

Relationship of Social Media Usage with Mindfulness, Loneliness and Resilience

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ABSTRACT

Ever since Internet server was created, there has been a boost to the IT industry. Along with the commercial, domestic consumption has increased, nonetheless. Certainly, it is not a new phenomenon that many studies show the majority of Social Media usage shoots sky high each year. Post pandemic (covid-19) resulted into implementation of policies to stay at home for months; aiding to shoot up in the figures of social media usage. To get an in-depth knowledge about the impact of usage of social media on mindful attention, loneliness and resilience of individuals, a study was conducted on 68 samples age ranging from 14-24 years. Standardized scales of social networking usage, mindful attention/ mindfulness, loneliness and resilience were used. The findings of the study divulges that there are no significant effects of Social Media Usage on Mindfulness, Loneliness and Resilience on the samples taken. Although, there were seen significant relations of Loneliness with Mindfulness and Resilience, and Mindfulness with Resilience. Monitoring one's time spent on social media and time spent outside the virtual world can be proven to help a person to be more mindful, resilient and feel less lonely.

Keywords: Social media, Mindfulness, Loneliness, Resilience

“Social media is a work of user-created pictures, audios, text, videos or multimedia that are published and shared in a virtual social environment, such as a blogs, vlogs, wiki or video hosting site.” – Capilanou

In the era of technological advances and the increased scope of social media, the communication with anyone across the world has become easy. Gone are the days of waiting for days to receive one letter from postmaster to get an update on loved ones living afar. On the contrary, in present times, any dialogue happens in a fraction of seconds. Biggest contributor to this advancement is Social Media. Social media is a computer-based technology that eases the sharing of thoughts, ideas, information via building up of virtual networks and communities. By its design, it is Internet based ad gives user quick electronic communication of content. This content may include personal information, documents, videos and photos. Users engage with social media using a computer, smartphone, or tablet with access of web-based software or applications.

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Relationship of Social Media Usage with Mindfulness, Loneliness and Resilience

In research work by Bekalu et al., (2019) the findings of their study highlight the importance of considering users routine use of social media vis-à-vis their emotional connection to such use in describing both positive and negative links between social media use and health.

Xu & Tan (2012) suggests that the transition from normal to problematic social media use occurs when the users regard social media use as an important or even exclusive mechanism to relieve stress, loneliness, or depression.

Mindfulness

According to Titchner (1890), “Attention is the state of sensory clearness with a focus and margin. It is that part of consciousness that relates to the amount of effort put in focusing certain aspects of an experience, so that they become almost vivid.”

Mindfulness is explained as a phenomenon of bringing a certain quality of attention to moment-by-moment experience. (Kabat-Zinn, 1990).

Attention is primary a cognitive process which refers to a selectively concentrating on a stance of the environment while blurring out or ignoring the rest. Being Mindfully attentive indicates to a person who is paying attention in a particular way that is on purpose in that very moment and is said to be non-judgemental. For instance, solemnly listening to a person speak while blurring out the conversations and noises in the background. According to Wikipedia (2021), mindfulness can be described as a practice of purposely bringing an individual’s attention in the present moment without any judgement, it can be called as a skill that one can develop/ enhance through meditation or other training. Also, there are evidence that suggests engaging into mindfulness meditation may influence physical health of a person.

In study by Poon and Jiang (2020), the findings highlight the importance of mindfulness in eliminating the negative outcomes associated with feeling of left out on social media.

In a study by Nusrath & Veronica (2020), found that there is a significant positive correlation between fear of missing out and social media usage and a negative correlation between mindfulness and social media usage.

Loneliness

American Psychological Association (2021) defines loneliness as an affective and cognitive discomfort or uneasiness from being or perceiving oneself to be alone or solitary. Psychological theory and research offer multiple theory and research offer multiple perspectives: social psychology emphasizes on the emotional distress that results when inherent needs for intimacy and companionship are not met; cognitive psychology emphasizes the unpleasant and unsettling experience that results from perceived discrepancy (i.e, deficiency in quality or quantity) between an individual’s desired and actual social relationships. Psychologists of humanistic/existential perspectives may see loneliness as an inevitable or rather a painful aspect that nevertheless may contribute to increased self-awareness and renewal.

In a study by Halston, Iwamoto, Junker & Chun (2019) on social media and loneliness found that there were minimal to no correlations between the two.

Relationship of Social Media Usage with Mindfulness, Loneliness and Resilience

According to Vally and D'Souza (2019) individuals who abstained from social media use, compared with those in the control group (use social media), evidenced a decline in life satisfaction, an increase in negative affect with an increase in loneliness.

Resilience

“Resilience is a process as well as an outcome of successful adaption to difficult or challenging life experiences. Especially that comes through mental, emotional, and behavioural flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands.” as defined by APA (2014), Further APA, (2014) suggests that psychological research demonstrates that the resources and skills associated with more positive adaptation (that is, great resilience) can be cultivated and practiced, also known as Psychological Resilience.

In simpler words, Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties or odds. It is an ability to recover from or adjust easily to a change or misfortune. It takes place when the person uses mental processes and behaviours to promote his/her personal assets and to protect oneself from the potential negative effects of stressors.

In the study by Hurley (2018) found that excessive social media usage was not significantly correlated with resilience overall, although greater social media usage was related to lower levels of determination.

Purpose

The aim is to study the effects of social media usage impacts on mindful attention, loneliness and resilience.

Hypothesis

There will be no significant effects of Social Media Usage on mindfulness, Loneliness and Resilience.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample consists of 68 individuals (36 females & 32 males), age ranging from 14-24 years. The data has been collected from samples living in Chandigarh, Punjab and Haryana.

Measures

List of standardized scales used in the study:

1. **SOCIAL NETWORKING USAGE QUESTIONNAIRE (SNUQ):** In the scale designed by Gupta & Bashir (2018), there are 56 items statements related to social networking usage. These were aligned so they could all be answered using a 5-point Likert scale, with each statement rated on five anchors, (Always=5, Often=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2 and Never=1).
2. **The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS):** The construct has been operationalized in dispositional terms by the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS), a 15-item self-report instrument with a single factor, designed by Brown and Ryan (2003).
3. **UCLA LONELINESS SCALE (UCLA)** In UCLA Loneliness Scale by Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona (1980), there are a 20 items of self-report measure developed at the University of California, Los Angeles, to assess subjective feelings of loneliness or social isolation. It consists of descriptive statements of feelings of loneliness and

Relationship of Social Media Usage with Mindfulness, Loneliness and Resilience

non-loneliness, rated on a scale of 1(never), 2(rarely), 3(sometimes), 4(often). The range of possible scores is 20 to 80, with higher scores indicating greater loneliness.

4. **The Resilience Scale (RS):** In the Resilience Scale, there are 25 items and all items are scored on a 7-point Likert scale from 1(disagree) to 7(agree). All items are worded positively and reflect accurately the verbatim statements made by participants in the original study (Wagnild & Young, 1993). Estimated range of scores is from 25 to 175 where higher scores reflects higher Resilience.

Procedure

The information regarding the purpose of this Research was provided prior to the participants and the data was collected through Google forms. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of their information so they can elicit their honest responses. A set of standardized psychological tests were administered.

Analysis of data Results

The responses of the participants were computed using the Pearson Correlation between Usage of social media and Mindful Attention, Loneliness and Resilience among the sample. In table 1: Mean and SD are presented. Table 2 shows the correlations between all the domains.

Table 1: Showing Mean & Standard Deviation of all variables; N= 68

| | SNUQ | MAAS | UCLA | RS |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Mean | 62.2 | 60.3 | 19.6 | 131 |
| Standard deviation | 13.3 | 12.1 | 13.8 | 26.0 |

Table 2: Showing Correlations

| | SNUQ | MAAS | UCLA | RS |
|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| SNUQ | — | | | |
| MAAS | -0.233 | — | | |
| UCLA | 0.098 | -0.536 *** | — | |
| RS | 0.071 | 0.035 * | -0.368 ** | — |

Note: * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The study shows that there are no significant correlation of Social Media Usage in the with respect to Mindfulness, Loneliness & Resilience. However, results shows that there is a negative significant relation between resilience and loneliness ($r = -.368$, $p < .01$), positive correlation between resilience & mindfulness ($r = 0.035$, $p < .05$). Further, there is negative correlation between loneliness & mindfulness ($r = -0.536$, $p < .001$)

In a study by Hurley (2018), found the negative correlation between the usage of social media and resilient behaviour.

Findings in a survey done by Cigna (2020), showcases the greater feeling of loneliness among people who use social media more frequently.

Relationship of Social Media Usage with Mindfulness, Loneliness and Resilience

According to a Lindsay, Young, Warren, et al. (2019), suggests mindfulness training reduces loneliness and increases social contact in daily life."

In the study by Jakobsen et al., (2020) the results indicates that the facets of resiliency are negatively related to loneliness.

CONCLUSION

This research was aimed at analysing the impact of social media on a Mindful Attention, Loneliness and Resilience. The results show case that there are no significant effects of usage of social media on any of the parameters. Even though the prime objective and focus was on Social media Usage and its impact. Despite that, there were significant results that shows relations of Loneliness with Mindfulness & Resilience.

It is safer to say that the more the person feels lonely, the lesser mindful and resilient s/he will be. Whereas results also showcase, higher the mindfulness of a person more will be the resilience. A person must thrive to be in a health state at all times. Be it online or offline. Loneliness can cause harm to mental peace and performance of an individual on daily basis. Therefore, practice of Mindfulness and to become more resilient is essential. Along with a control on the usage of social media.

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Relationship of Social Media Usage with Mindfulness, Loneliness and Resilience

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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