

Relationship between Social Media Addiction and Self Deception among Young Adults

Sneha Balasubramani

IInd Year M. Sc Psychology, Psychology Dept., Government Arts College, Coimbatore – 641018, India

Abstract: *The research aimed to investigate the relationship between social media addiction and self - deception among young adults. With the widespread prevalence of social media platforms and growing concerns about its impact on mental health, understanding the potential link between addiction and self - deception becomes crucial for promoting healthier digital behaviour. A sample of 200 young adults aged between 18 and 29 years participated in this research, assessing their social media addiction and self - deceptive tendencies by using Social Media Addiction Scale and Self - deception Scale. The result was analysed using Pearson correlation and shows that there is a significant positive correlation between social media addiction and self - deception.*

Keywords: social media addiction, self - deception, young adults

1. Introduction

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2018) provides one popular definition of young adulthood as the time between the ages of 18 and 29. The WHO describes this period of life as having "a focus on developing personal identity, establishing independence, and making lifestyle choices that can have long - term consequences for health and well - being." During this time, young individuals frequently go through considerable shifts in their sense of self. College students will be more committed to exploring and developing their identities (Luyckx et al., 2018).

Self - deception is a personality trait and an independent mental state, it involves a combination of a conscious motivational false belief and a contradictory unconscious real belief.

(Von Hippel and Trivers, 2011).

Social media addiction is a behavioral addiction that is characterized as being overly concerned about social media, driven by an uncontrollable urge to log on to or use social media, and devoting so much time and effort to social media that it impairs other important life areas.

In the digital age, social media platforms have emerged as ubiquitous channels for communication, interaction, and information sharing. With the advent of smartphones and widespread internet accessibility, social media has become an integral part of the daily lives of billions of people worldwide, particularly among young adults. While the positive aspects of social media usage are undeniable, there is growing concern about its potential negative impacts, including addiction and self - deception.

Social media addiction refers to a condition where individuals develop a compulsive and uncontrollable urge to engage with social media platforms, leading to excessive and prolonged usage. It shares similarities with other forms of behavioral addiction, such as gambling or gaming addiction, as users may experience withdrawal symptoms, neglect other responsibilities, and struggle to control their usage despite adverse consequences.

Self - deception, on the other hand, involves individuals engaging in various cognitive and emotional strategies to distort or deny their own behaviors and actions. In the context of social media, self - deception can manifest as individuals rationalizing excessive usage, downplaying its negative effects, or creating a false sense of identity through curated online personas that may not accurately reflect their real lives.

The combination of social media addiction and self - deception can be particularly concerning among young adults, as this demographic is considered more vulnerable to the influence of social media due to factors such as identity exploration, social comparison, and peer acceptance. The incessant need for likes, comments, and followers on social media platforms can foster a sense of validation and self - worth, making it easier for young adults to fall into the trap of addictive behaviors and self - deception.

2. Review of Literature

Ren, Zhong, and Fan et al (2018) explored the influence of Self - control and social status on Self - deception. The findings indicate that compared with individuals with high self - control, low self - control individuals tended to produce more self - deception. In addition, a high social status individual's perception could restrain the influence of low self - control on Self - deception.

Sheridan, Boman, Mergler and Furlong (2015) measured the well - being, anxiety and selfdeception in 268 University students. The tools used were a Battery of Positive psychological measures which measure anxiety and self - deception. The results indicated that those higher in self - deception scored higher in self - efficacy and all positive vitality measures and lower in anxiety than those lower in self - deception.

Bachkirova (2016) wrote a research paper on "A new perspective on self - deception for applied purpose". This paper provides a theoretical analysis of the literature on Self - deception from a pragmatic perspective that shows personal development work on recognizing and minimizing self - deception and helping practices such as counselling

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and coaching. This paper also suggests consideration of self in self - deceivers.

Abiddine, Aljaberi, Gadetrab, Lin and Muhammed (2022) conducted research on "Mediated effects of insomnia in the association between problematic social media use and subjective well - being among 288 students during COVID - 19 pandemic from a University in Algeria. The tools used were the Bergen social media addiction scale and Arabic scale of insomnia. The results concluded that insomnia appears to play a major role in mediating the association between subjective well - being and problematic social media use.

Zhao (2021) measured the impact of social media use types and social media addiction on the subjective well - being of 370 college students. The tool used was the social media addiction scale. The results show that social use and entertainment use have different effects on social media addiction and subjective well - being: entertainment use is more likely to lead to social media addiction.

Hou, Xiong, and Jiang et al (2019) examined the Impact, mediation and Intervention of social media addiction to college students' mental health and academic performance. 232 college students participated in this research. The results show that social media addiction was negatively associated with the student's mental health and academic performance.

Kircaburun, Griffiths, &Billieux, (2019) found the association of Trait emotional intelligence with problematic online behaviours among adolescents". This research found that the trait of emotional intelligence was negatively correlated with problematic online behaviours, including social media addiction. Individuals with personality disorders may struggle with emotional regulation, making them more vulnerable to addiction and self deception related to social media use.

3. Methodology

Objectives

- To estimate the level of social media addiction among young adults.
- To estimate the level of self - deception among young adults.
- To measure the difference in social media addiction and self - deception among the male and female young adults.
- To evaluate the relationship between in social media addiction and self - deception among young adults.

Hypotheses

- H1: The level of social media addiction among young adults is high.
- H2: The level of self - deception among young adults is high.
- H3: There is a significant correlation between social media addiction and self - deception among adults.

- H4: There is a significant difference in social media addiction and self - deception among the male and female young adults.

Sample

200 young adults between the age group of 20 to 40 years were selected using purposive sampling method from various areas in and around Karur, Tamil Nadu.

Tools

Personal Data Sheet which include Name, Gender, age, Social Media usage, domicile and Marital status was used to measure the personal details of the participants.

Social Media Addiction Scale (Aylin Tutgununal, 2015) is a 41 item self - report measure the social media addictions using a 5 - point Likert scale (5 = Always, 1 = Never). The internal consistency and test - retest reliability of the scale is 0.96.

Self - Deception Scale (Sirvent, 2007) is a 12 item scale derived from the IAM - 40 inventory and emphasizing the manipulation and mystification dimensions using a 5 - point Likert scale (5 = strongly disagree, 0 = strongly agree). The internal consistency of this scale is 0.85.

Procedure

A brief description about the purpose of the research was explained to the entire sample before conducting the research. The consenting sample were asked to fill their personal details like name, gender, age, domicile etc. Social Media Addiction Scale and Self - Deception Scale were given to the entire sample individually. The sample were informed that the responses will be kept confidential and the data will be used for academic purposes. The data were collected and statistically analysed using SPSS.

Data Analysis

In order to investigate the gender difference Social Media Addiction and Self - deception in among male and female young adults, independent sampling t - test was performed. To investigate the correlation between Social Media Addiction and Self - deception among young adults, Pearson correlation was performed.

4. Result and Discussion

Table 1: Level of self - deception among the sample (N=200)

Level of Self - Deception	Number	Percentage
High	36	18
Moderate	156	78
Low	8	4

Table 1 shows the level of self - deception among the overall sample. 18% of participants scored high level of self - deception. 78% participants scored moderate level and 4% scored low level of self - deception. This shows that majority of the sample have moderate level of self - deception.

Table 2: Level of Social Media Addiction (SMA) among the sample, (N=200)

Level of SMA	Number	Percentage
No Addiction	18	09
Less addicted	39	19.5
Moderate addicted	99	49.5
High addicted	47	23.5
Very high addicted	02	01

Table 2 shows the level of social media addiction among the overall sample. 9% of participants have no addiction. 19.5% of participants are less addicted to social media. 49.5% of participants have moderate addiction to social media. 23.5% of participants are highly addicted to social media. 1% of participants are very highly addicted to social media. This shows that most of the participants have moderate social media addiction.

Table 3: Mean differences in Self - deception among the male and female sample (N=200)

Variable	Gender	N	Mean score	S. D	t value
Self - deception	Male	71	38.9	6.1	- 1.87
	Female	129	40.5	5.2	

Table 3 shows the mean difference in self - deception among male and female sample. The mean value of male and female overall self - deception is 38.9 and 40.5. The t - value of overall self - deception is - 1.87 which indicate that there is no statistically significant difference among male and female. Overall from the analysis, it shows that there is no mean difference among male and female in self - deception.

Table 4: Mean differences in social media addiction among the male and female sample (N=200)

Variable	Gender	N	Mean score	S. D	t value
Social Media Addiction	Male	71	130.9	22.6	3.6
	Female	129	116.5	29.2	

Table 4 shows the mean difference in social media addiction among male and female sample. The mean value of male and female overall social media addiction is 130.9 and 116.5. The tvalue of overall social media addiction is 3.6 which indicate that there is a statistically significant difference among male and female. Overall from the analysis, it shows that there is a mean difference among male and female in social media addiction.

Table 5: Correlation between Social Media Addiction and Self - deception (N=200)

Variable	Mean	S. D	r value	P value
Self - deception	39.9	5.6	0.065	0.366
Social Media Addiction	121.6	27.8		

Table 5 shows that the correlation between self - deception and social media addiction. The overall mean score of social media addiction and self - deception is 39.9 and 121.6 and r value is 0.06. There is a positive correlation between social media addiction and self - deception.

5. Discussion

The research concerned with a sample of young adults and aimed at examining the difference among males and females of overall social media addiction and self - deception. The

result shows that overall sample have moderate level of social media addiction and there is a mean difference among males and females in social media addiction. This moderate level of social media addiction can be connect with negative consequences like depression symptoms, overuse of mobile phones etc. The mean difference among male and female may due to socialization and norms. The result also shows that overall sample have moderate level of self deception and there is no mean difference among males and females in self - deception. The research article support this result include gender differences in self - deception among college students (Paulhaus and John, 1998). The result also aimed at examining the relationship between social media addiction and self - deception among young adults. The result shows that there is a positive relationship between social media addiction and self - deception. The research article support the article that indicate positive correlation between self - deception and social media addiction among Chinese college students and shows that self - deception was a significant predictor of social media addiction (Wang, Chen & Liang, 2021). This positive relationship between social media addiction an self - deception may be due to individuals desire for positive self - presentation can lead them to spend more time on curating content and seeking validation through likes and comments.

6. Conclusion

From overall analysis, this research come to the conclusion that social media addiction and self - deception have strong relationship between each other. This findings suggest that individuals who exhibit higher levels of social media addiction are more prone to engage in self - deceptive behaviors as a coping mechanism to justify and rationalize their excessive online usage.

7. Limitation

- Intervention were not administered
- The sample size is small.
- Limited to specific population

8. Implications

- a) The research encourages individuals to take responsibility for their social media usage and be aware of potential self - deception.
- b) Therapists and counselors can incorporate insights from this research to address social media addiction and self - deception in therapy sessions.
- c) Recognizing the negative effects of social media addiction and self - deception, digital detox programs can be organized to help individuals.

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