

“A STUDY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ANXIETY AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG THE STUDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC”

Dr. Prajakta Y, Dr. Alpana Akolkar

School of Management, CHRIST (Deemed to be) University, Pune, Lavasa
prajakta.yawalkar@christuniversity.in, alpana.akolkar@christuniversity.in

Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to explore social media and its relationship with anxiety and emotional intelligence among the students during the Covid-19 pandemic. A total of 279 students from the city Pune participated in this research survey. To interpret and collect the data, Version 28 of software SPSS was used. In order to analyze the data in depth, methods like Regression Analysis and Pearson Correlation were used. The findings of the study was that social media has an impact on anxiety of the students. Anxiety has positive correlation with social media and emotional intelligence is negatively correlated with social media.

Keywords: social media, Anxiety, Emotional Intelligence, Covid-19

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic happened out of the blue and, abruptly affected all of us in various ways. The virus originated in Wuhan, China around end of December 2019 and since, has hit more than 200 countries with millions of deaths worldwide. The pandemic sure taught us the importance of physical health but also shown the impact one can have mentally, showcasing its crucial importance to mankind. As many universities adopted online teaching methods over the offline classrooms, the lives of students changed drastically (Elmer et al.,2020). As in pandemic university students had to do everything online, from their lectures to finding information about the pandemic, it caused an obvious increase in the usage of mobile and social media. (Yan Jianget al.,2020)

The social media surely has proven an important asset in helping the students to overcome boredom during this COVID-19 pandemic. Social network platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram are used mostly by young generation. These mainly are sites that are been used by mostly youngsters to share their ideas, communicate and showcase their credibility online. (W.Akramet al, .2017)

The focus of this study is, rise of social media during the Covid19 pandemic and its relationship with anxiety level and emotional intelligence of the students. According to a study, it was found anxiety, emotional intelligence and social media were closely related. (Yan Jianget al, .2020)

1.1 Social Media : Social Media is an online platform which is used by all the people regardless of the age, to connect with one another, form new network and connections, online or and also in real life and share similar interests, academic/professional or personal, show the activities that is been going in their lives and be updated in general and keep others updated about oneself.(W.Akramet al.,2017).People spend so much time on different sites of social media on daily basis, now that it is safe to say that it has become very important part of everyone’s daily

life.(Fazida Karim et al.,2020) However, the impact of social media on students is significant. It cannot be more emphasized that social media has become crucial factor of a student’s life. Because social media site said with medium to users simplifying having conversations, share data and files and produce web content. (W.Akrametal.,2017)

1.2 Anxiety: Yes, the lives has been changed since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it has its psychological and emotional impact evidently. Its impact and grimness of the situation overall has created a lot of concern for people leading to increased levels of anxiety (Royet al, 2020). It Is been pointed out by WHO, that underlying drivers of fear, anxiety and stigma that fuel misinformation and rumour are particularly through social media (Junking Gaoet al.,2020) Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pune university students had to go through a drastic change in terms of their learning process as well as lifestyle. Furthermore, they were asked in advance to stay home as all the classroom classes were cancelled to alleviate the pandemic effects. Because the students have been feeling the fear of unknown, of when to return to universities and about the near future, it may lead to risk in rising anxiety in students. (Wang et al.,2020) (Yan Jianget al.,2020)

1.3 Emotional Intelligence: The importance of developing a high level of emotional intelligence has risen rapidly in recent years. The capacity to recognise, label, understand, and convey feelings is what we mean when we talk about someone's "emotional intelligence." Emotional regulation and its role in pragmatic thinking are discussed. Self-awareness, emotional control, motivation, and social skills are all components of emotional intelligence. Self-awareness is the capacity to recognise and comprehend one's own emotions as well as those of other people. That's the mental condition that helps us understand our emotions and the ways in which they motivate us to do action, such when we are angry, frustrated, or happy. It helps us think more clearly and accomplish intellectual as well as emotional objectives. (Javed Iqbal and others, 2021) The COVID-19 pandemic had dealt a heavy blow to education systems, resulting in the widespread closure of schools, colleges, and universities. With numerous lockdowns and social segregation measures in place, the pandemic has also demonstrated its profound impact on the global economy. As a result, it has become increasingly important to understand the mental health of university students who are eager to begin their own lives in society through social channels. (Mubashir Majid Baba, 2020)

II. LITRATURE

2.1 Social media and mental health - It was seen that several research studies have been conducted on understanding the link between social media and mental health. Observations portray that students levels of stress, anxiety, loneliness, and depressive symptoms went more downhill, compared to measures pre Covid-19. According to preliminary findings, COVID-19-specific concerns, social network isolation, a lack of engagement and emotional support, and physical isolation are all related with poor mental health trajectories (Elmer et al.,2020). Researchers have also sought to understand what constitutes ‘problematic’ use of social media, its rising risks and how it is connected to increasing mental health among students (Ross Stephen 2018). Many studies have been conducted on the issue, impacts of social media, and its clearer that prolonged use of social media platforms such as Facebook , WhatsApp, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram etc. are related to symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress causing mental health issues worldwide (Karim et al.,2020). Thus it calls for urgent need to

promote interventions and strategies to address the mental health, overall of college students (Gunther et al., 2020)

2.2 Social media and Anxiety - Not just the physical health was in danger due to COVID 19 pandemic, the presence of psychological stress was also found, such as depression, anxiety and fear all worldwide (Song, 2020). Pandemic turned out to be a perfect example of a situation, in which there is highly infection and rapid outbreak, with minimum knowledge or treatment availability for this disease. Such effects can be devastating for the students especially for their mental health and anxiety level. (Ho et al., 2020). Weak psychological well-being (HUANG. 2017), anxiety (Vannucciet al., 2017; Elhalet al.,2020) and symptoms of depression (Twengeet al., 2018) have been linked to overuse and problematic usage of social media. Hence, the possible risk factors for the anxiety in university students are problematic social usage, changes in learning style and lifestyle. (Yan Jianget al., 2021).

2.3 Social media and Emotional Intelligence - Incorrect use of social media has been a growing concern among researchers and health professionals. Emotional intelligence influences both the motivations for utilising social media and the development and persistence of problematic social media usage. (Griffithset al.,2018) Studies on the association between social media addiction and emotional intelligence (EI) discovered EI to be a moderate to high predictor of addiction-related behaviours in both younger and older persons. (Parker, Taylor, Eastabrook, Schell, & Wood, 2008)(Cho & Lee, 2017) Path studies show that the two primary reasons people use social media—(i) to express or represent a more popular self and (ii) to pass the time—are both directly and indirectly connected to trait emotional intelligence. (Griffithset al., November 2018)

III. OBJECTIVE

1. To study the impact of social media and emotional intelligence on anxiety.
2. To study the relationship between social media and emotional intelligence.
3. To study the relationship between social media and anxiety.
4. To study the relationship between anxiety and emotional intelligence.

IV. HYPOTHESIS

H01- There is no significant relationship between social media and Anxiety

H02- There is no significant relationship between social media and Emotional Intelligence

H03- There is no significant relationship between Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Respondents: The survey was filled by 279 people with convenience sampling. The survey was collected from the students of Pune’s Universities, colleges and schools to reach out to students under all age categories.

4.2 Measures: The questionnaire that the respondents filled contained the statements, related to Social Media.

Respondents did fill out the questionnaire containing statements about Social Media, Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence respectively. Respondents were also asked to provide some demographic information such as name, age, education and gender.

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Anxiety was assessed with the validated, 7 statements using GAD 7 on 5 points likert scale ranging from, 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Generalised Anxiety Disorder Scale-7 (GAD-7) is a 7-item, self-rated scale developed by Spitzer and colleagues (2006) as a screening tool and severity indicator for GAD.

Descriptive analysis		Frequency	Percent
Variables			
Age	Below 18	5	1.8
	18 - 22 years	119	42.7
	Above 22	155	55.6
Gender	Male	153	54.8
	Female	126	45.2
Education	Undergraduate	100	35.8
	Graduate	93	33.3
	Post Graduate	86	30.8
Daily Social Media usage	Less than 2 hours	128	45.44
	2-4 hours	54	19.57
	More than 4 hours	32	11.46
	Not using Social Media	65	23.53
Most used Social Media Platform	Facebook	10	3.4
	Whatsapp	87	29.8
	Youtube	53	18.2
	Snapchat	5	1.7
	Instagram	124	42.5

Emotional Intelligence was assessed with, validated 25 statements on 5 points likert scale ranging 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

4.3 Cronbach’s alpha: To measure the internal consistency and reliability of the variables, Cronbach’s alpha was used. Cronbach’s alpha for Social Media, Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence was $\alpha = 0.836, 0.910$ and 0.966 respectively

Statistical-Analysis

Version 28 of Statistical package for Social Science Software (SPSS) was used to conduct the Statistical Analysis, and to examine and analyze the research variables, different methods were used for testing the Hypothesis. To compute the reality, Cronbach’s Alpha and Correlation were used. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to analyze the Central Tendency. Linear regression and Pearson Correlation were also used in the analyzing process.

Result - The hypothesis for this research was tested with the help of bivariate correlation method.

V. ANALYSIS

The table above depicts the age of the respondents. The table explicitly makes it clear that frequency of 155 that is 55.6% respondents are above the age of 22, 42.7% respondents were between ages 18-22 having frequency of 119 and 1.8% respondents were below ages 18 having frequency of 5.

The table above depicts the gender of the respondents. The table explicitly makes it clear that frequency of 153 that is 54.8% respondents were males and 45.2% respondents were females with a frequency of 126.

The table above depicts the education qualification of the respondents. The table explicitly makes it clear that frequency of 100 that is 35.8% of respondents were undergraduate, 33.3% respondents were graduate with frequency 93 and 30.8% respondents were post graduate having a frequency 86.

The table above depicts that the most used social media platform is Instagram having 42.5% users with frequency 124 and the least used social media platform is Snapchat having 1.7% users with frequency 5.

The result indicating in Table no.1 the percentage of users who use social media platform for:

1. less than 2 hours is 45.44% users with frequency 128,
2. 2-4 hours is 19.57% users with frequency 54
3. More than 4 hours is 11.46% users with frequency 32
4. Not using social media is 23.53% users with frequency 65

Table 2 : Mean and Standard deviation chart

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	279	2.54	0.534
Gender	279	1.45	0.499
Education	279	1.95	0.816
Social media	279	2.50	0.589
Anxiety	279	2.21	0.938

Emotional intelligence	279	3.82	0.837
Total	279		

The table depicts the Descriptive Statistics of the demographic attributes and social, anxiety and Emotional Intelligence. The table explicitly explains that the mean value of age is 2.54 with standard deviation 0.534.

Table 3: The levels of Emotional Intelligence: The scale consists of 25 items. The results are interpreted based upon 3 categories. High, Moderate and Low. To calculate it, scores below 90 are considered as low, scores from 90-120 are considered as moderate and scores above 120 are considered to be high, levels of Emotional Intelligence. We had total of 279 responses and from those responses, as we can see in the table above, 87 are with low EI levels, 122 with moderate and 70 have the highest

Low	87
Average	122
High	70

VI HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The aim was to find the Correlation between Social Media and Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence. Pearson correlation method was used to find out the correlation between Social Media, Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence using SPSS 28.

Table 4 : Correlations

		Social Media	Anxiety	Emotional Intelligence
Social Media	Pearson Correlation	1	.691**	-.020
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	.734
	N	279	279	279
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.691**	1	-.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		.696
	N	279	279	279
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	-.020	-.024	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.734	.696	
	N	279	279	279

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

6.2.1 Social Media and Anxiety - Social media use is a relatively new phenomena, thus the results of research evaluating its impact on psychological health are still in their infancy (Kittinger, Correia, & Irons, 2012; Lin et al., 2016) Emerging adults frequently experience social anxiety, which can be particularly detrimental given the social contacts necessary for the transitional challenges they will face (Parade, Leerkes, & Blankson, 2010). It is suggested that a study be conducted to see if there is a link between social media use by young adults and

social anxiety. The correlation values between social media and anxiety are shown in the table. Social Media is positively correlated with AI (0.691, $p < 0.001$).

6.2.2 Social Media and Emotional Intelligence - Emotional intelligence (EI) was shown to be a moderate to high predictor of addiction-related behaviours in a sample of younger and older people in studies examining the relationship between social media addiction and EI (Parker, Taylor, Eastabrook, Schell, & Wood, 2008) According to (Cho & Lee, 2017) Social media use among adolescents and teenagers is not only for social and entertainment purposes; it has also begun to play important functions in learning. As a result, there is literature that supports the use of social media to promote constructive and creative learning (Lu, Hao, & Jing, 2016). According to the research, social media ostracism is viewed as a danger to mood and psychological need fulfilment by both university and secondary-school pupils (particularly the need to belong). (R. Smith, Morgan, and Monks,, 2017).The above table signifies the correlation values between Social Media and Emotional Intelligence. Social Media is Insignificant negative correlated with AI (-.020, $p > 0.001$).

6.2.3 Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence - Less negative impacts by anxiety driven events are experienced Those who possess high dimensions on the emotional intelligence value, they experience pleasure of less negative impacts caused by anxiety driven events. They have precise comprehension of physical and mental and social consequences, of negative emotions on well-being and overall improvement in their relationships of life. On, one side of the quantum, people with high emotional intelligence experiences healthy and balanced feelings like serenity and freedom, self-control, friendship, autonomy, gratefulness and completeness. On the other hand, people with low dimension of EI cannot enjoy such feelings and find themselves hemmed by the feelings like loneliness, guilt/remorse, fear and stress and frustration (Bhatet al., 2017). The above table signifies the correlation values between social media and Anxiety. Social Media is negatively correlated with AI (-.024, $p > 0.001$).

6.3 Regression Analysis - The above table shows the analysis which revealed the relationship between social media, Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence where Adjusted R Square (.476) Model Summary, Model R R Square Adjusted R Square Std; Error of the Estimate of the model was and the value of R Square was found to be (.477). After analyzing the same, it can be concluded that Social Media was at 47.7 percent variation in regards with the dependent variable i.e. Anxiety. Social Media doesn't have any impact on Emotional Intelligence level of the students. The above table shows the multiple linear regression model summary and overall fit statistics for the dependent variable anxiety with independent variable Social media and Emotional Intelligence. In the above table depicts the analysis revealed the relationship between anxiety, Social media and Emotional Intelligence where Adjusted R square .474 with the R Square = 0.478 which means EI and Social Media explained approximately 47.4% variation in the dependent variable i.e. Anxiety for the student respondents. The table also shows that Independent Variable i.e. Social Media. Statistically significantly predicted the dependent variable Anxiety ($P < .001$) The coefficient table revealed that social media has a significant positive impact on Anxiety with standardized coefficient of beta .691 thus the Null Hypothesis for social media and Anxiety was rejected. There was Multi co-linearity as the values of VIF for social media + 1 hence the model for Anxiety (Y), social media (X1) was = $Y = -.538 + 1.100X_1$

Table 5:

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.691 ^a	.477	.476	.67909	.477	253.067	1	277	<.001
a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media									

Table 6:

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	116.705	1	116.705	253.067	<.001 ^b
	Residual	127.742	277	.461		
	Total	244.448	278			

Table 7:

Coefficients									
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Co-linearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta				Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.538	.178			-3.032	.003		
	Social media	1.100	.069	.691		15.908	<.001	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Anxiety

VII. DISCUSSION

This current study investigates the relationship between Social Media and its usage with Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence among the students during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study indicated that there was positive correlation between Social Media and Anxiety however, Negative correlation was found between Social Media and Emotional Intelligence. The study suggested, there was a positive impact of Social media on Anxiety among the students, whereas there was no impact of Social media on Emotional Intelligence of the students

During the COVID-19 epidemic, it is clear that social media clearly played a leading role in the studying, living, and recreational activities of the university students who were confined to their homes owing to lockdowns throughout the globe. E-learning did become the primary mode of learning for all university, college, and school students, where face-to-face social interactions became slim to a minimum, which created the situations and gave time for more social media exertion, resulting in an increase in the total amount of time the students typically spend on social media certainly has led to a lack of face-to-face social interactions. Since students stayed at home for long hours at their houses, e-learning did become the primary mode

of learning for all university, college (Lee et al., 2020). Therefore, the likelihood of anxiety among university students may be increased when they spend extended amounts of time alone at home and when they are unsure of when they will return to school (Wang et al., 2020). It is an example of such a situation that the COVID-19 crisis is, in which the outbreak is sudden and highly infectious, the treatment for which is unclear due to limited current knowledge of it, and which, as a result, may lead to devastating effects on people's mental health and produce anxiety in those affected by it (Ho et al., 2020). Mainly there has been 2 main side effects of this pandemic on the lives and studies of the University students, 1st as the university campuses were closed and no one was allowed in they students lost the privilege of attending the classes in the actual classrooms of institutions, causing unknown and new situation for no one knows how to deal with (Liu et al., 2020).

The outbreak mainly affected the studies and the life of a university student. As the students were not able to attend the classroom session and live laboratory work due to closure of university campus, which could have affected their actual plan of study and eventually added up as uncertainty in their future academic development (Liu et al., 2020). Secondly the students were no able to be introduced to the actual life scenarios and the opportunity to connect and bond with the fellow students as well as the surroundings to gain expertise of the market area around and the economic conditions as such.

The study of emotional intelligence is becoming more popular in the fields of business, psychology, and education. The idea is based on self-awareness of one's emotions, guiding those feelings in one's own direction, identifying various emotional experiences, and assisting others in understanding and assisting others in channelling their own and other people's emotions (Bliss, 2005). It also includes dealing with emotional upheavals, developing coping mechanisms and the capacity to prevent emotional weariness caused by stress, emotional self-control issues, and burnout, as well as learning to regulate egotism and steer clear of negative feelings. (Sala, 2002; Chandra and Mathur, 2016, p. 231). Throughout the elementary school years, children participated in a range of activities designed to help them grasp and become conscious of their own emotions, as well as practical consequences designed to assist children in channeling their emotions in more productive ways. Students are seen engaged in self-awareness activities, value-driven activities, acts of empathy, as well as assertive and selfless behaviour in the workplace. Students are able to acquire all of these abilities in addition to overall academic accomplishments by participation in a variety of educational activities. Some examples of these activities are role plays, team exercises, and group projects. (Chandra et al., 2020)

VII. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at exploring social media and its relationship with anxiety and emotional intelligence among the students during the Covid-19 pandemic in PUNE city. The conclusion was made after analyzing the responses of 279 people in total from the city.

There were 4 objectives of the study-

1. To study the impact of social media and emotional intelligence on anxiety.
2. To study the relationship between social media and emotional intelligence.
3. To study the relationship between social media and anxiety.
4. To study the relationship between emotional intelligence and anxiety.

Study indicated that there was an impact of social media on anxiety level of the students. There was no impact of emotional intelligence to be found on Anxiety level of the students.

Furthermore, it indicated that there was positive correlation between Social Media usage and Anxiety level of the students. However, there was negative correlation for both Emotional Intelligence with Social Media and Anxiety level, respectively.

Suggestions - Since March 2020, the world has been locked indoors due to Covid 19. During the Covid 19 lockdown, most of the people have started consuming more Social media than their general average time. It is not a myth that the usage of Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp have unnecessarily increased in comparison with the past normal routine usage. The outdoor activities such as walking, running and outdoor activities have been replaced by Social media activities. The whole education system has shifted to online platforms, leading to online classes for all the students. Due to all this online transition, the screen time of an average student has significantly increased. Students are also adjusting with the stress of learning online in comparison with learning offline at the university with practical on the job experience.

The students should depend on constructive means of dealing with anxiety and stress such as meditation and breathing exercises, spiritual measures, following a routine, and positive reframing of ideas and emotions in order to get through periods of worry and stress more effectively. Making physical activity a part of daily routine would significantly uplift the mood, physical stature and state of mind of the student.

LIMITATION OF STUDY - The maximum no. of data was collected from the respondents who were above 22 years of age and only 5 students filled the questionnaire who were below 18 years of age.

1. This study is limited only to the students located in the Pune city.
2. The study was based on a small sample, a considerable sample would have provided a finer result
3. The other variables of Emotional Intelligence such as self-awareness, empathy, etc were not included in the study.