

Research Paper

Instagram's Influence on Academic Motivation and Emotional Intelligence of Early Adults

Meenatchi V. A.¹, Narmadha Devi G.², Sharveshwaran K. S.^{3*},
Mr. Santhosh Kumar S⁴

ABSTRACT

Instagram, a popular photo and video sharing platform, profoundly impacts various aspects of young adults' lives. This research examines the influence of Instagram on academic motivation and emotional intelligence in early adulthood (18–34 years). Utilizing robust survey methods, the study employs the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS-C 28), Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), and the Internet Addiction Test. A stratified sampling method was implemented to collect data from a representative sample of 207 individuals. Results highlight significant correlations between Instagram usage, academic motivation, and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, the study delves into the nuanced effects of excessive social media consumption on emotional well-being and academic persistence. Implications for educational and emotional interventions are thoroughly discussed.

Keywords: *Instagram, Academic Motivation, Emotional Intelligence, Survey Method, Sampling, Digital Literacy*

Instagram has rapidly become a dominant platform in the lives of young adults, influencing social interactions and personal perceptions. Initially designed for sharing photos, it has evolved into a powerful tool shaping societal trends, mental health, and self-esteem. Instagram's focus on idealized lifestyles and beauty standards fosters unhealthy comparisons and feelings of inadequacy. Research has shown links between excessive Instagram use and increased anxiety, depression, and body image dissatisfaction, particularly due to the platform's portrayal of unattainable beauty ideals and lifestyles (FOMO, unrealistic expectations).

Despite its ability to foster online connections, Instagram often leads to shallow interactions, contributing to emotional dependency and isolation. Furthermore, its addictive nature affects productivity and disrupts sleep, which in turn impacts academic motivation and emotional

¹Department of Psychology, Sri Krishna Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu

²Department of Psychology, Sri Krishna Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu

³Department of Psychology, Sri Krishna Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Sri Krishna Arts and Science College, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu

*Corresponding Author

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intelligence. Social interactions online may also hinder the development of emotional intelligence, particularly when real-life connections are replaced by virtual ones. Thus, understanding Instagram's influence on academic motivation and emotional intelligence is crucial for promoting a balanced approach to social media use.

Academic Motivation is driven by intrinsic and extrinsic factors, including curiosity, external rewards, and self-efficacy. A balance between these motivations is vital for sustaining academic engagement. Factors such as the learning environment, peer support, and parental involvement also play significant roles in shaping academic motivation.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) encompasses emotional awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and social skills. High EI helps individuals manage their emotions effectively, leading to better personal and social outcomes. Social media platforms, including Instagram, can interfere with emotional intelligence by fostering negative comparisons and unrealistic expectations.

Instagram Usage and Its Effects: Instagram usage has been linked to academic distraction, poor time management, reduced face-to-face interaction, and unrealistic expectations. Furthermore, excessive use can lead to sleep disruptions, which negatively impact both academic performance and emotional regulation. Setting boundaries and engaging in offline activities can mitigate these effects, promoting healthier social and academic development. The relevance of this research lies in understanding how digital platforms like Instagram shape individual and collective behaviors. With early adulthood being a formative period for academic and emotional development, examining the interplay between social media habits and these domains is crucial.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample comprised 135 adults aged 18-25 years from Tamil Nadu. We used convenience sampling to collect the samples. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure representation of key characteristics. The inclusive criteria included adults aged 18-25, both genders, college students and young working adults, urban and rural populations, English readers, and willing participants from Coimbatore. The exclusive criteria excluded children, late adults, middle-aged and elderly populations, unwilling participants, and non-English readers.

Instruments

Three measures were used in this study,

- 1. Academic Motivation Scale (AMS-C 28):** Measures intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, assessing both academic persistence and the underlying reasons for engagement.
- 2. Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS):** Provides insights into participants' emotional regulation, awareness, and interpersonal adaptability.
- 3. Internet Addiction Test:** Examines patterns of excessive and compulsive Instagram use, linking them to broader behavioral outcomes.

Ethical Consideration

1. Participants were informed about the purpose and nature of the study.
2. Participants were informed about the right to refuse to participate in the study.
3. Participants were ensured about the confidentiality issues.

Procedure

We selected participants aged 18-25 from Coimbatore for the study. We asked participants to read and understand the statements in the questionnaires provided via Google Forms. Participants related the questions to their true emotions and answered accordingly. We provided detailed instructions and explanations for certain questions online, ensuring confidentiality. We acted as the agents, while the subjects aged 18-25 were the recipients. The goal of the study was to estimate whether excessive Instagram usage influences academic motivation and emotional intelligence.

RESULTS

The study involves 135 populations of early adults. The age range of the population is between 18 – 25 years. the questionnaires are administered to the subject to identify the relationship between academic motivation and Instagram usage as well as emotional intelligence and Instagram usage and to find whether Instagram usage actually influence the persons academic motivation and emotional intelligence. Both the relationship between academic motivation and Instagram usage as well as emotional intelligence and Instagram usage is tested with Pearson correlation test. The result of the study is analyzed, tabulated and discussed below.

Table No. 1 Correlation Between Academic Motivation and Instagram Usage

Group	Academic Motivation and Instagram Usage
Pearson’s Correlation	-.819**
Significance (p-value)	< .001

H01: There is no negative relationship between academic motivation and Instagram usage. The results from the above table show that there is negative correlation between academic motivation and Instagram usage. While mentioning negative relationship it means that, when one variable decreases the other variable decreases as well. According to SPSS, any variable correlated with it will have a correlation of 0.01. From the above correlation table, the Pearson’s correlation for both academic motivation and Instagram usage is -.819. Stating this, we can say that academic motivation is negatively correlated with Instagram usage among adults of the age ranging from 18-25. We got the p-value as < .001 it is shown that there is a statistically significant correlation between the two variables. Thus, we can conclude that there exists a significant correlation between academic motivation and Instagram usage among young adults.

Table No. 2 Correlation Between Emotional Intelligence and Instagram Usage

Group	Emotional Intelligence and Instagram Usage
Pearson’s Correlation	-.877**
Significance (p-value)	< .001

H02: There is no negative relationship between emotional intelligence and Instagram usage. The results from the above table show that there is negative correlation between emotional intelligence and Instagram usage. While mentioning negative relationship it means that, when one variable decreases the other variable decreases as well. According to SPSS, any variable correlated with it will have a correlation of 0.01. From the above correlation table, the Pearson’s correlation for both emotional intelligence and Instagram usage is -.877. Stating this, we can say that emotional intelligence is negatively correlated with Instagram usage

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among adults of the age ranging from 18-25. We got the p-value as $< .001$ it is shown that there is a statistically significant correlation between the two variables. Thus, we can conclude that there exists a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and Instagram usage among young adults.

DISCUSSION

This research uncovers a significant and compelling connection between Instagram usage, academic motivation, and emotional intelligence. The data indicate a strong association between Instagram usage and decreased academic motivation, suggesting that the visually stimulating content and social interactions on Instagram may divert attention away from academic responsibilities, potentially impacting academic performance.

Additionally, the study shows that increased Instagram usage negatively impacts emotional intelligence, particularly in understanding and managing one's own emotions and those of others. Excessive use of Instagram may hinder emotional regulation, which is essential for personal and social well-being.

These findings highlight the need for strategies to balance social media use with emotional intelligence development and academic focus. As the digital world continues to evolve, it is increasingly important for educators, mental health professionals, and policymakers to address the challenges associated with Instagram addiction, ensuring that young adults can manage their social media consumption in a way that supports both their emotional and academic growth.

The aim of this study was to explore the significant correlation between Instagram usage and both academic motivation and emotional intelligence. This quantitative study, with a sample of 135 participants, has shown that Instagram usage negatively correlates with both academic motivation and emotional intelligence. The null hypotheses were rejected based on Pearson's correlation results, with p-values $< .001$ for both academic motivation ($-.819$) and emotional intelligence ($-.877$).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study reveal the following key findings:

- There is a significant negative correlation between academic motivation and Instagram usage among young adults.
- There is a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and Instagram usage among young adults.
- Both academic motivation and emotional intelligence are negatively influenced by increased Instagram usage.

Suggestions for Further Research

The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between Instagram usage, academic motivation, and emotional intelligence among young adults. The findings show a significant correlation between Instagram usage and both academic motivation and emotional intelligence. However, further research can explore other relevant factors that might influence these relationships. Additionally, this study was limited to one state and a small sample size, suggesting that future studies with larger samples (greater than 500) would provide more robust results. A mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data, would also offer a more comprehensive understanding. Further research can explore additional demographic variables to improve the generalizability of the findings.

Limitations

- The sample size of the study is limited to 135 participants.
- The area of sampling is restricted to Coimbatore and its surrounding regions.
- The sample includes only individuals between the ages of 18-25.
- The sample profile is limited to young adults, which may not represent other age groups.
- There is an unequal distribution of males and females in the total sample.
- The study was conducted exclusively with Instagram users.

Implications

- This study helps individuals better understand their interactions with Instagram and its impact on academic and emotional outcomes.
- It encourages young adults to focus on time management, balancing entertainment and academic responsibilities.
- The study emphasizes the importance of enhancing emotional intelligence, helping individuals better understand and manage their own emotions and those of others.
- It contributes to improving self-confidence and decision-making skills by recognizing the effects of social media usage on emotional development.
- The findings highlight the need to understand the broader influence of Instagram on daily life, influencing social, academic, and emotional aspects.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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