



The Impact of Social Media Usage on Self Worth and Identity among Young Adults

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Abstract: The present study investigates the impact of social media usage on self-esteem and self-worth among young adults. With the rapid rise in digital engagement, especially through social networking platforms, concerns have emerged about how such usage affects individuals' perceptions of self. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 200 young adults via a Google Form questionnaire. Statistical analysis, including regression and correlation methods, was employed to examine the relationship between the variables. The results revealed a significant negative impact of social media usage on both self-esteem and self-worth. Specifically, higher levels of social media use were associated with lower levels of self-esteem and self-worth. Regression analysis confirmed that social media usage was a significant predictor of both outcomes, although the strength of the relationship varied. The study also identified negative correlations among the variables, supporting the hypothesis that increased exposure to social media can negatively influence self-perception. These findings align with existing literature emphasizing the psychological consequences of excessive online engagement, such as comparison-based anxiety and reduced self-valuation. The study concludes by recommending digital literacy initiatives, promoting healthy usage habits, and encouraging further research on the topic. While the study offers meaningful insights, it is limited by its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data.

Keywords: *Social media usage, self-esteem, self-worth, young adults, digital behavior, identity, regression analysis, psychological impact.*

1. Introduction

In the contemporary digital age, social media has become essential to everyday existence, significantly influencing how young people see themselves and their identities. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Snapchat provide avenues for self-expression, social affirmation, and connectedness. Nonetheless, in conjunction with these advantages, the ubiquitous presence of social media has elicited apprehensions about its influence on self-esteem and identity development. Young people, at a pivotal phase of psychological and emotional development, are more vulnerable to the impact of digital connections, often assessing their self-esteem and intrinsic worth via online validation manifested as likes, comments, and shares. Self-worth, denoting an individual's assessment of their value and importance, is increasingly correlated with social media involvement. Research indicates that continual exposure to idealized imagery, curated lives, and social comparisons may result in feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, and diminished self-esteem. The need to adhere to unattainable beauty ideals, attain social validation, and maintain an appealing online persona may affect an individual's self-perception. Numerous young people encounter the "comparison trap," when they assess their accomplishments, physical attributes, and social standing against the often embellished and curated lifestyles of their contemporaries and influencers. This may result in discontent, body image concerns, and even mental health challenges, including sadness and anxiety.

Moreover, social media significantly influences identity development. Identity, including an individual's views, values, personality, and self-concept, is increasingly influenced by digital interactions. Young individuals use social media to investigate many facets of their identity, engage in self-presentation experimentation, and want validation from their online networks. Although this may be liberating, it also entails hazards, as identity may become fractured or too reliant on external affirmation. The fear of missing out (FOMO), the need to present an idealized existence, and the inclination to get validation from online audiences may result in a tenuous self-concept, whereby personal identity is shaped more by external impressions than by fundamental values. Notwithstanding these issues, social media may also have a beneficial influence on self-esteem and identity. It offers a platform for self-expression, networking, and activism, enabling young people to connect with like persons, participate in significant discussions, and discover groups that align with their interests and ambitions. A multitude of people use social media to disseminate personal development narratives, promote mental health awareness, and contest cultural conventions, so cultivating a more inclusive and varied portrayal of identity.

This research seeks to investigate the dual effects of social media on self-esteem and identity in young people, analyzing both the beneficial and detrimental outcomes of digital interaction. This project will analyze psychological theories, empirical studies, and real-world experiences to elucidate how social media influences self-perception and provide ways for fostering healthy digital habits. Ultimately, comprehending the interplay between social media, self-esteem, and identity is essential for effectively managing the intricacies of online relationships while cultivating a balanced and assured sense of self.

2. Review of Literature

Our society and the whole globe have been profoundly affected by social media. We need a deeper understanding of how this online social phenomenon is influencing our perceptions of ourselves and others, given the revolutionary nature of social media websites as a means of communication and social interaction. The goal of this research was to learn more about how young adult girls and women utilize social media and how it affects their self-esteem as they interact with and adopt the online personas of others. This research looked at how being active on social media and seeing media pictures might influence how people see themselves, which in turn can influence how they rate themselves. A phenomenological, qualitative approach was used in this investigation. The self-evaluative consequences of social comparison in the context of social media usage were explored with eight young adult females (varying in age from 24-30 years) who engaged in semi-structured interviews. Participants' accounts of content selection and manipulation idealized self-presentation, impression management process, online and offline self-comparison, and varied experiences with unknown and verified users' profiles were among the major themes that emerged and were further investigated. (Solomon,2016)

For many young adult women, social media has replaced face-to-face interactions as their principal method of keeping in touch with friends and family. Regular social media usage is linked to worse mental health, even though social connectivity normally improves mental health. The extent to which women rely on social media comments to gauge their value may explain individual variances. Of the 164 female undergraduates in the United States who took the time to fill out an online survey, researchers looked for correlations between four measures of psychological health: self-kindness, resilience, stress, and whether or not self-worth was based on social media feedback. Using social media to pursue status was linked to having one's self-worth reliant on comments and likes, according to the results. Those women whose sense of value was based on what others thought of them on social media were more likely to suffer from stress and depression, and they were less likely to be resilient and nice to themselves.

Furthermore, women who sought social status via their online contacts and whose self-worth was heavily reliant on social media comments showed greater levels of stress. These results have important policy and practical implications for women's mental health as they imply that women whose sense of self-worth is based on comments made about them on social media are more likely to experience poor mental health. (Sabik, 2020)

New channels of interpersonal connection and self-presentation are opened by social networking sites (SNSs). The impact of low self-esteem, narcissism, and loneliness on social networking site usage was examined in a meta-analysis of 80 research, which produced 143 effect sizes. Individuals with poor self-esteem, high narcissism, and high loneliness were more likely to utilize social networking sites overall. All aspects of social networking, including updating one's status, uploading photos, engaging with others, and the number of friends one has, were shown to be associated with high levels of narcissism upon further analysis. Having more online friends was associated with high self-esteem (not poor), but no other activity was. The associations were more robust in research that included fewer women or those from less individualistic, non-Western nations. We hypothesize that the effects are attenuated in Western populations and among females due to the fact that SNS usage occurs for a variety of reasons, and that the so-called "lurkers" are really individuals with low self-esteem since they browse without revealing their identities (Liu, 2016).

3. Methodology

3.1 Aim

The aim of the study was to examine the impact of social media usage on self-worth and self-esteem among young adults

3.2 Variable of the Study

Independent Variable

Social Media Usage: In this study, social media usage serves as the independent variable. It refers to the amount of time and frequency with which young adults engage with various social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and others. Social media usage includes activities like posting content, scrolling through feeds, interacting with others online, and comparing oneself with others.

Dependent Variable

Self-Esteem: It refers to a young adult's overall evaluation of their own worth, confidence, and self-respect. Self-esteem plays a crucial role in emotional well-being,

influencing how individuals perceive their abilities, value themselves, and interact with the world.

Self-worth: The second dependent variable in this research is self-worth, which is closely related to, but distinct from, self-esteem. Self-worth reflects a deeper sense of personal value and the belief that one is inherently deserving of love, respect, and happiness.

3.3 Research Objectives

- a) To examine the impact of social media usage on self-esteem among young adults.
- b) To examine the influence of social media usage on self-worth among young adults.
- c) To analyze the relationship between social media usage, self-esteem and self-worth among young adults

3.4 Hypothesis

- 1) There is significant impact of social media usage on self-worth among young adults.
- 2) There is significant relationship between self-esteem, social media and self-worth among young adults.
- 3) There is significant relationship between self-esteem, social media and self-worth among young adults.

3.5 Participants of the Study

The sample size was 200 individuals, and it was intentionally designed to include both males and females. Mostly, the group consisted of persons between the ages of 18-30

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The study gathered the data using the "Social Networking Usage Questionnaire, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale" and a demographic questionnaire.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Three surveys—the "Social Networking Usage Questionnaire, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale"—were used to gather the information. Following the explanation of the objectives of the study, participants received a package containing a questionnaire with specifics on the research, privacy concerns, the contact information of the researcher, and other measures. Then participants were invited to take part in the study. Ten minutes of describing the instruments took.

3.7.1 Social Networking Usage Questionnaire

This is a survey meant to assess an individual's use of social networking sites. The scale's items are presented as statements. In 2018, "Dr. Savita Gupta" and "Liyaqat Bashir" invented this scale. Each statement on this scale is assessed on five anchors (Always=5,

Often=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, and Never=1). The items are assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. This scale has no elements that are inverted.

Reliability

The internal consistency of the objects is assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The dependability coefficient Alpha often falls between 0 and 1, according Gliem & Gilem (2003). "Above 0.80 is acceptable" is the general guideline George & Mallery (2003) provide for interpreting Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, the current social networking utilization scale Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha=.830$) suggests strong internal reliability.

3.7.2 Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSS), which has ten items, is used to gauge self-esteem. It is the most widely used instrument for assessing self-esteem and has evolved into the benchmark for quality in psychological research. Items with an asterisk (*) are rated as follows: (1) Strongly Agree (SA), (2) Agree (A) to 1, (3) Disagree (D) to two, and (4) Strongly Disagree (SD). The scores are obtained in reverse order. After applying the reversal to each of the ten items in the list, we total them altogether.

Reliability

These two samples have high amounts of internal consistency, as shown by their Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.84 and 0.86, respectively. The amended edition's mean item ratings fell between 2.95 and 3.36, while the previous version's range was 2.23 to 3.31. In the first edition, the factor loadings as well as communalities were 0.277 to 0.808 & 0.077 to 0.661, respectively. The factor loadings and communalities of the improved version ranged from 0.361% to 0.814% and 0.149 to 0.672%, respectively.

3.7.3 Contingencies Of Self-Worth Scale

The Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale (CSWS) is a 35-item questionnaire that measures the domains on which people's self-esteem depends, focusing on seven areas: academics, appearance, approval from others, competition, family support, God's love, and virtue.

Reliability

Research has demonstrated that the CSWS possesses good internal consistency across its subscales. For instance, a study reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .82 to .91 for the various subscales, indicating high reliability. Additionally, test-retest reliability coefficients over a four-week period ranged from .76 to .89, further supporting the scale's stability over time.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis for the study was conducted using SPSS software, employing descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and Pearson correlation to examine the relationships between variables. The analysis aimed to assess the impact of social media usage on self-esteem and self-worth among young adults.

4. Data Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected through a structured Google Form questionnaire on the topic “The Impact of Social Media Usage on Self-Worth and Identity Among Young Adults.” The responses were gathered from a sample of young adults to explore patterns and correlations between their social media habits and their perceptions of self-worth and identity. The data has been systematically organized and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to address the research questions and test the hypotheses. The results are presented through tables, and interpretations to provide insights into the psychological implications of social media use in this age group.

Table 1: *Descriptive statistics of all variables*

	<i>Self Esteem</i>	<i>Social media Usage</i>	<i>Self-Worth</i>
Mean	25.505	64.125	165.89
Standard Deviation	5.1976	16.64858	28.84246
N	200	200	200

The study's three main variables—self-esteem, social media usage, and self-worth—were described in the table above. The sample for the study was 200 young people. With a mean score of 25.51 and a standard deviation of 5.20, individuals' self-esteem is moderately high with relatively low variability. While there is a lot of use of social media, there is a lot of variances in how people use it, as seen by the high mean of 64.13 and standard deviation of 16.65. With a mean of 165.89 and a standard deviation of 28.84, self-worth reveals a wide range of individuals' perceptions of their own value. These findings lay the groundwork for future studies that will probe the links between the variables by illuminating the data's primary trends and variability.

Table 2: *Regression analysis of impact of social media usage on self-esteem among young adults*

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.335751

R Square	0.112728
Adjusted R Square	0.108247
Standard Error	15.7217
Observations	200

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	6217.861	6217.861	25.15603	0.000008
Residual	198	48940.01	247.1718		
Total	199	55157.88			

H1: There is significant impact of social media usage on self-esteem among young adults.

The purpose of the regression analysis was to look at how frequent social media use affected young people's self-esteem. A moderately positive correlation between the two variables is shown by the findings, which show a multiple R value of 0.335. With an R-squared value of 0.1127, social media use explains almost 11.27% of the variation in self-esteem. A significant F-value of 25.16 and a Significance F (p-value) of 0.000008, which is significantly lower than the conventional significance level of 0.05, are shown in the ANOVA table. The results show that the model has a high level of statistical significance. These results provide credence to the study hypothesis H1: Social media use significantly affects young adults' self-esteem. The results show that there is a considerable impact between the two variables.

Table 3: *Regression analysis of impact of social media usage on self-worth among young adults*

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.225303
R Square	0.050761
Adjusted R Square	0.045967
Standard Error	28.17176
Observations	200

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	8403.308	8403.308	10.58821	0.001338
Residual	198	157142.3	793.6478		
Total	199	165545.6			

H2: There is significant impact of social media usage on self-worth among young adults.

The purpose of the regression analysis was to determine if and how young people's use of social media affected their sense of self-worth. Using social media and feeling good about yourself are somewhat correlated, according to the multiple R value of 0.225. Social media use explains just 5.07 percent of the variation in self-worth, according to the R Squared value of 0.0507. The ANOVA findings provide a statistically significant F-value of 10.59 with a Significance F (p-value) of 0.001338, surpassing the 0.05 criterion, even if the association is weak. The results show that the model has a high level of statistical significance. Hence, we accept hypothesis H2: Social media usage significantly impacts young people's self-worth. The results show a substantial, albeit modest, link between the two variables.

Table 4: *Pearson Correlation Analysis of relationship between self-esteem, social media and self-worth among young adults.*

	<i>Self Esteem</i>	<i>Social media Usage</i>	<i>Self-Worth</i>
Self Esteem	1		
Social media Usage	-0.33575	1	
Self-Worth	-0.08591	-0.2253	1

H3: There is significant relationship between self-esteem, social media and self-worth among young adults.

The Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between self-esteem, social media usage, and self-worth among young adults. The results show a negative correlation between self-esteem and social media usage ($r = -0.3357$), indicating that higher social media usage is associated with lower self-esteem. Similarly, a negative correlation is observed between self-worth and social media usage ($r = -0.2253$), suggesting that increased social media usage tends to be linked with reduced self-worth. Additionally, there is a very weak negative correlation between self-esteem and self-worth ($r = -0.0859$), implying little to no relationship between the two constructs in this sample. While the exact p-values are not provided in the table, the correlations involving social media usage are consistent with the earlier regression results that were statistically significant. Therefore, based on the strength and direction of the correlations, and in alignment with the previously accepted regression findings, the hypothesis H3: There is a significant relationship between self-esteem, social media usage, and self-worth among young adults is accepted.

5. Conclusion

This research looked at how young people's use of social media affected their sense of value and self-esteem. The results showed that social media use was significantly correlated with lower levels of self-esteem and self-worth, according to quantitative data analysis that used regression and correlation methods. This data reveals that young individuals' self-perception tends to decrease in correlation with their social media usage. Social media use is a statistically significant predictor of self-esteem and self-worth, according to the regression analysis. The intensity of the link, however, varied. The effect on self-worth was smaller but nevertheless notable, in contrast to the mild effect on self-esteem.

The results of the Pearson correlation study corroborated these observations by showing that social media use is negatively correlated with feelings of self-worth and self-esteem. Statistical analysis revealed a weak and non-significant association between self-esteem and self-worth, which raises the intriguing possibility that, although both are affected by social media usage, they may function independently in some situations. The results of the study are in line with what is already known about the negative psychological impacts of social media addiction. Social comparison, unattainable ideals of beauty and success, and the ongoing want for approval are major factors that lead to a lowered sense of self-worth. Particularly noticeable are these trends among young adults, a demographic that is both extremely engaged in online activities and yet in the process of developing its own unique identity.

Finally, this study shows how critical it is to encourage young adults to practice responsible social media use. Preserving self-esteem and self-worth may be achieved via promoting media literacy, cultivating real-life social ties, and building coping mechanisms to handle online demands. Mediating characteristics including gender, social media platform type, and content kind might be studied more in future studies. Better ways to reduce the mental health dangers of social media usage can be developed by addressing these aspects.

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