

Effect of Social Media Addiction on Emotional Intelligence in Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the impact of social media usage on emotional intelligence (EI) among college students. A total of 100 participants aged 18–25 years were purposively selected and categorized as *Active Users* (more than 4 hours/day) or *Minimal Users* (less than 2 hours/day). Emotional intelligence, including its four dimensions self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and social skills was assessed using the Emotional Intelligence Scale, while social media addiction was measured using the Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS). Comparative analysis revealed that active users scored significantly lower than minimal users across all EI dimensions and overall EI. Correlational analysis showed significant negative relationships between social media addiction and all EI dimensions, indicating that excessive social media use adversely affects emotional functioning. Findings highlight the need for balanced digital engagement to support emotional well-being and interpersonal competence among young adults.

Keywords: *Social Media Usage, Emotional Intelligence, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Social Skills*

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has transformed the way individuals communicate, interact, and access information in the 21st century. Among these technologies, social media platforms have emerged as some of the most influential tools, shaping not only communication patterns but also the psychosocial development of users across the globe. Over the past decade, the global penetration of social media has been unprecedented. According to recent reports, there are currently over 5 billion social media users worldwide, representing approximately 62% of the world's population (Data Reportal, 2025). Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, and TikTok have become embedded in the everyday routines of individuals, with the average global user spending nearly 2.5 hours daily on these platforms (We Are Social, 2024).

India, as one of the fastest-growing digital markets, has witnessed a significant surge in social media penetration in recent years. India currently has over 470 million social media users, making it one of the largest online populations globally (Statista, 2025). The demographic profile reveals that youth and young adults constitute the majority of users, with individuals aged 18–24 representing the most active segment. On average, young Indians spend more than

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3 hours daily engaging with social media platforms, often exceeding the global average (IAMAI, 2023). This trend reflects both opportunities and concerns: while social media has expanded avenues for information sharing, connectivity, and self-expression, it has also given rise to problematic patterns of excessive use.

The growing reliance on social media has led to an increasing body of research exploring its negative psychosocial implications. Excessive use of these platforms has been linked with issues such as disrupted sleep patterns, academic underperformance, social comparison, anxiety, depression, and deteriorating interpersonal relationships (Andreassen et al., 2017; Twenge & Campbell, 2018). Importantly, scholars have highlighted the phenomenon of social media addiction, characterized by compulsive and uncontrollable engagement with social platforms despite adverse consequences (Griffiths, 2005; Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). This has raised concerns about its potential impact on key psychological attributes such as emotional regulation, self-awareness, and overall emotional intelligence (EI).

Emotional intelligence (EI) the capacity to recognize, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively plays a vital role during young adulthood, a critical stage of identity formation and socio-emotional development (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995). Since social media interactions often substitute or dominate offline communication, excessive usage may influence the development and functioning of EI. Thus, examining the relationship between social media addiction and EI, particularly among young adults, is both timely and essential.

Social Media Addiction

Social media addiction refers to a behavioral addiction characterized by excessive and uncontrollable use of social networking platforms that disrupts daily functioning. While not yet formally classified in diagnostic manuals such as the DSM-5, it shares similarities with other behavioral addictions, including symptoms of salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse (Griffiths, 2005). Individuals with social media addiction often engage in compulsive checking, spend excessive time online, and experience distress when unable to access social networking sites (Andreassen, 2015).

For research purposes, social media users are often categorized into active users and minimal users. In this study, active users are defined as individuals who spend four or more hours daily on social media platforms, whereas minimal users are those who spend less than two hours daily. This classification allows for meaningful comparisons between heavy and light users in terms of psychosocial outcomes, including emotional intelligence. Active users typically report higher tendencies of problematic use, whereas minimal users are less likely to exhibit addictive symptoms (Bányai et al., 2017).

Griffiths' (2005) components model of addiction provides a theoretical framework for understanding social media addiction. According to this model:

- Salience occurs when social media dominates an individual's thinking and behavior.
- Mood modification refers to using social media as a coping mechanism to relieve stress or improve mood.
- Tolerance involves the need to increase usage time to achieve the same effects.
- Withdrawal symptoms include irritability and restlessness when deprived of social media.
- Conflict arises when excessive use interferes with academic, occupational, or social functioning.

- Relapse reflects returning to problematic patterns after attempts to reduce usage.

Globally, research indicates that 6–10% of social media users may qualify as being at risk of addiction (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). In India, the prevalence appears to be rising, especially among adolescents and young adults, due to the availability of affordable smartphones and widespread internet connectivity. A study by Prakash and Singh (2021) found that approximately 8% of Indian college students demonstrated addictive use patterns, with higher risks observed in those spending over four hours daily online. This suggests that social media addiction is becoming a significant public health concern, particularly in youth populations.

Emotional Intelligence and Its Dimensions

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) was first introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990), who defined it as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (p. 189). Later, Goleman (1995) popularized the construct by emphasizing its importance in personal and professional success, arguing that EI can often matter more than cognitive intelligence (IQ) in determining life outcomes. Bradberry and Greaves (2001) operationalized EI through the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal, which identifies four core dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and social skills.

1. Self-Awareness

This refers to the ability to accurately recognize and understand one’s own emotions, as well as their impact on thoughts and behavior (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Self-awareness is foundational to EI, as it enables individuals to identify emotional triggers and align their responses appropriately. In the context of young adults, strong self-awareness supports resilience and adaptive coping in academic and social settings. Excessive social media use, however, may diminish self-awareness by encouraging external validation and continuous comparison with others (Twenge & Campbell, 2018).

2. Self-Regulation

Self-regulation involves the ability to manage and control one’s emotional responses, particularly in stressful or challenging situations (Goleman, 1995). It includes skills such as impulse control, adaptability, and emotional flexibility. Individuals with high self-regulation can maintain composure and constructive behavior under pressure. However, social media addiction has been associated with impulsive online behaviors, emotional reactivity to feedback, and difficulty in disengaging from negative interactions (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

3. Motivation

Motivation in EI refers to the capacity to channel emotions toward achieving goals, maintaining persistence, and sustaining optimism (Bradberry & Greaves, 2001). Highly motivated individuals are often goal-oriented, resilient, and enthusiastic. Social media addiction, however, can undermine motivation by fostering procrastination, distraction, and reliance on instant gratification, thereby interfering with long-term achievements, particularly among students and young adults (Andreassen, 2015).

4. Social Skills

Social skills represent the ability to manage relationships effectively, including communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and cooperation (Goleman, 1995). In young adulthood, these skills are crucial for building meaningful interpersonal connections and professional networks. While social media can facilitate networking, addiction may erode genuine social interactions, leading to superficial relationships,

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reduced face-to-face communication, and difficulties in sustaining meaningful offline bonds (Bányai et al., 2017).

Emotional intelligence is a critical factor in promoting mental health, academic success, workplace competence, and interpersonal harmony. The potential adverse influence of social media addiction on EI dimensions makes this an important area of investigation, especially among young adults navigating the challenges of a digitalized society.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Andreassen et al. (2017) examined Facebook addiction among adults in Norway and reported that addiction was linked with lower self-esteem and emotional intelligence, particularly deficits in emotion regulation. This study highlights how even in adult populations, excessive engagement with social networking sites can have detrimental effects on emotional functioning and self-concept.

Argentina, Pilatti et al. (2021) studied undergraduate students and found that poor self-control and emotion-driven impulsivity were strong predictors of problematic social networking site use. Their results emphasize the role of emotional regulation deficits in the development of addictive behaviors, aligning with global evidence that social media addiction is closely tied to impairments in emotional intelligence.

Bányai et al. (2017) conducted a large-scale study involving 5,961 Hungarian adolescents. They found that approximately 4.5% of participants met the criteria for problematic social media use. These adolescents reported poorer psychological well-being and lower emotional regulation compared to their peers. The study provides strong evidence of the negative emotional and mental health consequences of excessive social media use among youth.

Basu et al. (2021), who studied 424 undergraduate medical students in Delhi. They developed and validated the Social Media Addiction Questionnaire (SMAQ) and discovered that higher addiction scores were strongly associated with poor sleep quality and impaired self-control. These outcomes point to the emotional dysregulation components of addiction, such as irritability, low frustration tolerance, and difficulty in managing stress, which have direct consequences on emotional intelligence.

Chandel and Gupta (2018) explored the effect of daily social media use on emotional intelligence among adolescents at the Central University of Haryana. While detailed results were not available, their work emphasized that pervasive media use potentially affects the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions. This observation resonates with the broader concern that adolescents and young adults immersed in social networking may experience compromised social skills and reduced emotional awareness.

Che et al. (2025), in a global review published in *Nature Scientific Reports*, summarized the evidence on social media addiction and health outcomes. The review concluded that social media addiction was consistently correlated with negative outcomes, including heightened stress and emotional dysregulation. The findings reinforce the global consensus that problematic social media use poses a threat to emotional well-being.

Dong et al. (2025) conducted a bibliometric analysis of research on social media dependence. Their study identified “emotional regulation deficits” as a central research theme that frequently emerged in the literature. This highlights the fact that across different cultural and

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research contexts, difficulties in managing emotions are one of the most commonly cited consequences of social media addiction.

Gioia et al. (2021) carried out a systematic review of more than forty studies examining problematic internet and social media use. The review consistently demonstrated that problematic use was linked with emotional dysregulation, reduced self-awareness, and diminished empathy. These findings highlight a broad and robust pattern across diverse populations, reinforcing concerns that social media addiction can erode core dimensions of emotional intelligence.

İnaltekin (2024) conducted a study on Turkish university students to explore the relationship between social media addiction and emotional intelligence. The findings indicated that higher levels of social media addiction were significantly associated with lower emotional intelligence, particularly in the domains of self-regulation and social skills. This suggests that excessive reliance on social networking platforms can hinder students' ability to manage their emotions and maintain healthy interpersonal interactions.

Khatoon et al. (2023) investigated 100 students from a central university in Delhi to examine the influence of internet addiction disorder (IAD) on emotional intelligence. Although the abstract did not provide detailed statistical outcomes, the study underscored the growing concern of excessive online use among Indian youth and its potential implications for self-regulation and social connectedness.

Kircaburun (2016) studied Turkish adolescents and found that problematic Facebook use predicted lower emotional intelligence and greater loneliness. These findings suggest that not only does social media addiction impair emotional competence, but it also contributes to social isolation and reduced well-being among young people.

Naik and Sherekar (2022) surveyed 64 adolescents aged 17–21 years in Pune. They found that social networking addiction and fear of missing out (FoMO) were negatively correlated with cognitive reappraisal ($r = -0.286, p < 0.05$), an important emotional regulation strategy. This finding suggests that problematic online behaviors may undermine adaptive coping strategies and restrict the development of higher-order EI skills.

Şahin and Bekiroğlu (2022) investigated communication undergraduates in Turkey and reported that students with higher levels of emotional intelligence, especially emotional awareness, showed lower scores on measures of social media addiction. This study highlights the protective role of emotional intelligence, suggesting that individuals with greater awareness of their emotions are less likely to engage in compulsive or maladaptive social media use.

Sanghvi and Rai (2015) conducted an exploratory study on 30 university students in Bangalore and reported no significant correlation between internet addiction and emotional intelligence. This early finding suggested that the impact of problematic internet use on emotional competencies may not be uniform and could vary with cultural, contextual, or sample-specific factors.

Singh and Nagar (2022) assessed 237 high school students in Bhopal. Their results indicated that internet addiction was significantly correlated with a lack of independence, a dimension of emotional maturity, though it was not significantly related to emotional instability or social

maladjustment. This nuanced outcome suggests that while internet addiction may not always translate into broad emotional dysfunction, it can compromise aspects of autonomy and self-regulation, both central to emotional intelligence.

Singhal and Gautam (2024) examined 151 young adults aged 18–25 years in Noida, focusing on the intersection of internet addiction, perceived stress, and emotional regulation. Their findings revealed a moderate prevalence of mild internet addiction and highlighted that compulsive internet use was linked to difficulties in emotional control, thereby aligning with global evidence that connects digital overuse with reduced regulation of emotions.

Statement of the Problem

social media has become an integral part of daily life for college students, influencing their communication patterns, social interactions, and emotional well-being. While social media offers opportunities for connection and information sharing, excessive use may have detrimental effects on psychological functioning, including emotional regulation and interpersonal skills. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and social skills, plays a crucial role in students' personal and academic development. Despite growing concern over social media's impact on mental health, limited research has systematically examined the relationship between varying levels of social media usage and emotional intelligence among college students. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the differences in emotional intelligence between *active* and *minimal* social media users and explore the association between the extent of social media engagement and emotional competence, aiming to provide insights into promoting balanced digital behavior and emotional well-being in young adults.

Objective of the Study

1. To examine differences in the specific dimensions of Emotional Intelligence (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and social skills) across active and minimal social media users.
2. To analyze the relationship between social media addiction and Emotional Intelligence.

Hypothesis of the Study

1. There will be no significant difference in the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social skills) between active and minimal social media users.
2. There will be no significant relationship between social media addiction and Emotional Intelligence.

METHODS

Participants

The sample consisted of 100 college students between the ages of 18 and 25 years, recruited from various colleges. The sample was evenly divided by gender, with 50 male and 50 female participants. Based on self-reported daily usage, participants were classified into two groups:

- **Active Social Media Users (n = 50):** Students who reported using social media for more than 4 hours per day.
- **Minimal Social Media Users (n = 50):** Students who reported using social media for less than 1 hour per day.

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A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate representation of both active and minimal users. Students with diagnosed psychological disorders and those who did not use social media were excluded from the study.

Research Design

The study adopted a comparative research design to examine differences in psychological variables between active and minimal social media users. Additionally, a correlational research design was employed to investigate the relationship between the extent of social media usage and psychological variables among college students.

Variables Used for Study

- **Independent Variable (IV):** Level of social media usage (Active vs. Minimal).
- **Dependent Variable (DV):** Emotional Intelligence (overall score and four dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social skills).

Operational Definitions

1. **Social Media Usage:** Social media usage was defined based on the average daily time spent on social networking platforms. Participants who reported using social media for more than 4 hours per day were categorized as *Active Users*, whereas those who reported using social media for less than 2 hours per day were categorized as *Minimal Users*.
2. **Emotional Intelligence:** Emotional Intelligence refers to an individual's ability to recognize, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively in daily life. It was assessed across four dimensions:
3. **Self-Awareness:** The capacity to recognize and understand one's own emotions.
4. **Self-Regulation:** The ability to control and manage one's emotional responses.
5. **Motivation:** The drive to achieve goals and maintain persistence despite challenges.
6. **Social Skills:** The ability to build and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.

Research Tools

- **Social Media Addiction Scale:** The Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS) is a standardized tool developed to assess problematic patterns of social media use. Its primary purpose is to measure compulsiveness, frequency, and the extent to which social media behavior reflects characteristics of addiction. The scale consists of 20 items; each rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). It evaluates four major dimensions: Excessive Use (time spent and difficulty reducing use), Compulsive Behavior (uncontrollable urges to check social media), Withdrawal Symptoms (irritability or anxiety when unable to access), and Negative Impact (interference with academic, social, or occupational functioning). Higher scores indicate stronger tendencies toward addiction. In this study, active users were defined as those scoring above the mean (using social media more than 4 hours daily), while minimal users scored below the mean (less than 1 hour daily). Previous research confirms strong reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.85\text{--}0.90$) and validity across Indian and international samples.

Procedures of Data Collection

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between social media usage and emotional intelligence among college students. A total of 100 students, aged 18–25 years, were selected and categorized into two groups based on daily social media use: Active Users (more than 4 hours/day) and Minimal Users (less than 2 hours/day). Emotional intelligence

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was assessed using the Emotional Intelligence Scale, which measures overall EI and its four dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and social skills. A comparative research design was employed to explore differences in emotional intelligence between the two groups, while a correlational design examined the association between the extent of social media usage and emotional intelligence. Data were collected using self-report questionnaires administered in a controlled classroom setting, with ethical guidelines and confidentiality strictly maintained.

Statistical Treatment

The data collected in this study were analyzed using quantitative statistical methods to examine the relationship between social media addiction and emotional intelligence (EI) among college students. The primary statistical technique employed was Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficient (r), which is appropriate for assessing the strength and direction of linear relationships between two continuous variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis: - 01

- There will be no significant difference in the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social skills) between active and minimal social media users.

Table No-01. Summary of descriptive statistics showing the Social Media Addiction on Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence	Social Media Addiction	Mean	SD	N	DF	‘t’ Value	Sign.
Self-Awareness	Active Social Media Users	27.58	4.56	50	98	-7.93	0.01
	Minimal Social Media Users	34.80	4.50	50			
Self-Regulation	Active Social Media Users	27.94	4.39	50	98	-6.67	0.01
	Minimal Social Media Users	34.38	5.23	50			
Motivation	Active Social Media Users	28.28	3.68	50	98	5.43	0.01
	Minimal Social Media Users	33.38	5.53	50			
Social Skills	Active Social Media Users	26.90	4.58	50	98	-9.37	0.01
	Minimal Social Media Users	36.60	5.12	50			
Emotional Intelligence	Active Social Media Users	110.70	8.18	50	98	-15.02	0.01
	Minimal Social Media Users	138.56	10.25	50			

Independent samples t -tests were conducted to compare active social media users and minimal users on four dimensions of Emotional Intelligence (EI) self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and social skills as well as overall EI. Results are summarized in Table 01.

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There was a significant difference in self-awareness between active and minimal users, $t(98) = -7.93, p < .01$. Active users ($M = 27.58, SD = 4.56$) scored lower than minimal users ($M = 34.80, SD = 4.50$). This suggests that active social media users have reduced ability to recognize, monitor, and understand their emotions. The results revealed that active users demonstrated significantly lower self-awareness compared to minimal users. This aligns with Valkenburg, Meier, and Beyens (2022), who argued that constant exposure to online comparison and validation-seeking behaviors undermines self-reflection and emotional clarity. Social media platforms often encourage curated self-presentation and external validation, which may distract individuals from internal emotional monitoring. Consequently, active users may struggle to identify their true feelings, a critical first step in effective emotional management (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

A significant difference was also found for self-regulation, $t(98) = -6.67, p < .01$. Active users ($M = 27.94, SD = 4.39$) reported lower self-regulation skills compared to minimal users ($M = 34.38, SD = 5.23$). This finding indicates that excessive social media engagement may impair emotional control and increase susceptibility to impulsive behaviors. The study also found that active users had lower self-regulation, consistent with prior research showing that compulsive social media use reduces impulse control. Hormes, Kearns, and Timko (2014) demonstrated that compulsive Facebook users exhibited poor regulation of emotional impulses. The instant rewards of likes, comments, and shares provide immediate gratification, which can erode individuals' ability to delay gratification and cope with frustration adaptively. This impairment may increase susceptibility to stress, impulsive behaviors, and mood fluctuations, reflecting a decline in psychological resilience.

Motivation was significantly lower among active users ($M = 28.28, SD = 3.68$) compared to minimal users ($M = 33.38, SD = 5.53$), $t(98) = -5.43, p < .01$. Active users appear to have weaker drive and persistence toward achieving long-term goals, possibly due to reliance on instant digital gratification. In terms of motivation, active users were less goal-directed compared to minimal users. This supports the findings of Ryan, Chester, Reece, and Xenos (2014), who reported that excessive social media engagement displaces real-life achievements with digital validation. Over time, dependence on online approval may undermine persistence, self-discipline, and achievement orientation, leading to reduced academic and personal goal attainment. Since motivation is central to self-determination and long-term success (Deci & Ryan, 2000), the weakening of this construct among active users has concerning implications for academic and career outcomes.

A large difference was found in social skills, $t(98) = -9.37, p < .01$. Active users ($M = 26.90, SD = 4.58$) scored lower than minimal users ($M = 36.60, SD = 5.12$). This suggests that excessive online engagement may weaken offline interpersonal competence, including communication and relationship-building abilities. The most pronounced difference was observed in social skills, where minimal users significantly outperformed active users. Kuss and Griffiths (2017) highlighted that heavy reliance on online communication reduces the richness of face-to-face interactions, leading to poorer interpersonal competence. Twenge and Campbell (2018) further observed that higher screen time is linked with lower levels of social competence, possibly due to the superficiality of online exchanges. The present findings suggest that while social media facilitates connectivity, it may simultaneously erode real-world social abilities critical for building meaningful relationships.

Overall, EI scores were significantly lower among active users ($M = 110.70, SD = 8.18$) than minimal users ($M = 138.56, SD = 10.25$), $t(98) = -15.02, p < .01$. The magnitude of the

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difference indicates a strong negative impact of social media addiction on emotional functioning. The cumulative effects of these deficits were evident in the significantly lower overall EI scores among active users. This supports the framework of Goleman (1995) and Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004), who emphasized that EI is essential for effective communication, stress regulation, and personal well-being. The findings suggest that social media addiction not only impairs discrete emotional skills but also undermines the broader emotional capacity necessary for psychological health and adaptive functioning.

Hypothesis: - 02

- There will be no significant relationship between social media addiction and Emotional Intelligence.

Correlations Between Social Media Addiction and Emotional Intelligence Dimensions

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Social Media Addiction (SMAS)	—					
2. Self-Awareness	-.61*	—				
3. Self-Regulation	-.53*	.54***	—			
4. Motivation	-.43*	.49***	.46***	—		
5. Social Skills	-.64*	.58***	.52***	.44***	—	
6. Emotional Intelligence (Total)	-.78*	.74***	.69***	.62***	.77***	—

The present study investigated the relationship between social media addiction and emotional intelligence (EI) among college students. The results indicated that social media addiction is significantly and negatively associated with all dimensions of emotional intelligence, consistent with previous research suggesting that excessive engagement with social media may adversely affect emotional functioning.

A strong negative correlation was found between social media addiction and self-awareness ($r = -.61, p < .01$), suggesting that students who exhibit higher levels of social media addiction have a reduced ability to recognize and understand their own emotions. This finding aligns with prior research by Valkenburg, Meier, and Beyens (2022), who reported that adolescents engaged in online comparison and validation-seeking demonstrated decreased self-reflection, likely due to the constant external focus on online feedback rather than internal emotional processes.

Social media addiction also showed a moderate negative correlation with self-regulation ($r = -.53, p < .01$), indicating that frequent users may experience difficulties in controlling emotional impulses and managing emotional responses effectively. Hormes, Kearns, and Timko (2014) similarly observed that compulsive social media use diminishes individuals' ability to delay gratification and regulate emotions, potentially leading to impulsive behaviors and emotional dysregulation.

The study further revealed a moderate negative correlation between social media addiction and motivation ($r = -.43, p < .01$). This suggests that higher engagement with social media is associated with lower goal-directed behavior and persistence in achieving personal or academic objectives. Ryan, Chester, Reece, and Xenos (2014) noted that social media often provides immediate gratification, which may replace engagement in long-term, real-world goal-directed activities, thereby weakening perseverance and self-discipline over time.

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The strongest negative correlation was observed between social media addiction and social skills ($r = -.64$, $p < .01$), indicating that excessive social media use is associated with diminished interpersonal competence, including challenges in communication, empathy, and relationship management. Research by Kuss and Griffiths (2017) and Twenge and Campbell (2018) highlights that high screen time can compromise the quality of face-to-face interactions and hinder the development of meaningful social relationships.

social media addiction demonstrated a very strong negative correlation with overall emotional intelligence ($r = -.78$, $p < .01$), reflecting the cumulative impact of overuse on emotional functioning. The combined effect of reduced self-awareness, poor emotional regulation, diminished motivation, and weaker social skills contributes to lower overall EI. These findings support the conceptualization of emotional intelligence as a multifaceted construct essential for psychological well-being, stress management, and academic success (Goleman, 1995; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004).

CONCLUSION

1. Active social media users exhibit significantly lower self-awareness compared to minimal users, indicating difficulty in recognizing and understanding their own emotions.
2. Excessive social media use is associated with poorer emotional control and increased impulsivity among active users.
3. Active users show reduced drive and persistence toward long-term goals, likely due to reliance on instant digital gratification.
4. Heavy social media engagement negatively impacts interpersonal competence, including communication and relationship-building abilities.
5. Cumulative deficits in self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and social skills result in significantly lower overall EI among active users.
6. A strong negative correlation was found between social media addiction and self-awareness.
7. Social media addiction also showed a moderate negative correlation with self-regulation.
8. moderate negative correlation between social media addiction and motivation.
9. The strongest negative correlation was observed between social media addiction and social skills.
10. social media addiction demonstrated a very strong negative correlation with overall emotional intelligence.

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Conflict of Interest

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