

Relationship Between Social Intelligence and Social Media Usage Among Youth

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between social media usage and social intelligence among youth, with a specific focus on gender differences. Data was collected from 100 respondents aged 15 to 24, evenly split between males and females, utilizing the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) and Social Networking Usage Questionnaire to measure social media engagement. Findings revealed no statistically significant gender-based disparities in social intelligence ($t=0.289$, $df=98$), suggesting that various factors influence this trait beyond gender. While females exhibited slightly higher social media usage, there was no significant gender difference ($t=0.972$, $df=98$). Additionally, the research did not establish a significant negative correlation between social intelligence and social media usage among youth, highlighting the intricate nature of this relationship ($r=0.08854$). This study provides insights into the multifaceted interplay between social media and social intelligence, emphasizing the need to consider the quality and purpose of online interactions when assessing their impact on youth.

Keywords: *Social Media, Social Intelligence, Social Media Usage, Youth*

The fast integration of digital technology and social media into the lives of young people in the 21st century has reshaped the terrain of human contact. From WhatsApp to Facebook, social media platforms have ushered in an era in which communication and information exchange are not limited by physical or temporal limits. This communication revolution has created new opportunities and difficulties, notably for the development of social intelligence among youth.

In an article published in Happer Monty's Magazine in 1920, Edward Thorndike, a psychologist at Columbia University, established the concept of "social intelligence" for the first time. He emphasized the significance of interpersonal effectiveness in achieving success in many areas of life (Goleman, 2008). Social intelligence, according to widely accepted definitions, is the capacity to successfully insight relationships and acquire interpersonal skills to solve problems and respond correctly in interpersonal relationships (Duneroi, 2005). For everyday interpersonal relationships social interactive intelligence has the greatest significance. Extroverts benefit today, when communication skills are essential.

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On the other hand, our interpersonal orientation is influenced by our level of social intelligence. People with high social intelligence are frequently a source of positive behaviour and make others feel treasured, loved, and respected, and these people are incredibly attractive to others, and are often described as a "magnet." People with a lesser degree, social intelligence is frequently referred to as "poison" since people evoke sentiments of rage, despair, frustration, and guilt. They are frequently alienated or lonely individuals. We have seen a considerable expansion in the use of information and communication technology during the last few decades. New information technologies have given rise to whole new social groups, as well as new modes of communication.

As social media continues to affect young people's daily lives, it has become clear that it plays a critical role in creating their social intelligence. This paper attempts to provide a thorough examination of how social media affects youth social intelligence, a subject as dynamic and diverse as the digital world itself. This study aims to shed light on both the positive and negative aspects of social media's influence on youth social intelligence. It recognizes the potential benefits of exposure to diverse perspectives, networking opportunities, and improved communication skills, while also addressing the challenges of decreased face-to-face interactions, cyberbullying, filter bubbles, social comparison issues, and the risk of addiction and distraction.

This research strives to expand our understanding of how digital technologies and online platforms impact the interpersonal and emotional landscape of today's youth by diving into the subtle interplay between social media and youth social intelligence. We hope that this research will be useful to parents, educators, policymakers, and others concerned with the well-being and development of the next generation as they navigate the complexities of the digital age and strive to harness the potential of social media for personal and social growth while mitigating its potential pitfalls.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rosidah Musa, Nadhratul Ain Ibrahim and Ainul Azreen Adam, January 2016, conducted the research study on the "Factors and Outcomes of Social Media Dependency Framework". The research has been conducted to examine the factors of social media dependency and identify its implications among graduates. The researchers developed a theoretical framework based on a modified Media System Dependency (MSD) like Social Media Dependency framework, Pathological Internet Use and Millennial Teens Framework and Social Media Dependency Conceptual framework. The study concludes that excessive and responsible use of social media among millennials can enhance their employment prospects and foster successful entrepreneurship, as demonstrated by increased job opportunities and the growth of online entrepreneurs across diverse industries.

Mohd Raziq and Dr Shiva Shukla, December 2022, conducted the research study on "Connecting Social Intelligence with Social Media Usage: A Study at a University". The research has been conducted to study the association of social media usage with the context of social intelligence, referring to gender and subject stream. The study involved a sample of 208 students stratified based on subject stream, i.e., arts and science students and gender. The researchers used proportional stratified sampling technique for collecting data. The study concludes that the group performed average for social intelligence and high for social media usage. The students of the arts stream showed higher social intelligence than science students. The male students performed better in social intelligence, and the female students showed higher social media usage.

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Muwafaq Bsharah, Al-Mothana Gasaymeh & Mahmoud Bani Abdelrahman, June 2014, conducted the research study on the “Relationship between the Use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) and Perceived Level of Social Intelligence among Jordanian University Students: The Case of Facebook”. The research has been conducted to investigate Jordanian university students’ use of Facebook and their perceptions of their social intelligence as well as the relationship between students’ use of Facebook and a self-reported measure of their social intelligence. The researchers used cross-sectional survey design in which a questionnaire was administered and collected in-class by number of faculty members, who agreed to have their classes participating in this study. The questionnaire aimed to collect data regarding students’ use of Facebook as well as the perceptions of their social intelligence. The study concludes that Jordanian university students, who were active Facebook users, had a positive perception of their social intelligence. This study found a significant link between Facebook use and perceived social intelligence, challenging the negative Arab World reputation of Facebook's impact on students' social lives. It suggests that Facebook can enhance students' social skills by providing a platform for self-expression.

Semseddin Gunduz, 2017, conducted the research study on the “Relationship Between Social Networks adoption and Social Intelligence”. The research has been conducted to set forth the relationship between the individuals’ states to adopt social networks and social intelligence and analyze both concepts according to various variables. The researcher collected from 1145 social network users in the online media by using the Adoption of Social Network Scale and Social Intelligence Scale. The study concludes that participants in the study had moderate readiness for social network adoption, but their social intelligence levels were high. Gender did not impact adoption or social intelligence. University graduates had significantly higher adoption and social intelligence than primary school graduates. Sub-dimensions of social intelligence correlated positively with social network adoption, except for social impact. Individuals with higher social intelligence were more likely to adopt social networks, explaining 2.25% of the variance. This underscores the connection between social intelligence and online social engagement.

Belma Duvnjak, Jasna Bajraktarević, April 2013, conducted the research study on “Connections using Social Networks and Social Intelligence of students”. The research has been conducted to identify the impact of social networks on the development of social intelligence. The researchers used the method of theoretical analysis, survey methods, descriptive methods and statistical methods. The study concludes that internet usage has a positive impact, primarily through engagement with existing social networks, communication, and the formation of new acquaintances, fulfilling the human need for companionship and interaction with sociable individuals.

Need of the Study

The extensive use of social media among today's youth emphasizes the crucial importance of our research. Social media has expanded from a mere communication tool to a cornerstone of youth culture, greatly impacting how young people interact, create relationships, and build their identities, using social media usage and constant contact. Given the pervasiveness of these platforms in daily life, it is critical to explore their impact on youth social intelligence. This pervasiveness needs a thorough investigation into both the positive and negative consequences on social intelligence.

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Statement of the Problem

- Is there a statistically significant difference in Social Intelligence between males and females?
- Is there a statistically significant difference in Social Media Usage between males and females?
- Is there a negative correlation between the subjects' Social Intelligence and Social Media Usage?

Objectives of the Study

- To Assess Gender Differences in Social Intelligence.
- To Examine Gender-Based Variations in Social Media Usage.
- To Investigate the Correlation between Social Intelligence and Social Media Usage.

Hypotheses

- There will be a statistically significant difference in social intelligence between males and females, with one gender demonstrating a higher level of social intelligence than the other.
- There will be a statistically significant difference in social media usage between males and females.
- There will exist a statistically significant negative correlation between individuals' level of social intelligence and their social media usage.

Working Definitions of The Terms Used

- **Social Media Usage:** The act of interacting with social media platforms to share, receive, or communicate content and information with others online is known as Social Media Usage.
- **Social Intelligence:** The capacity to interact with others, respond to social situations in daily life, and forge relationships is known as social intelligence. The eight components of social intelligence are: tolerance, cooperation, self-assurance, sensitivity, environmental awareness, tactfulness, sense of humour, and memory.
- **Youth:** The term "youth" refers to the period between adolescence and early adulthood. People who are no longer children but have not entirely made the transition to adulthood make up this age group. According to WHO, it includes individuals aged between 15 and 24.

Universe and Sample

In this study, 100 respondents consisting 50 males and 50 females were randomly selected from the Universe of Youth aged between 15 to 24 years old.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Interpretation

Primary data is collected for this study. Using the random sampling method, the primary data of 100 respondents, aged 15 to 24, were gathered. Of these, 50 were male and 50 were female. Utilizing Google Forms, the "Tromso Social Intelligence Scale" and "Social Networking Usage Questionnaire" were used to gather the data.

Tromso Social Intelligence Scale: To measure social intelligence, the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (Silvera et al., 2001) was used. A self-assessment tool called the Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) has 21 items spread across three factors. The TSIS uses three different subscales to assess intelligence:

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- a) **Social Information Processing (SP):** This subscale assesses a person's capacity to comprehend verbal or nonverbal cues about interpersonal relationships, empathy, and the ability to read both implicit and explicit messages posted online.
- b) **Social Skills (SS):** This subscale assesses social skills, which include active listening, assertiveness, relationship establishing, sustaining, and ending.
- c) **Social Awareness (SA):** This subscale assesses a person's capacity to act actively in accordance with the circumstance, setting, and time. Each of the three factors of the scale comprises 7 items which are measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale.

Social Networking Usage Questionnaire: Based on the standardized Usage of Social Networking Sites Questionnaire (Gupta and Bashir, 2018), the investigators created the Social Media Usage Questionnaire. Based on the main areas of students' activities, the questionnaire had four dimensions: academics, socialization, entertainment, and informativeness.

Data Interpretation

The current study investigates if social intelligence is influenced by gender and whether there are gender disparities in social media usage. The study will also examine the co-relationship between social intelligence and use of social media. To check the authenticity of the research hypotheses, t-test and Pearson r are used.

Hypotheses I

The first hypothesis is that there will be a statistically significant difference in social intelligence between males and females, with one gender demonstrating a higher level of social intelligence than the other.

Table - 1: Mean, Standard deviation and t-test results of Social Intelligence.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	P
Male	50	99.28	13.28	0.289	>0.05
Female	50	100.24	19.36		

The above table helps us to clearly understand that the mean of the Social Intelligence of females (M= 100.24, N=50, SD=19.36) is greater than the mean of the males (M=99.28, N=50, SD=13.28). Result of the t-test is not significant at 0.05 levels (t=0.289, df=98). This clearly proves that the difference of mean is not significant. Hence, the first alternative hypothesis of the research that one gender will demonstrate a higher level of social intelligence than the other is rejected.

Hypothesis II

The second hypothesis is that there will be a statistically significant difference between how much each gender uses social media, with one gender using it more than the other. Table -2 shows mean and standard deviations and t-test results of Social Media Usage of both the groups.

Table - 2: Mean, Standard deviation and t-test results of Social Media Usage.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	P
Male	50	61.30	14.96	0.972	>0.05
Female	50	63.98	12.47		

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The accompanying table makes it very evident that women use social media on average more than men do ($M=63.98$, $N=50$, $SD=12.47$ vs. $M=61.30$, $N=50$, $SD=14.96$). The t-test result ($t=0.972$, $df=98$) is not significant at 0.05 levels. This unequivocally demonstrates that the mean difference is not important. As a result, the research's second alternative hypothesis—that one gender will use social media more than the other—is rejected.

Hypothesis III

The third hypothesis of this research is that a negative correlation will be found between the social intelligence and social media usage of the youth. In table 3, mean, SD and correlation coefficients are shown.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Social Intelligence	Social Media Usage	Remark
Social Intelligence	100	99.76	16.53	1		Not significant
Social Media Usage		62.64	13.77	0.08854	1	

From table 3 it is clear the mean of social intelligence of the respondents is 99.76 and SD is 16.53 and the mean of social media usage score is 62.64 and SD is 13.77. The correlation coefficient of social intelligence and social media usage was found to be 0.08854 which is not significant at 0.05 levels. Therefore, the research hypothesis that a negative correlation will be found between social intelligence and social media usage is rejected.

Findings

The study investigated three hypotheses related to social intelligence, gender differences in social intelligence, gender disparities in social media usage, and the correlation between social intelligence and social media usage among youth.

The study aimed to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in social intelligence between males and females. However, the results of a t-test revealed that there is no statistically significant difference between genders ($p > 0.05$). This aligns with existing research suggesting that gender alone is not a reliable predictor of social intelligence. Social intelligence is influenced by various factors, including socialization, upbringing, cultural context, and individual traits (Baron-Cohen, 2002). The study investigated whether there are differences in social media usage between genders. While the mean values indicated that, on average, females used social media slightly more than males, the t-test did not find a significant difference ($p > 0.05$). This is consistent with previous research indicating modest gender differences in social media usage (Hampton, Sessions, Her, and Rainie, 2009). The gender gap in social media usage has been closing in recent years, possibly due to changing cultural and social factors (Smith & Anderson, 2018). The study proposed a negative correlation between social intelligence and social media usage among youth. However, the data analysis showed no significant correlation (correlation coefficient of 0.08854, $p > 0.05$). This finding is consistent with mixed results in previous research, which reported varying effects of social media use on social skills and intelligence. The complex relationship between social media and social intelligence may depend on the quality and purpose of usage.

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In summary, the study did not find significant gender differences in social intelligence or social media usage. Additionally, it did not establish a significant negative correlation between social intelligence and social media usage among youth, suggesting the complex nature of this relationship and the need for further research. The study's findings align with previous literature on these topics, highlighting the multifaceted factors influencing social intelligence, gender-related behaviours, and social media usage patterns.

Suggestions

First and foremost, the sample must be diverse. Future studies should aim to include a wider and more diverse participant pool, including people of all ages, cultural origins, and socioeconomic positions. This greater demographic representation would enable a more comprehensive study of how social media affects social intelligence across various population groups, offering light on potential differences and commonalities.

Second, in future research attempts, extensive component analysis should be prioritized. Researchers can acquire a more nuanced knowledge of this delicate link by diving into individual components or dimensions of social intelligence and investigating how they are influenced by various features of social media use. Examining empathy, perspective-taking, emotional control, and communication skills in the context of social media interactions could be part of this.

In this study, cultural and contextual elements are also important. Future research should consider the influence of culture and societal context on the relationship between social media and social intelligence. Comparative studies across cultures and societal norms can provide important insights into how these elements impact social intelligence in the digital age.

Furthermore, the use of qualitative research methods is required. Interviews and focus groups can provide a more in-depth understanding of individuals' own experiences and impressions of the impact of social media on their social intelligence. This qualitative technique can assist researchers in uncovering rich, context-specific insights that quantitative data alone may miss.

Finally, intervention studies represent a viable future study option. It is critical to investigate the efficacy of interventions and educational programs targeted at increasing positive social media use and supporting social intelligence development among youth. To counteract the possible detrimental impacts of social media on social intelligence, this might entail devising and testing treatments that encourage digital literacy, critical thinking, and good online behaviours. These interventions could be an important method for encouraging pleasant online interactions and relationships.

Research Limitations

First and foremost, the sample size of 100 respondents (equally divided between males and females) is small and may not effectively represent the diversity of the youth population in terms of age, socioeconomic level, culture, and location.

Second, depending on self-reported data can include biases such as social desirability bias, thus jeopardizing the quality and trustworthiness of the information collected.

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Furthermore, the study approaches social intelligence, rather than delving into its various components or dimensions. Because of this lack of precision, social intelligence may be oversimplified.

The study also fails to distinguish between different social media platforms and their potential differential effects on social intelligence, neglecting each platform's distinct features and dynamics.

Finally, the study did not go into detail about the impact of cultural and societal influences on the relationship between social media usage and social intelligence. Understanding these contextual impacts is critical for gaining a thorough grasp. In conclusion, while the study provides useful insights, its limitations highlight the need for further comprehensive research to properly comprehend the complicated relationship between social media and social intelligence.

Scope For Further Research

To begin, the study confines its investigation to the age group typically referred to as "youth," recognizing that the specific age range may vary across cultures and circumstances. The study will investigate how social media impacts people of this age group, considering potential differences in experiences and outcomes.

The study aims to present a fair viewpoint by investigating both the positive and negative effects of social media use on social intelligence. It will look into how social media may improve communication skills, expose youth to other ideas, and facilitate networking. Concurrently, the study will investigate the potential negative effects of social media, such as decreased face-to-face encounters, cyberbullying, and the psychological repercussions of social comparison.

This broad approach will help to provide a more comprehensive view of the multifaceted issue of social media's impact on youth social intelligence.

CONCLUSION

The major goal of the study was to investigate the relationship between social media usage and social intelligence in a group of 100 young people aged 15 to 24. The findings of this study provide unique insights into the complex interaction between these two variables. To begin, the study found no statistically significant difference in social IQ between males and females in the sample. This data implies that gender alone is not a strong predictor of differences in social intelligence among youth, calling into question long-held beliefs about gender differences in this domain. It underlines the importance of gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the elements influencing social intelligence, given that it is not significantly tied to gender.

Furthermore, the study looked at the difference in social media usage between men and women and discovered that, on average, women used social media slightly more than men. This difference in utilization, however, was not statistically significant. This discovery highlights the shrinking gender gap in social media usage, which reflects the changing landscape of digital interactions. Finally, the study's findings were particularly thought-provoking because they contradicted the initial supposition. Contrary to predictions, the study failed to find a substantial negative association between social intelligence and teenage social media usage. This study emphasizes the complex and diverse character of the

relationship between these two variables, implying that other influential or moderating variables are at work. It allows for further investigation.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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