significantly different across time period of social media use. The study concluded that the youth must be least engage with virtual interaction or the virtual interaction may be preferred when no other option is available.

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