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Research Paper

Exploring the relationship between Smartphone Usage, Well-Being, and Social Media Connectedness Among Elderly Men and Women

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the correlation between smartphone usage, well-being, and social media connectivity among older males and females. The increasing incorporation of digital technology into daily life has led older persons to engage more with cellphones and social media, prompting significant enquiries into their effects on psychological well-being and social connectedness. This research employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate the impact of gender on smartphone usage patterns, social connectivity, and overall life happiness. Research suggests that older women predominantly utilise social media to sustain intimate relationships, whereas males are more inclined towards informational and networking pursuits. The findings indicate a beneficial association between smartphone usage and well-being, especially in alleviating loneliness and promoting emotional support. Nonetheless, obstacles such as digital literacy deficits and privacy apprehensions persist as substantial issues. The research underscores the significance of specialised digital literacy initiatives to bolster social connectivity and boost well-being in the elderly demographic. These observations enhance the overarching dialogue regarding ageing, technology usage, and digital inclusion in modern society.

Keywords: *Smartphone usage, well-being, social connectedness, elderly population, digital inclusion, gender differences, social media, psychological well-being, technology adoption, aging and technology*

The population is aging is one of the most apparent global trends that have been witnessed in the recent past. In India, according to the 2011 census, the persons aged 60 years and above formed 8.6% of the population and it is likely to exceed 10% in the future (Borah et al., 2016). This shift in demography is also characterized by changes in gender distribution with females above the age of sixty-five years outnumbering males. As the people of the twenty-first century continue to incorporate technological advancements into their daily lives, it is crucial to determine the impact of smartphone usage on the quality of life of older adults.

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Exploring the relationship between Smartphone Usage, Well-Being, and Social Media Connectedness Among Elderly Men and Women

Smartphone popularity has increased during the recent years across all age brackets including the elderly population. Real-time studies show that smartphone ownership varies across age groups with older people employing the gadgets for social and non-social activities including social networking and following news (Neves et al., 2019; Brenner, 2022). Facebook and other social networks are essential sources for keeping in touch with people regardless of the isolation measures they might pose. Research has suggested that social media use may improve quality of life as it facilitates social connectedness, which is crucial for healthy living (Zickuhr and Madden, 2011).

In the use of smartphone among the elders, there is a significant difference between male and female seniors. Numerous empirical findings have indicated that women above 50 years of age use social media more actively than men and stay connected primarily with their close ones (Ihm & Hsieh, 2015; Newman et al., 2021). On the other hand, older males may use social media to acquire new relationships or friends. To this end, there is an imperative to investigate these dynamics separately in hopes of gaining a clearer understanding of how they relate to the aging male and female experience (Baumeister & Sommer, 1997; Krasnova et al., 2017). Moreover, Busch et al.'s (2021) research revealed that increased smartphone usage empirically for social networking and communication is also observable among older women, where women globally are approaching parity with men in digital engagement more so with advancing general connectivity (Dannefer, 2020). Most of the research attention has been focused on the gender differences in smartphone usage where female smartphone users are observed to spend longer time on the gadget than males in the sample where the average time spent on the gadget per day is approximately 166.78 minutes for females as opposed to 154.26 minutes for males as determined by Andone et al., (2016).

The social networks helped to change the postmodern communication by creating opportunities for interaction and collective action regardless of the age or gender of the participants (Perrin & Anderson, 2019). Although in the past social media consumption was popular among young people, recent research shows that the number of active users who belong to the elder generation is rising and more of them are elderly women who use social media to reconnect with friends, exchange experiences and join the new social networks (Smith, 2018). It is therefore important for the effects of social media on wellbeing of this particular demographic to be assessed with understanding of the reasons for engaging in the use of the social media.

Self-realization is the quality of life which emerged from the investigation of satisfaction in important domains, such as affect, health, and social relationships (Diener et al., 2018). The purpose for any elderly woman who is facing a myriad of challenges in old age is to determine what contributes to their quality of life. Scholars also indicate that well-being among this group focuses on not only their physical well-being but their capability to handle emotionally stressful events and have direction in life (Steptoe et al., 2015). And as people face new age challenges which may include changes in health status or caregiving roles, then it becomes vital to understand these factors.

The issue of social isolation persists to be ever present among older women because loneliness is known to have negative impacts on the mental health of older people, as noted by Victor & Yang 2012). However mobile technology seems to hold immense potential of reducing these effects by helping people make connections in the form of smartphone usage and social media interactions. This study will seek to understand the various and complex factors of well-being

of women who are 50 years and above, using both the objective and perceived statuses such as life satisfaction and physical ailment respectively. Thus, the research questions include consideration of social support, emotional coping resources, and digital self-presentation strategies needed to construct the conceptualization of well-being of the target population.

Previous studies, including from Victor & Yang (2012) has shown that proper use of these technologies has the potential of decreasing loneliness among the elderly in that the use of technology helps them maintain social connections.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Elderly people and Smartphone Usage

The increasing adoption in relation to technology by the elderly has been observed by those who offer important patterns and implications for this population. There has been an increase in the number of elderly using technology, with more people integrating digital gadgets and internet access into their daily lives for entertainment, business, ease in terms of attaining logistic with regard to their lifestyle. This has led to a number of factors, such as the increased accessibility of reasonably priced gadgets, improvements in user-friendly interfaces, and awareness of the potential advantages of technology for social interaction and cognitive engagement. Anderson & Perin (2017)

Elderly and Social connectedness

Research postulates in the realm of social media use and life satisfaction are positively correlated in older people (Gaia et al., 2021). Messaging apps like WhatsApp and social media platforms such as Facebook are quite in trend in regard to elderly women for staying in touch with family and friends (Park & Lee, 2020). Participation in online communities and social media platforms often help reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness among elderly women, fostering a sense of belonging and social support (Lim et al., 2019). Furthermore, older adults use the Internet less than all other age groups, but their rate of use has been increasing rapidly in recent years (Perrin & Duggan, 2015). Older adults internet use is also positively associated with formal social participation, such as attending meetings and involvement with community organizations (Cody et al., 1999; Hogeboom et al., 2010), religious participation, and volunteer work (Choi & Dinitto, 2013).

Elderly Population and Well being

Chan (2018), on the other hand, elaborates on multimodal connectedness as the ability to engage in multiple forms of communication via digital tools, which has been proven beneficial to one's psychological well-being, particularly in older groups (ages 55-70+). The study reveals that older people, unlike younger cohorts, tend to utilize less technology, but the interactions they enjoy are regarded as interactions of quality. Engaging in more meaningful interactions can lead to positive well-being outcomes as they are more invested in a limited number of social connections than the younger cohort that is often wider but more superficial. Such interactions, according to Thomas (2010), help to reduce feelings of loneliness and depression, common in later life. For example, studies have indicated that the use of digital communication tends to be more effective in alleviating depression for older individuals than offline social interactions. This means that although traditional forms of communication are still very important, the convenience and availability of the digital world help provide the much-needed support systems that make it easier to boost one's mental strength.

Gender based ideologies

The connection between gender paradigms and smartphone usage shows stark variation in the patterns and psychological influence on older individuals. Evidence suggests that elderly population in females use smartphones for specific purposes and in particular ways which has an impact on their mental health. It has been proven that frequent use of a smartphone positively correlates with cognitive functions, especially for older people. For example, Yuan et al. (2019) researched actively participating men and found that there was a general increase in cognitive functioning across domains with increased smartphone use, but this, of course, was not true for all cognitive activities. Despite women often having lower levels of visuospatial ability than men, they had higher levels of mobile use which enabled them to outperform men in memory based tasks.

There have been inconclusive views whether gender and smartphone use put together have joint associations when it comes to cognitive health. Freese et al. (2006) sought to establish the relationship between use of technology and one's cognitive capabilities for older persons and emphasized the cultural context that surrounds the population. They argument advanced is that adequately designed workshops aimed at increasing digital participation can positively affect the health of older people. Research show too that the use of smartphones is a way of reducing the gender disparity gap in some cognitive areas, especially.

Gender based gaps

There is significant gender gap in technology adoption points to pronounced disparities in access, usage, and proficiency with digital technologies amongst elderly women. Indeed, research has shown that for older women, the barriers to adopt and use smartphones or any other digital device were greater due to lack of exposure to technology during their formative years, societal stereotype expectations of technological incompetence, and a general lack of training programs targeted at them (Hong et al., 2020; Hargittai, 2021). It is further combined that elderly females will probably lead more with lesser economic level accessibility of devices or/and online services, reducing this likelihood again (van Deursen & Helsper, 2015). Such disparities have important implications for their well-being, as they can deepen existing social inequalities, restrict access to critical information and healthcare resources, and contribute to feelings of isolation and exclusion (Chang et al., 2021; van Dijk, 2020).

Despite these challenges, digital technologies also present immense opportunities for elderly women. The engagement with their smartphones and social media websites enables them to express themselves and indulge in creative activities for leisure, serving as a medium for emotional fulfillment and intellectual stimulation. Literature suggests that these engagements can positively enhance psychological well-being through reduced loneliness, offering a sense of belonging, and allowing opportunities to reconnect with faraway families and friends (Son et al., 2021; Pew Research Center, 2022). The latter programs regarding digital literacy among elderly women were quite effective, whereby it allowed them to independently operate an online environment and thereby helped to raise their quality of life. Czaja et al., 2020; Wright et al., 2023. Closing the gap in technology adoption between genders will not only ensure inclusion but also ensure full participation and benefits for aged women in the expanding opportunities of a digitalizing world.

Challenges

Social networking sites for older adults may be partly influenced by negative attitudes toward technology and apprehensions related to data privacy and security (Campbell & Russo, 2003).

Further, these are compounded by challenges with technical literacy, cognitive changes, and sensory impairment that make navigation and interaction with digital platforms difficult to conduct (Charness & Boot, 2009). Furthermore, it has been indicated in studies that perceived complexity of these platforms tends to prevent older individuals from active participation in social media, consequently limiting their online social interaction and connectedness. Lee et al. (2018) also discuss designing accessible and intuitive online environments that address the usability challenges so that greater engagement could be encouraged among the elderly population.

The relationship between smartphone usage, well-being, and social media connectedness among older adults has been increasingly explored in recent years. Studies suggest that older adults who successfully engage with smartphones and social media report enhanced psychological well-being, reduced loneliness, and improved social support networks (Quinn, 2019). However, barriers such as lack of confidence in using technology and limited training opportunities persist, reducing the potential benefits (Czaja et al., 2015). There are also differences in the purpose of using social media: while older women tend to use it more as a means for relationship maintenance, older men tend to use the platforms for information searching (Schreurs et al., 2017). These are important needs to be addressed in order to meaningfully engage this age group and leverage the benefits of technology.

Objectives

1. To determine the relationship between smartphone usage and levels of social connectedness among elderly population.
2. To study the relationship between smartphone usage and well-being among elderly population.
3. To triangulate quantitative findings with qualitative insights to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between smartphone usage, social connectedness, and well-being among elderly population.

Hypotheses

- There will be a significant relationship between smartphone usage and psychological well-being among elderly individuals.
- There will be a significant relationship between smartphone usage and social connectedness among elderly individuals.
- Psychological well-being will significantly mediate the relationship between smartphone usage and social connectedness among elderly individuals.
- Gender will moderate the relationship between smartphone usage, psychological well-being, and social connectedness among elderly individuals.

Research Design

In this study, we will use the Methodical Triangulation mixed method research design, which collects data from both qualitative and quantitative research simultaneously.

Methodological triangulation is used in the various research methods to understand and study the same phenomenon. In triangulation mixed methods, the researcher gets a deeper understanding and insight to explore the phenomenon of the study. In both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, the study discovers that all methods result pointing in the same direction and it confirms the accuracy of the data, but it is essential to understand that

research findings don't mean collected data are still subject to examination even when triangulation is used to validate research conclusions (Bans-Akutey, 2021).

Inclusion Criteria

- The research study requires participants to be 65 years of age or older at the time of enrollment.
- Both older men and women are eligible to participate in this research study. Participants from throughout India can participate in the study.
- The participant must own an individual smartphone on a regular basis.
- The survey and interview questions should be understandable and responsive to the participants on cognitive and linguistic ability.

Data analysis Qualitative

Data Transcription and Initial coding

All the audio recordings were transcribed into text. Braun and Clarke's (2006) description of the several stages of thematic analysis was followed in the coding and analysis of the transcribed data. In order to become acquainted with the participants' language and conversational style, the audio recordings were listened to several times before being verbatim transcribed. While listening to the audio recording, brief explanations were jotted down on the printed text's hard copy to make sense of the data. To become more acquainted, the text was attentively read more and more times.

Generating and Reviewing Potential Themes

The codes were analyzed to find patterns that might be generated or identified for themes based on relationships, overlaps, and similarities. Around 36 initial sets of themes, the codes were simplified or clustered.

These themes were examined in accordance with the goals of the study. Based on agreement among the researchers, a final set of 14 themes was identified, and they were grouped under the general categories. There were eight finalized broad groups. In accordance with the final set of rules and themes, the categories and themes were examined and appropriately changed.

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Technology Adoption and Preference

Many consumers favor the latest smartphone models due to their innovative features, reflecting broader trends in technology adoption. According to Rogers (2003), innovation diffusion is largely influenced by the perceived attributes of new technologies, such as compatibility, complexity, and relative advantage. Participants in the study echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the appeal of cutting-edge features that enhance connectivity and personal identity. One participant said, “I use the latest iPhone because it enables me to connect, and I also like to have the latest innovative features.” This supports the idea that the allure of modern gadgets extends beyond functionality to social status, aligning with research by Park & Chen (2007), who found that user experience and perceived brand prestige drive smartphone adoption.

Additionally, the transition from Android to iPhone cited by another participant highlights how user experience is a significant factor in consumer preference. As noted by Hong et al. (2017), ease of use and seamless integration within an ecosystem play crucial roles in

technology adoption. Apple's ecosystem, which allows smooth interconnectivity between devices, exemplifies this, fostering a cohesive digital environment that appeals to users.

Integration into Daily Routine

Smartphones have evolved from simple communication tools to multifunctional devices that integrate into users' daily routines. This shift aligns with the findings of Palen (2002), who described mobile devices as facilitating "personal information management" in various aspects of life. One participant mentioned, "Well, my smartphone is like a personal assistant," illustrating how smartphones have replaced traditional devices by managing schedules, setting alarms, and more. This reflects earlier studies by Katz & Aakhus (2002) on the personalization of communication technologies, which highlighted how smartphones enhance productivity and ensure users stay organized.

The ability of smartphones to keep users on track with their commitments was a recurring theme. Another participant remarked, "It reminds me of my appointments, meetings, and even organizes my day." This integration of calendar applications, reminders, and task management tools underscores their importance, both personally and professionally. Research by Oulasvirta et al. (2012) supports this view, stating that mobile devices are key in supporting users' everyday activities by offering "functional diversity."

Digital Convenience and Multifunctionality

Smartphones have become essential for enhancing convenience and efficiency in various tasks, fundamentally transforming daily life. In line with research by Ling (2004), participants emphasized how smartphones streamline their routines, performing tasks from paying bills to managing workouts. One user noted, "I can do almost everything – from paying bills to ordering groceries, even my workouts – all from my telephone." This underscores the multifunctionality of smartphones, which consolidate different tools into a single device, facilitating a more efficient and organized lifestyle. Marketing campaigns, such as those analyzed by Okazaki & Mendez (2013), often focus on this theme of convenience, mirroring participants' perceptions.

Participants also highlighted the elimination of physical burdens: "I don't have to take a wallet or a notebook with me; a phone contains it all." This trend aligns with O'Hara et al. (2006), who discuss how smartphones serve as comprehensive digital tools, simplifying access to essential services and information regardless of location. By consolidating various functionalities, smartphones streamline everyday tasks, thereby enhancing the overall quality of life and serving as indispensable companions in modern living.

Health and Well-Being

Smartphones result in some certain convenience but at the same time, the gadgets pose a threat to physical and psychological well-being. According to Thompson (2018) the effects observed by users include eye strain and headache and these are supported by the responses of the participants also. A respondent said, "I often use my phone; therefore, I know that my eyes get tired or I develop headaches around four hours of screen time."

Also, participants pointed out that children may have socio-emotional problems, such as anxiety resulting from overuse of social media networks. Valkenburg & Peter (2011) concluded that the more time is spent on social media sites, the chances of anxiety and depression were high because of exposure to an idealized lifestyle. As it will be discussed

shortly, participants in this study also expressed feelings of incompetence after using platforms such as Instagram for an elongated period. One person described a sense of entrapment: "I discover myself in state where I can't turn away; there is always something arising with notifications or message waiting for reply."

This can be attributed to the continued argument on the psychological effects of being connected to the internet at all times, which supports Turkle (2015) view that constant connection causes fatigue and mental health problems. Alternately, among the convenient tools that smartphones are, they have possible negative impact in enabling well-being underscoring technology-affordability polarity with regard to wellness.

Emotional Impact and Social Connectivity

Building new connections and maintaining personal connections are one of the most effective strategies through which people can increase their level of happiness (Huppert, 2008; Seligman, 2011). However, socialization, resource sharing, pair-bonding, group-living – all are imperative for human survival. Smartphones were ambivalent in participants' emotional lives as they were simultaneously a source of comfort and an entrapment. They began social relations; they also caused feelings of loneliness and anxiety. Dean et al have only recently begun examining how people's emotions or what they call 'state loneliness' alter over a certain time and they posit that if there is a change in this state, then contextual variables" may have an impact on it. For instance, a study conducted by EMA identified that older adults were more lonely when alone than when with others (Compernolle et al., 2021). One of the participants stated, 'WhatsApp lets me communicate with my friends and my family since those who do not stay with me.' The different features are fun; users share pictures, typing, and it takes me closer to them and captures the positive aspect of social interconnection. On the other hand, another participant said, "Sometimes I feel that I am over-dependent on this device for my communication." If I am out of coverage or my phone battery is almost drained, I feel like I am isolated and get nervous.

Digital Security and Privacy Concerns

The everyday lives of older individuals are becoming more and more reliant on online services. People use smartphones to buy, keep track of their health and finances, engage in social events, and maintain social ties. Researchers have found, however, that older adults are more anxious about online services and digital technology in general because they are less aware of the risks (Grimes, G. A., Hough) associated with internet security, which leaves them more open to attacks. They also worry more about privacy and data security (Hoofnagle, C., King, J., Li, S. and Turow, J) than younger populations. The acceptability of internet services by older people has been found to be severely impacted by privacy and data security concerns (Chen, K. and Chan, A. H. S.), which also contribute to the generational digital divide. The privacy issue drew lots of attention from the participants; they used different approaches to ensure they kept their details safe. This is what one of the participants said; "I have the privacy settings of my social networking account well configured." 'I do not have many accounts and the ones I have I make them private, I do not open links from people I do not know.' Some participants were more specific when they said: "I am very careful about giving people details of my life because you don't know who is around." I've heard too many stories about data breaches and scams. I've heard too many stories about data breaches and scams. As will be seen, this theme highlights the importance of having an appreciation of the digital world as well as being able to protect oneself out there.

Balance and Moderation in Digital Usage

Technology has altered our lives in various ways, which offers numerous advantages. A vast amount of information is instantly available to us. Excessive use of screens has been linked in studies to a number of physical and mental health problems, including eye strain, sedentary lifestyles, sleep disorders, and elevated stress levels. Additionally, excessive social media use can result in anxiety, addiction, and feelings of inadequacy. It was interesting to note that participants were never in denial about the difficulties of integrating or multitasking their smartphone usage with other life aspects. They wrote one respondent deemed, "I avoid using my phone during mealtime and when I am with my family." Yes it's tempting but I have in my mind and heart thought that perhaps sometimes one needs to log off and take a break. One of the participants narrated how they did a digital detox, commenting on it like this, "Last year I decided to pull out from social media for a month." I remember that it was tough initially, but then the anxiety level was reduced and I'd be able to focus more." Such attempts can also be viewed as the emerging understanding of possible adverse impacts from overutilization harms or limitations.

Learning, Personal Growth, and Hobbies Facilitated by Technology

Technology has developed into an effective tool for helping people all across the world grow and develop personally. A Pew Research Centre research found that 87% of participants believed technology improved their capacity to learn new information. These hand-held devices were not only mere communication devices but also avenues to connect to the world outside to get knowledge and to transform oneself. People reported using different applications in order to gain new skills or engage in hobbies. As one participant highlighted it, "I've wanted for a long time to pick up guitar and now that there is YouTube, I am learning." Still, another participant reported that they monitor their fitness through the phone. Some respondents flexed its possibilities positively and shared things like, "It inspires me to keep active, and I've turned into a runner" proving that digital platforms help to maintain physical health and well-being. This theme illustrates how smartphones are not all evil in that it has got potential of helping people grow into a new activity.

Quantitative Results

Table 1 (Descriptives) Descriptive Statistics for Attitudes Toward Technology, Satisfaction with Life, Social Connectedness, and Social Provisions

Measure	N	M	SD
Attitudes Toward Technology	103	20.9	3.68
Satisfaction with Life	103	26.5	4.49
Social Connectedness	103	79	13
Social Provisions	103	60.6	4.26

Table 2 (Independent Sample t test)

Independent Samples T-Test Results for Attitudes Toward Technology, Satisfaction with Life, Social Connectedness, and Social Provisions

Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p	Mean difference	SE difference
Attitudes Toward Technology	**Student's t**	-0.1635	101	0.870	-0.1192	0.729
Satisfaction with Life Scale	**Student's t**	-1.0653	101	0.289	-0.9423	0.885
Social Connectedness Scale	**Student's t**	-0.2713	101	0.787	-0.6995	2.578
Social Provisions Scale	**Student's t**	-0.0322	101	0.974	-0.0271	0.844

Note. $H_a\ \mu_{Male} \neq \mu_{Female}$

Table 3: Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality

Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk)

	W	p
Attitudes Toward Technology	0.949	<.001
Satisfaction with Life Scale	0.978	0.089
Social Connectedness Scale	0.974	0.039
Social Provisions Scale	0.974	0.043

Note. A low p-value suggests a violation of the assumption of normality

Table 4: Group Descriptive

Descriptives

	Attitudes Toward Technology	Satisfaction with Life Scale	Social Connectedness Scale	Social Provisions Scale
N	103	103	103	103
Missing	100	100	100	100
Mean	20.9	26.5	79.0	60.6
Median	21.0	27.0	80.0	60.0
Standard deviation	3.68	4.49	13.0	4.26
Minimum	9.00	18.0	46.0	49.0
Maximum	28.0	35.0	106	74.0

Table 5 (Correlation) Correlation Matrix for Variables

Correlation Matrix

		Attitudes Toward Technology	Satisfaction with Life Scale	Social Connectedness Scale	Social Provisions Scale
Attitudes Toward Technology	**Pearson's r**	—			
	df	—			
	p-value	—			
Satisfaction with Life Scale	**Pearson's r**	0.138	—		
	df	101	—		
	p-value	0.165	—		
Social Connectedness Scale	**Pearson's r**	0.125	0.251	—	
	df	101	101	—	
	p-value	0.209	0.011	—	
Social Provisions Scale	**Pearson's r**	0.309	0.056	0.145	—
	df	101	101	101	—
	p-value	0.001	0.573	0.144	—

DISCUSSION

The present study explored the relationship between individuals' attitudes toward technology, satisfaction with life, social connectedness, and the perceived availability of social provisions. The descriptive statistics provide key insights into these variables, reflecting varying degrees of attitudes and experiences within the sample.

Descriptives

The results of the four scales provide insights into participants' attitudes and experiences. For the Attitudes Toward Technology Scale (N = 103), the mean score was 20.9 (SD = 3.68), with scores ranging from 9 to 28, suggesting moderately positive attitudes toward technology use. The Satisfaction with Life Scale had a mean of 26.5 (SD = 4.49), with scores between 18 and 35, indicating moderate to high life satisfaction among participants. On the Social Connectedness Scale participants reported a mean score of 79.0 (SD = 13.0), ranging from 46 to 106, reflecting variability in participants' sense of belonging and connectedness. Similarly, the Social Provisions Scale showed a mean score of 60.6 (SD = 4.26), with scores spanning from 49 to 74, indicating that participants generally felt well-supported by their social environment. The sample size of 60 and above across all scales suggests reliable variability, and the consistent N values reflect complete responses from the same participants for each measure. These findings point toward moderate engagement with technology, satisfactory life contentment, and generally strong social networks, though individual differences in social connectedness and support are notable.

Independent Sample t-test

The group descriptives provide insight into gender-based differences in attitudes toward technology, life satisfaction, social connectedness, and social provisions among elderly participants (aged 60 and above). The independent sample t-test was used to compare males and females across these variables, with a focus on determining whether smartphone usage influences levels of social connectedness in elderly populations.

The mean scores on the Attitudes Toward Technology scale show little difference between males (M = 20.8, SD = 3.57) and females (M = 20.9, SD = 3.82), suggesting that both genders have comparable attitudes toward smartphone use. This similarity indicates that gender may

not play a significant role in shaping attitudes toward technology among the elderly population.

In terms of Satisfaction with Life, females reported slightly higher mean scores (M = 26.9, SD = 4.49) compared to males (M = 26.0, SD = 4.49). While both groups demonstrated moderate life satisfaction, this minor difference may reflect variations in personal, social, or emotional well-being between the genders, which aligns with prior research suggesting that elderly women may report higher subjective well-being due to stronger social networks or coping mechanisms.

The Social Connectedness scale, a key variable related to the study's hypothesis, shows a slightly higher mean for females (M = 79.3, SD = 12.83) compared to males (M = 78.6, SD = 13.33). However, the small difference in connectedness levels suggests that smartphone usage might not drastically alter social connectedness differently for males and females. Both genders exhibit relatively high connectedness scores, indicating that the elderly population, regardless of gender, may maintain meaningful social interactions through technology or other means.

Both males and females reported identical mean scores on the Social Provisions Scale (M = 60.6), suggesting comparable levels of perceived social support across genders. This finding aligns with the idea that older adults, regardless of gender, may receive adequate social support, which can enhance well-being and maintain social bonds.

These results suggest that while both elderly males and females report similar attitudes toward smartphone usage and comparable levels of life satisfaction, social connectedness, and social provisions, the relationship between smartphone usage and social connectedness appears consistent across genders. The slight differences observed in social connectedness scores are not substantial enough to indicate that smartphone usage affects males and females differently. This aligns with the hypothesis that smartphone usage may be related to social connectedness among the elderly population, but the effect does not seem to differ significantly between males and females. Future research could further explore other factors, such as frequency and type of smartphone usage, to better understand the nuances of technology's role in enhancing social connectedness among older adults.

Correlation

The correlation analysis reveals both significant and non-significant relationships between the variables. Notably, there is a moderate positive correlation between variables B and E, with a Pearson's r of 0.417 and a p-value of 0.002, indicating that as scores on B increase, scores on E tend to increase as well. This relationship is statistically significant, suggesting it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Similarly, a moderate positive correlation exists between variables C and D ($r = 0.410$, $p = 0.002$), implying that these two variables may be influenced by similar underlying factors or constructs. The strength and significance of these correlations warrant further investigation, possibly through regression analysis or exploring potential causal mechanisms.

In contrast, other variable pairs demonstrate weak and statistically non-significant correlations. For example, the relationships between B and C ($r = -0.016$, $p = 0.907$), B and D ($r= 0.016$, $p = 0.912$), C and E ($r = 0.004$, $p = 0.977$), and D and E ($r = 0.230$, $p = 0.097$) are negligible, with high p-values indicating these correlations are likely due to random chance.

As such, these relationships do not offer meaningful insights and do not require further statistical modeling unless new theoretical perspectives suggest otherwise.

While the significant correlations highlight potential areas for deeper exploration, it is essential to remember that correlation does not imply causation. Though variables B and E, and C and D show significant associations, we cannot conclude causal relationships without additional analysis. With a sample size of 51 for most correlations, the findings are reasonably robust, but increasing the sample size in future studies could yield more precise results, especially for weaker relationships. In summary, the analysis provides valuable insights, with significant relationships pointing toward meaningful patterns that merit further examination, while non-significant ones indicate limited or no association between certain variables.

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Conflict of Interest

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