

Social-media Usage, Self-Esteem and Self-concept in Young Adults

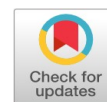
Komal Hassan ^{1*}, Safa Afzal ²

¹ Department of Home Economics, Lahore College for Women University, Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract: Practice of using social media has accelerated since the last few years. This incredible rise in demand has considerably affected users lives, and this fact has drawn researchers' attention (Güven, 2019). Usage of other social networking platforms e.g., Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat, has increased drastically in young adults. This research was attempted to develop a quantitative study on social media by looking into its association with self-esteem and self-concept among Pakistani young adults. Sample of 100 students was selected from different universities of Lahore by using a random sampling technique. A demographic information sheet and three standardized questionnaires related to social media, self-esteem, and self-concept were used. Data were analyzed through SPSS. Regression and correlation tests were used. Findings indicated that usage of social media is a predictor of self-concept and self-esteem, so it was concluded that there is a strong positive association between social media usage, self-esteem, and self-concept among young adults. There are theoretical and practical implications for educators as they ought to indulge young adults in activities that may prevent themselves from spending unnecessary time on social media, and that would be beneficial for their physical and mental health.

Keywords: Addiction, Facebook, Self-concept, Self-esteem, Snap chat, Social media usage, Whatsapp, Young adults

Received: 19 October 2021 / Accepted: 12 December 2021 / Published: 23 January 2022



INTRODUCTION

Online activities that allow "direct exchanges" between users are referred to as "social media usage" (Verdun et al., 2017). Recently, greater use of networking sites has become an international phenomena. Young adults are commonly used social media platforms in many different ways. For example, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Users can connect with friends, family, and people from different nations by using social media. It also gives an individual the opportunity to meet new people who share similar interests. People's lives are influenced by social media sites in both positive and harmful ways. However, the majority of studies in this field show that excessive usage of social media is linked to despair and a lack of mentality. Other factors that are influenced by social media include self-esteem and self-concept (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

The simplest and fastest instrument for acquiring information and connecting with friends has been termed as social media. People who access these platforms can effortlessly maintain their online social relationships and interact. Social media keeps everyone up to date on what's going on and allows users to interact with people from different cultures without time constraints. Many Facebook users stated that they use the site to check up on old friends. Young people who utilize social media believe that other people have better lives. They see beautiful photographs on media and believe that their life is perfect, and this perception has a negative impact on their well-being. There are a variety of active social media tools. Also, positive and negative effects on young adults who use social media extremely in their lives. According to studies, the impact of social media on young adults is rapidly increasing (Hawi & Samaha, 2017).

In psychology, self-esteem means an individual's overall assessment of their worth. Self-comparison is built into social media sites like Instagram and Facebook. Adults make upward and downward comparisons on social media (Smith & Andersan, 2018). Upward comparisons are related to an increase in the number of depressive symptoms and a decrease in self-esteem; downward comparisons are associated with an increase in the number of depressive symptoms and a decrease in self-esteem. It's crucial to understand how social networking sites like Facebook affect people's subjective well-being. Self-esteem can be elucidated at various stages of life in favourably

*Corresponding author: Komal Hassan

†Email: truth.komal@gmail.com

and negatively both ways. Someone with poor self-esteem may display introverted qualities such as social anxiety, loneliness, and shyness. The establishment and preservation of social capital are also linked to Facebook usage. Individuals can use these tools to get knowledge, organize themselves, and develop personal relationships (Ross et al., 2017).

Self-concept is one's cognitive identity, including self-perceptions and thoughts. Self-beliefs evolve over time and alter in response to signals from the outside world. Because of the struggle to find a true identity while remaining socially acceptable, young adults' self-concept is particularly fluid. A person's cognitive self, or self-concept, will become more stable and organized over time. One of the identity development goals is to build a stable, accurate, and positive self-concept. The process toward this goal is conceptualized by one main theory. Adolescent development is marked by a fight with identity construction inside and outside the online world. The self-concept, described as one's beliefs and thoughts about oneself, develops over time as new information about one self is acquired. Many identity theories examine young people's behaviour and development, which could be aided by online social networking sites. Adults obtain social input through Internet technologies, which influence their self-perception. Adults can immediately witness what is happening on social networking platforms (Brown, & Velthuis, 2018).

This research was conducted in the Pakistani context, and regarding it, there is a literature gap because most of such studies are conducted in abroad as the use of social media was started from European countries. So, worldwide and especially in Pakistan, this study would be important and provoking for researchers as they would further explore different hidden psychological mechanisms of social media usage. Moreover, intervention plans can be developed, and their efficacy may be examined to cope with the negative effects of social media on the overall personality of young adults.

Objectives

To assess the association between addiction of social media usage, self-esteem, and self-concept of young adults while focusing on distinct social media platforms.

Research Questions

1. What is the association between addiction of social media usage, self-esteem, and self-concept among young adults?
2. What is the association between young adults' social media usage and self-esteem? Does this relationship change while accounting for background characteristics?
3. What is the association between young adults' social media usage and self-concept? Does this relationship change when accounting for background characteristics?
4. What is the association between young adults' social media usage and their background features?

Research Hypothesis

1. Social media usage is correlated to self-esteem and self-concept.
2. The relation between social media usage and young adults' self-esteem will change on the basis of background characteristics.
3. The correlation between social media usage and young adults' self-concept will change on the basis of background characteristics.
4. Relation between social media usage and young adults 'will change based on background characteristics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media

The way people engage with one another has changed considerably over the last several decades as a result of the advent and improvement of social media sites e.g., snap chat, Facebook, etc. Individuals have been able to keep in touch with friends and family members from all around the world due to these platforms. Since the inception of Facebook at Harvard in 2004, the percentage of adults using social networks has risen substantially

(Emarketer, 2018). Snapchat is used by 78 percent, and Instagram is used by 71 percent of adults. Because of social media's popularity, these massive gains in social media use have piqued the interest of numerous scholars who have researched social media. The majority of these studies have concentrated on its use and impact on people's lives (Eksisu, Hosoglu, & Rasmussen, 2017).

Self Esteem

Self-esteem is the ability to believe in yourself. A person's entire subjective sense of personal worth or values is characterized as self-esteem. It is an important phenomenon in a person's life since strong self-esteem leads to various beneficial consequences (Baumeister et al., 2017). Some people report feeling more lonely, shy, unsociable, and apprehensive as a result of their low self-esteem (Forest & Wood, 2012). Poor self-esteem is linked to heavy social media use, according to the researchers, and people who have low levels of self-esteem mostly use social media to improve their self-esteem (Cock et al. 2014). People with low self-esteem like to stay active on social media networks to increase their popularity (Eksisu et al., 2017).

Social media users are broadly presented with photos showing idealized self-introductions, which represents a possible danger to an adult's appearance self-esteem. However, the adverse consequence might rely on sorts of Social media commitment. Young adults who effectively post updates (i.e., self-arranged online media use) may situate themselves to get positive input and appearance affirmation and subsequently show upgraded confidence. In contrast, those who, for the most part, view and react to other's posts (for example, other-situated online media use) are presented to these admired introductions while not getting positive input all alone appearance, which may bring about diminished confidence and reduced self-esteem (Steinsbekk, Wichstrøm, Stenseng, Nesi, Hygen, Skalicka, 2021). A strong relationship was found between social media use and self-esteem of young adults in the Turkish population (Kose & Dogan, 2019). Research indicated that when the usage of social media increases among adults then their self-esteem level decreases (Jan, Soomro & Ahmad, 2017).

Self-Concept

The most common unpleasant experiences online for young teens include bullying, unwanted contact, inadvertent disclosure, and misconceptions, with bullying being the most common. Unfortunately, youths who place a high value on popularity and have low self-esteem are more likely to share personal information online, making them a target for unwanted attention from friends and strangers. The way others treat adults online has an impact on their self-esteem. There are significant concerns to consider when deciding how to display oneself online and are increasingly difficult for new users to find (Boyd & Ellison, 2014).

METHDOLOGY

Research Design

This study was quantitative in nature. The survey was carried out to collect information about social media usage, self-esteem, and self-concept of young adults.

Sample

The study enlisted the participation of 100 students from Lahore's various universities. Both males and females were included. For this research, a random sampling strategy was used.

Inclusion Criteria

Unmarried young adults who were studying in Lahore were included in this study.

Exclusion Criteria

Those young adults who had some disabilities were not included in this study.

Tools for Data Collection

Three standardized instruments (including social media addiction questionnaire (developed by Hawi, & Samaha, 2017; seven-point Likert type scale, ranging from 1-7), Rosenberg self-esteem scale (developed by Rosenberg, 1965; four point Likert type scale for 10 items), and Robsen self-concept scale of 30 items (developed by Robsen,

1989) were used in this research along with a demographic information sheet.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed through SPSS. Regression analysis and correlation were applied.

RESULTS

Social Media Usage

It was highlighted that all young adults are addicted to using social media. Although, their preferred social media platforms were different as 43% of people selected Instagram as their favourite social media tool; 40.8% considered Whatsapp as their favourite social media tool; 5.8% voted for Facebook; 4.9% identified Snapchat, and 1% indicated Twitter as their preferred social media tool.

Adults use different social media tools for distinct purposes. Like the majority of the respondents use social media for entertainment purposes only while some use it for social events; others use it for meeting new people; several uses it for maintaining their social relations; very few use it for academic posts and following news/politics.

The majority of Instagram users (70%), Snapchat users (60%), Facebook users (42%), and Twitter users (24%) use their selected social media platform for their entertainment purpose only. More than half of the respondents (52%) use WhatsApp to maintain their social relations. 22% of participants use skype for maintaining their relations.

Research Question 1:

What is the association between addiction of social media usage, self-esteem, and self-concept among young adults?

Correlation test was applied to find out association of social media usage, self-esteem, and self-concept among young adults. Table 1 shows that there was positive association between social media usage, self-esteem and self-concept measures ($r = 1$, $p < 0.01$; ($r = .0.391$, $p < 0.001$); ($r = .37$, $p < 0.01$)

Table 1: Pearson correlation of each scale

	Social Media	Self-esteem	Self-concept
Social media	1	.391**	.372**
Self-esteem	.391**	1	.510**
Self-concept	.372**	.510**	1

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

Research Question 2:

What is the association between young adults' social media usage and self-esteem? Does this relationship change while accounting for background characteristics?

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of background difference in young adults' self-esteem

	Mean	SD	N
Gender			100
Males	3.59	.792	20
Females	3.38	.457	80
Age (years)			
16-18	3.29	.557	10
19-21	3.46	.425	26
22-24	3.44	.517	40
25-27	3.42	.695	24

An independent sample *t*-test was used to determine the difference in males' and females' self-esteem scores

Table 3: Hierarchical regression of self-esteem and social media usage with age and gender of young adults ($N = 100$)

Variables	B	SE	<i>P</i>	Beta	R^2	R^2
STEP 1					.158	
SMAQ	.346	.088	.367	.377	.158	
STEP 2						
Gender	-.077	.131	-.055	-.057		
Age	.020	.055	.367	.035		

Factors of variance inflation for independent variables didn't indicate multicollinearity (VIF SMAQ = 1.059); VIF age (1.015); (VIF gender = 1.075). Hierarchical multiple regression reveals that at Step 1, social media contributed significantly to the regression model, $F(5.984) p < .05$. So, controlling for respondents' background features didn't methodically change the association of self-esteem and social media usage.

Research Question 3:

What is the association of young adults' social media usage and self-concept? Does this relationship change when accounting for background characteristics? (Age and Gender)

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of background differences in the self-concept of young adults

	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Gender			100
Males	3.59	.792	20
Females	3.38	.457	80
Age (years)			
16-18	3.42	.451	10
19-21	3.49	.348	26
22-24	3.49	.483	40
25-27	3.49	.311	24

Descriptive statistics of demographic differences in self-concept of young adults as shown in Table 4. Also, an independent sample t-test was applied to find out if there was a difference in self-concept scores between males and females. Participants were 20 male and 80 female in this results. Participants were classified into 4 groups: 16 to 18 years old ($n = 10$), 19 to 21 years old ($n = 26$), 22 to 24 years old ($n = 40$) and 25 to 27 years old ($n = 24$).

Table 5: Hierarchical regression of self-concept and social media usage with age and gender of young adults ($N = 100$)

Variables	B	SE	<i>P</i>	Beta	R^2	R^2
STEP 1					.145	.145
SMAQ	.242	.067	.348	.354	.145	.145
STEP 2						
Gender	-.081	.099	-.084	-.080		
Age	.007	.042	.348	.015		

VIF for the independent variables didn't show multicollinearity (VIF SMAQ = 1.059); (VIF age = 1.015); (VIF gender = 1.075). Hierarchical multiple regression reveals that at Step 1, social media contributed significantly to the regression model, $F(5.443) p < .02$. So, controlling for respondents' background features didn't methodically change the association of social media usage and self-concept.

Research Question 4:

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of background differences in the self-concept of young adults

	Mean	SD	N
Gender			100
Males	3.56	.585	20
Females	3.22	.575	80
Age (years)			
16-18	3.05	.659	10
19-21	3.40	.518	26
22-24	3.33	.620	40
25-27	3.20	.581	24

Descriptive statistics of background differences in social media use are shown in Table 6. Participants were classified into 4 groups: 16 to 18 years old ($n = 10$), 19 to 21 years old ($n = 26$), 22 to 24 years old ($n = 40$) and 25 to 27 years old ($n = 24$).

Table 7: Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting Social Media Usage

Variables	B	SE	P	Beta
STEP 1				
SMAQ	3.981	.338	.000	
STEP 2				
Gender	-.351	.063	-.237	-.239
Age	.020	.146	.348	-.032

VIF for independent variables didn't show multicollinearity (VIF age = 1.014); (VIF gender = 1.014). The first age variable (18 to 20) was only significantly predictive of social media usage when other variables were controlled: $t = 11.761$, $p < 0.00$. the +ive slope for this variable as the predictor of social media usage ($b = 3.981$) highlighted that there was a predicted difference of social media use scale between 19 to 21 and 22 to 24 and 25 to 27 years by controlling for gender. Lower scores on social media users tend to have higher scores of self-esteem

DISCUSSION

The study's goal is to look into the relationship between young adults' self-concept, self-esteem, and use of various social media tools. Social media usage has steadily increased. Previous research was conducted by Pantic (2014). has primarily emphasized on the effect of Facebook on personal characteristics. This study focused on the effects of other social media tools on young adults' personal qualities.

In the current study, it was found that girls upload more images and spend their more time and energy using social media tools than boys. These findings are consistent with a study conducted by Kemp (2018). Most of the young individuals accessed different social network platforms many times in a day, demonstrating the frequency with which they used. This study indicated that most of the time men use social media for entertainment, and females use it for meeting new people. Sheldon (2012) discovered that young adults use many networking sites for entertainment and maintaining social relations, which supports these findings.

Self-esteem was negatively connected to social media usage, with a medium-sized effect when main biographic characteristics were taken into account. People on social media are more active for no particular reason, and sometimes they lose track of its too much use. The results of this study are consistent with previous research that indicates people like online communication more than face-to-face interaction. The impact of social media on self-concept was also discovered to be intriguing. Using social networking websites had negative consequences on self-concept, according to Liu and Larose (2015). According to the findings of this study, young individuals believe that social media websites either positively or negatively affect their self-esteem. In this study, just 1% of participants expressed negative feelings as a result of their social media use. Young individuals do not consider how social networking sites affect them.

Self-expression on the internet is beneficial to self-concept development because it provides young adults choice over how their identities are presented, giving them a sense of empowerment. Young teenagers require a space to express themselves, and that area is increasingly being found online. Valkenburger et al. (2006). showed that online users revealed more about themselves than offline in a study of 1,340 adult social media users aged 18 to 26. This is due to a better level of confidence in navigating the online environment as well as a lower level of inhibitions when speaking online.

In this study association of social media usage and self- concept gave a positive response. The responses got a positive because through social media, they feel emotionally mature. When people criticize, they never feel helpless on social media. Social media have a positive effects on young adults. The results are similar to the previous research conducted by Valkenburg and Peter (2017) because people have developed the confidence to communicate online and know how to overcome the problems.

CONCLUSION

While actual online social networking use has changed when the process of identity construction occurs, this is still the case. Adults increasingly use different social media platforms to stay connected with their friends, share images and postings, and obtain feedback on current events. According to research, adults' usage of social networking sites has beneficial and negative consequences on their self-esteem and self-concept. The study showed that young adults are active and regular social media users. Most famous and common social media sites that are used by young adults are Instagram and Whatsapp. It also revealed that the majority of young adults use social media for entertainment. The study's main findings include that young people's usage of social media is a predictor of their self-esteem, self-concept, and positive-negative effects. This findings study showed that the majority of young adults use Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat for entertainment and how much they use social media platforms in a day. Self-esteem and self-concept ve also changed the personality and perception of other people because social media has a bad effect on young adults and helps them recognize their ability to yourself.

As a result, as evidenced by current and historical studies, young adults use social media for a variety of reasons. There are theoretical and practical both implications for educators as they ought to indulge young adults in as activities that may prevent themselves to spend unnecessary time on social media, and that would be beneficial for their physical and mental health.

LIMITATIONS

A limitation of this study was the sample size because of the shortage of time only data from 100 students were collected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research didn't focus on all social media platforms separately, so for further research, it is suggested to focus on the diversity of using each social media and its effects on individuals.

REFERENCES

- Andreassen, C. S., Pallesen, S., & Griffiths, M. D. (2017). The relationship between addictive use of social media, narcissism, and self-esteem: Findings from a large national survey. *Addictive Behaviors*, *64*, 287-293. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2016.03.006>
- Barthel, M., Shearer, E., Gottfried, J., & Mitchell, A. (2015). *The evolving role of news on twitter and facebook*. Washington, DC, WA: Pew Research Center.
- Bergagna, E., & Tartaglia, S. (2018). Self-Esteem, social comparison, and facebook use. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, *14*(4), 831-845. <https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v14i4.1592>
- Best, P., Manktelow, R., & Taylor, B. (2014). Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: a systematic narrative review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *41*, 27-36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2014.03.001>
- Boyd, M. D., & Ellison, N. B. (2014). Social network sites: definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *13*(1), 210-230. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x>
- Cock, R. D., Vangeel, J., Klein, A., Minotte, P., Rosas, O., & Meerkerk, G. (2014). Compulsive use of social networking sites in Belgium: prevalence, profile, and the role of attitude toward work and school. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior & Social Networking*, *17*(3), 166-171. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2013.0029>
- Eşkisü, M., Hoşoğlu, R., & Rasmussen, K. (2017). Full length article: An investigation of the relationship between Facebook usage, Big Five, self-esteem and narcissism. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *69*, 294-301. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.12.036>
- Emarketer (2018). *Emarketer-release-new-us-digital-user-figures*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3318BSY>
- Forest, A. L., & Wood, J. V. (2012). When social networking is not working: Individuals With low self-esteem recognize but do not reap the benefits of self-disclosure on Facebook. *Psychological Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611429709>
- Fullwood, C. (2021). Self-concept clarity and online self-presentation in adolescents. *PubMed*. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27830930/>
- Fuller, R. J. (2020). *Social media use and self-esteem*. New York, NY: Behavioral Health.
- Güven, A. (2019). *Relationship between social media use, self-esteem and satisfaction with life* (Masters dissertation). The University Of Alabama Tuscaloosa, Alabama
- Hawi, N., Samaha, M. R. (2016). The relations among social media addiction, self-esteem, and life satisfaction in university students. *Social Science Computer Review* *35*(5), 576-586. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439316660340>
- Halder, U. K. (2018). Self-Concept and Attitude towards the Use of Facebook: A Study on The Post-Graduate Students. *Self Concept*. <https://bit.ly/34WFxU>
- Hong, F. Y., Huang, D. H., Lin, H. Y., & Chiu, S. L. (2014). Analysis of the psychological traits, Facebook usage, and Facebook addiction model of Taiwanese university students. *Telematics and Informatics*, *31*(4), 597-606. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2014.01.001>
- Jan, M., Soomro, S. & Ahmad, N. (2017). Impact of social media on self-esteem. *European Scientific Journal*, *13*(23), 329-341. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2017.v13n23p329>
- Kemp, S. (2018, January 30). *Global-digital-report-2018*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3v7J8xq>
- Köse, O. B., & Dogan, A. (2019). The relationship between social media addiction and self-esteem among Turkish university students. *Addicta: The Turkish Journal on Addictions*, *6*(1), 175-190. <https://doi.org/10.15805/addicta.2019.6.1.0036>
- Pantic, I. (2014). Online social networking and mental health. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, *17*(10), 652-657.
- Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (1993). Review of the satisfaction with life scale. *Psychological Assessment*, *5*(2), 164. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2014.0070>

- Ross, C., Orr, E. S., Sisc, M., Arseneault, J. M., Simmering, M. G., & Orr, R. R. (2009). Personality and motivations associated with Facebook use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 25(2), 578-586. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2008.12.024>
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400876136>
- Sheldon, P., & Bryant, K. (2016). Instagram: Motives for its use and relationship to narcissism and contextual age. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 58, 89-97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.12.059>
- Steinsbekk, S., Wichstrøm, L., Stenseng, F., Nesi, J., Hygen, B. W., & Skalická, V. (2021). The impact of social media use on appearance self-esteem from childhood to adolescence—A 3-wave community study. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 114, 106528. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106528>
- Smith, A., & Anderson, M. (2018). Social Media Use 2018: Demographics and Statistics. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <https://pewrsr.ch/3thfVhh>
- Mayo clinic. (2020). *Self-esteem check: Too low or just right?* Retrieved from <https://mayocl.in/34WFYly>
- Verduyn, P., Ybarra, O., Resibois, M., Jonides, J., & Kross, E. (2017). Do Social Network Sites Enhance or Undermine Subjective Well-Being? A Critical Review. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 11(1), 274-302. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12033>
- Valkenburg, P. M., Peter, J., & Schouten, A. P. (2006). Friend networking sites and their Relationship to adolescents' well-being and social self-esteem. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 9(5), 584-590.
- Verywell Mind. (2021). *What Is Self-Concept and How Does It Form?* Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3p2CC7y>
- WebFX, Inc. (2021). *Why social media is important to your company [4 Reasons]*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3H9ptQ0>
- Wigmore, I. (2020). Social media. WhatIs.Com. <https://bit.ly/36x4Gte>
- Wilson, R., Gosling, S. & Graham, L. (2012). A review of Facebook research in the social Sciences. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 7(3), 203-220. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691612442904>