



THE RELATIONSHIP OF FACE BOOK USAGE ON MENTAL HEALTH OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract:

This research study was an attempt made to explore the influence of Social media more explicitly, Face book on the mental health of the students in Annamalai University (the largest residential University in Asia). The sample-size for the research comprised of 100 participants from five different faculties of Annamalai University. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the samples. The tools used for data collection were standardized measures selected after a comprehensive review of related literature, specifically, (1) the Face book Intensity Scale (Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe, 2007), (2) the Mental Health Scale (Kamalesh Sharma, 2002) and (3) the Personal Information Schedule designed by the researcher. Data collection was approximately spread over duration of two months. Pearson's Moment Correlation analysis was done. Result indicated that Face book usage was negatively correlated with mental health.

Introduction:

Communication occupies an indispensable role in human life. All human relationships are intrinsically intertwined through various means of communication and established in sharing information. What is breath to life is communication significant to human growth and development. Communication has become the decisive factor in every facet of human life. The origin of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has totally changed the pattern of human communication process. The evolution of the Web has revolutionized the process of communication affecting every fascia of human life. It has unshackled novel pathways, prospects and spaces for people to interact, socialize, generate and promote their work and spread knowledge online.

The IT revolution and the digital age have paved way for the emergence of e-culture which has brought plethora of changes in our life styles and personality. We live in a world of web where Internet has become part of our self. Emails, e-banking, and e-commerce have become part of our daily routines. The modern civilization is acclimatizing to the transformations Internet technology is creating in our lives. Now with the advent of mobile technologies social media have developed into a rampant and dominant platform for social networking and information sharing. Social media displays exceedingly imperative place in the contemporary world. Empirical surveys designate that fairly sizable populace expends 25 percent of their time on social networking platforms; this set out to illustrate how pertinent and popular social media platforms have surfaced into in present scenario. Social media is the relationships that exist between networks of people (Walter and Riviera 2004).

There are numerous social networks available online for social interaction, communication and sharing information. The social networks widely utilized by common people are Face book, Instagram. UTube, Quora, Twitter, LinkedIn, Simcity, Vine, Viber and Whatsapp. However, the present study concentrates on Face book as it has the largest users especially among youth in the age group 18-25 years and most of them are college/ University students. The rationale of Face book is to provide expertise to the world to be more open and stay connected. Face book's latest mission statement

is that people use Face book to stay connected with friends and family, discover what is going on in the world and share and express what matters to them. Face book was established in 2004 in the precincts of Harvard University by a 19-year old Mark Zuckerberg. Face book has a catchphrase: "Face book is a social utility to share and express what matters to them".

At the present time it is observed that Face book has become a crucial part of almost every college student's daily life. Among social networks, Face book is the most frequently visited site compared to Google, YouTube and Twitter and similar networks.

Average time used is estimated to be 107.95 minutes daily as claimed by Marshall et al (2015).

Need for the Present Study:

Empirical researches indicate that more manpower hours are exhausted on various social networking platforms. The issue has drawn the attention of academicians in the field of higher education. The breakthroughs in the field of ICT and the surfacing of e-culture have made Internet incredibly imperative and inevitable. Globally due to the emergence of mobile technology and 4G services in recent times there is an explosion in the youth population among Internet users especially students. The prevalence of social media among the students has inexorable repercussion on their mental health.

Nowadays, as more and more time is being spent online by people, it is important to look at how this may affect the mental health of people (Melissa and Wilodt, 2015). There have been significant links between online presence and other aspects of mental health. Social comparisons develop inferiority and this shows symptoms of depression. Further it can cause irritation, exhaustion and jealousy.

Presently the psychological studies probing the consequences of social media usage among students is merely in an embryonic phase. Empirical studies on the social media usage among students from psychological perspective at International scenario are scanty and sporadic. In Indian milieu the psychological studies on social media usage appear inadequate and remote. Fragile information is available about the psychological status of the students in India on the impact of social media usage. Knowledge about the psychological consequences of social media usage is imperative for ensuring the wellbeing of students. Hence, this study is an effort to discern the impact of social media on the mental health of University students in Indian context.

Method:

Sample:

The target populations of the study were the students of Annamalai University (largest residential University in Asia) at Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu, India. The sample size for the present study comprised of 100 students pursuing undergraduate, postgraduate and M.Phil and PhD courses. Among the respondents 53% were males and 47% females. Their age range was from 18 to 31 years. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted.

Tools Used:

In this research study the following two standardized psychological scales along with a personal information schedule developed by the research investigator were used. All these tools were selected carefully after a comprehensive review of related literature.

1. Face book Intensity Scale (Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe, 2007): The Face book Intensity Scale was used to measure Face book usage, frequency, and duration. It also measures emotional connectedness to the social networking site, namely Face book.

Examples of questions used in this measure include "Face book is part of my everyday activity" and "I would be sorry if Face book shut down." Participants are asked to rank each item on a scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The score of each question was calculated by adding the appropriate number of tick mark on the five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3= neutral; 4 = agree; and 5 = strongly agree), there are no negative items in the scale. Higher values represent more involvement in facebook user.

2. Mental Health Scale (Kamalesh Sharma, 2002): The scale contains 60 items of self-affirmations type. (e.g. "you consider yourself as a lucky person). Items are rated on a three point Likert-type rating scale. Participant were asked how much the item "is true for you", ranging from "yes", "Undecided", "No". Cronbach's alpha for this sale was 0.84. In this questionnaire the score of each question was calculated by adding the appropriate number of tick mark on the three-point scale (2=yes, 1- undecided, 0=no), there is no negative item in the scale. Higher values represent higher status of mental health.

3. Personal Information Schedule: The personal information schedule was designed by the investigator of the present research to procure relevant demographic and biographic information from the respondents pertaining to this study.

Method of Data Collection:

The primary method of data collection was adopted for the present research study. The participants were contacted individually by the researcher and data was obtained through questionnaire survey following informed consent. The booklets containing three questionnaires, namely, the Face book Intensity Scale, Mental Health Scale and the Personal Information Schedule was distributed to 100 students from a wide spectrum of courses, undergraduate, postgraduate, M Phil and PhD courses. Prior to data collection due permission was obtained from the heads of respective departments. The 100 booklets were distributed and received in completed form suitable for scoring and data analysis. The data collection was approximately spread over duration of two months.

Research Design:

This study is an ex-post facto research. It is a descriptive survey research where the researcher measures the variables involved for testing the formulated hypotheses.

Statistical Analysis:

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was the inferential statistics done.

Discussion:

This study clearly demonstrates that there is a significant negative relationship between face book usage and mental health of University students. Analogous to the results of this study Pantic et al (2012) identified that online social networking is related to depression. Furthermore, a quantitative study by Meador (2014) perceived that frequency and time spent on Face book have been detrimental to mental health. Park and other four researchers (2013) found that Korean students had symptoms of depression with Face book usage. It resulted in fewer social interactions and the number of Face book friends has declined.

Concerning mental health the research of Strickland (2014) is in accordance with the results of the present study that most active social media users had a predominantly high risk for developing mental health issues. Song et al (2014) explored the relationship of mental health and face book usage and found that as sense of loneliness increased the time spent on Face book increased and online interactions make them more isolated and replace real life communications.

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Table 1: showing the correlation coefficients between mental health and Face book usage

Variable	Face Book Usage
Mental Health	- 0.284**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).