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Impact of Social Media Usage & Social Engagement on Physical- Mental Health of Young Employees

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ABSTRACT: Due to the dispensable exercise of social media, young employees have reduced social engagement. The objective of the present study was to find out the impact of the exertion of social media and social engagement on the physical-mental health issues of young professionals working in diverse sectors. Together 431 young respondents age group 22-38 have responded to the questionnaire about the use of social media, social engagement, and their physical mental health issues. Principal Factor analysis revealed unique factors measuring employee social media, social engagement, and physical-mental health issues. Scale reliability was .80, .79, and .60, for social media, physical-mental health issues, and social engagement respectively. The Pearson correlation coefficient revealed a positive association between excess usage of social media and increased physical-mental health problems. There was a negative relationship found between high social engagements and reduced physical-mental health issues among the employees. Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed and validated all three measured scales. The structural equation model revealed a positive effect of social media usage upon increased physical-mental health issues. However, social engagements were found to have a negative relationship with reduced physical-mental health of the young employees. This signifies that the overburdening use of social media increases physical-mental health problems among young professionals. However, social engagement reduces the physical-mental health issues among the employees significantly. The present study recommends that social engagement is required for young professionals to keep them healthy.

KEY WORDS: Social Media Usage, Social Engagement, Physical-Mental Health Issues, Young employee.

INTRODUCTION

In this age of global digitization, social media has emerged as a popular platform for self-expression, connecting with others, and collaboration (Dawood, 2016). It offers a range of tools to gather information and connect with like-minded individuals, thereby functioning as a complete knowledge management system with simple and flexible management tools (Cao & Ali, 2018). However, younger people seem to be strengthening their social networks at the expense of physical contact, leading to a growing detachment between generations and peers belonging to the younger generation, as they tend to be more comfortable in their virtual world. India, being a young country with half of its population under twenty-five and two-thirds under 35, must recognize the primary differences in the current scenario of a multi-generational workforce to better understand and train the younger generation.

Use of Social Media

Social media refers to various websites and online tools that enable users to interact, share information, opinions, and interests (Swar and Hameed, 2017). It has a significant impact on online communication, connecting individuals and groups to exchange knowledge. The most commonly used social media platforms include Facebook, Wikipedia, Twitter, WhatsApp, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Reddit, and the use of social media has increased exponentially in recent years. Although it may seem like an exaggeration, social media has become an integral part of the lives of the younger generation, and its use continues even after they start their careers, with both positive and negative effects (J. Nesi, 2020; P. U. Rani and Padmalosani, 2019). Previous research has shown that social media use has a positive impact (Charoensukmongkol, 2015). However, excessive use of social media can lead to negative effects on the health and job performance of young people, turning their initial interest in the platform into an obsession (Sands, Campbell, Ferraro, & Mavrommatis, 2020).

The excessive use of social media has been linked to increased levels of anxiety, sleep loss, and depression (Levenson, Shensa, Sidani, Colditz, & Primack, 2016). This addiction has led to negative consequences in the workplace, such as work-life conflicts and interruptions that can lead to exhaustion (van Zoonen, Verhoeven, & Vliegenthart, 2017). Social media has also influenced the social activities of adults, sometimes leading to unrealistic expectations (Alfasi, 2019). Younger generations often compare themselves to others on social media, which can trigger negative feelings like jealousy and depression, and even lead to negative gossip behavior (Verduyn, Gugushvili, Massar, Täht, & Kross, 2020; Yang & Robinson, 2018).

Social engagement

Social engagement refers to the level of involvement individuals have in various interactions with others who share similar interests, characteristics, and activities (Thomas R. Prohaska et al. 2012). . This involvement can be defined as the extent to which an individual participates in different social roles and relationships (William R. Avison et al. 2007).
. While the importance of social engagement has been studied in older individuals, it is equally important to study it among young professionals who may lack social involvement (Zhang, S et al. 2010). Engaging in social activities helps build long-term relationships, strengthens systems of relationships among people and societal norms, and fosters participation in cohesive and collective activities. It is worth noting that social engagement is not limited to paid or obligatory activities; rather, it is essential for maintaining social connections and participation in social activities (Bassuk, Glass, & Berkman, 1999)..

Physical-mental health Issue and use of social media

Mental health issues refer to disturbances where people are unable to recognize their potential and abilities. They may experience constant anxiety and, in extreme cases, depression (Fardouly J. et al., 2016). On the other hand, physical health issues can manifest in various ways, such as insomnia, poor performance, loneliness, headaches, and more (Carter B., Rees P., et al., 2016). Excessive use of social media has been linked to reduced, disturbed, and delayed sleep, which can lead to memory loss, depression, and poor performance (A British study, 2018). It has been revealed that social media use can also lead to physical health problems, including sickness, headaches, neck aches, muscle tension, and more. Moreover, the habit of using social media has been linked to increased mental health issues, self-doubt, anxiety, and eating disorders, among others. Depression and irresponsibility have also increased among the younger generation (M. D. Siebert, 2019; F. A. Rostam, 2020). Being mentally and physically healthy is crucial for human well-being, and social media is having a negative impact on it. Excessive use of technology, including social media, has been identified as a contributor to escalating health problems. Unfortunately, physical and mental health challenges are often overlooked and dismissed (J. Nesi, 2020).

Physical-mental health Issue and Social engagement

Various studies have shown that social engagement, involvement, and support, whether direct or indirect, can have a positive impact on physical and mental wellbeing (Cohen 2004). Social engagement and support can help reduce the negative effects of stress and provide a sense of purpose and meaning in life (Cohen 2004). Research has found that social engagement is linked to better mental and physical health in both young and older individuals (Luo et al. 2020). While there have been many studies conducted on the impact of social media on health, there is still a lack of research on the effects of excess social media use on the health of young professionals in India. Additionally, while the importance of social engagement and involvement has been studied in older individuals, there is a lack of research on the relationship between social engagement and young employees who are more active in the virtual world than in the real world. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of social media usage and social engagement on the physical and mental health of young professionals working in various organizations.

Objectives of the study

-To study the Impact of social media usages on young employees' physical -mental health issues.
-To study the impact of social engagement on young employees' physical -mental health issues.

Hypotheses

Previous studies have revealed that extreme usage of social media can cause a definite amount of psychosomatic stress to employees. It may affect employee's attitudes, show a positive relationship with increased stress, anxiety, and depression, and cause emotional disturbance. Further, preferred loneliness, social isolation, loss of physical interpersonal connection, and in-person interaction may also be seen (Cao and Yu, 2019; Kim Y, Lee M, 2013; Dhir A. et al 2018; Chi LC et al. 2022).
It was hypothesized that –

HO1: The excess usages of social media will positively affect the physical-mental health issue of the young employees.

As researchers have found the negative association between social engagement and depressive mental-physical health. Many Longitudinal studies have shown that social engagement was negatively related to mortality related health issues (Nelson LA, et al. 2013; Stamatakis E. et al 2011).
It was hypothesized that-

HO2: The social engagement will negatively associated with physical –mental health issue of the young employees.

METHOD

Development of the Instrument

Instrument to measure the use of social media was created based on Ellison & Boyd (2013), Dreamgrow.com (2017), and Scharkow (2016). Over all 4 items were developed to measure the social media usage. Self-report techniques was used for the responses. Four items were developed to measure the usage of social media, using the available gadgets. Further 4 items were constructed based on social engagement scales by Fredrickes et al. (2016), Szanton et al .(2016), and Duppen et al. (2019). Items

were based on definition, concepts of social engagement. Hence, over all eight items were prepared 4 measuring the social media use and 4 items measuring the social engagement. Five point Likert scale was used to measure the statements from 'completely agree' to 'completely disagree'. Considering the mental-physical health issues, items were prepared based on items and statements of Heiberg et al. (2018), Stubbs et al. (2015), Vancampfort et al. (2016), Dauwan et al. (2016) Spitzer et al. (2006); and Zimmerman et al. (2008) were evaluated and 3 items were constructed. One item was constructed to measure the mental health problem, another item was to measure the physical health issue and third item was prepared to measure the anger and frustration level of the employees. The statements were rated on a 5 point scale ranging from 1 'not at all true of me' to 5 'to a great extent true of me'. Questionnaires were distributed via google form using online mode and in person to the respondents, and it was collected back after one week.

Sample

The study was conducted in various organisations located in India. Obtaining the sample in a manner that ensures sticking to probability sampling method with opportunity sampling bias is suggestive of including divergent elements that represent wider application advantage. Thus, the sample represented a cross section of different industries with their managers having diverse personal backgrounds and differed in functions, roles and responsibilities. The heterogeneity of the sample ensured varying levels of personal attainments in the industries for measuring use of social media, social engagement and its effect on physical mental health on the young employee. Overall, 431 respondents have responded to the questionnaire of which 20% belongs to the age group 22-25 years. 33% respondents were from 26-30 years age group. 31% respondents were from 31-35 years and 17% respondents were group 35-40 working at different level at diverse companies with 14-18 years of working experience.

RESULTS

Social Media Measure

Factor structure was extracted to accept a given structure of social media, which explains the maximum percentage of variance and reflects semantic closeness of items within a given factor that attribute of social media usage. Factor analysis revealed single factor of related items (Table 1). Further, The model fit indices also suggested that the measurement model was a good fit to the data, Comparative Fit Index (CFI)=.984, Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) =.953, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)=.08, Normed Fit Index (NFI) =.981. (Figure1).

Table 1. Factor Loading of Items Related to Social Media

Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading
1	My work suffers because of time I spent online	76
2	I choose to spend time online rather than going out with others/friends/ family members	83
3	I feel disturbed if someone interrupts me when I am online	82
4	I am comfortable with my virtual friends then real friends	75

Note: N=431, decimals of the factor loadings are omitted.

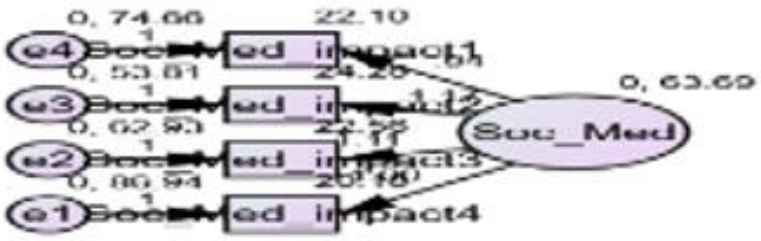

Figure1: Latent factor structure of single factor Usage of Social Media scale.

Social Engagement Measures

Factor structure was extracted to accept a given structure of social engagement , which explains the maximum percentage of variance and reflects semantic closeness of items within a given factor that attribute about social engagement of the employees. Factor analysis revealed single factor of related items (Table 2). Further, Exploratory Factor analysis result was validated with Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The model fit indices revealed that the measurement model was a good fit to the data, Comparative Fit Index (CFI)=.941, Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) =.923, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)=.06, Normed Fit Index (NFI) =.931. (Figure 2).

Table 2: Factor Loading Social Engagement

Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading
1	I am available for my friend and relatives at the time of need. Also friends and relatives are available at any time.	60
2	I am close to my friends and relatives. I like to interact in person to my family and friends once in week.	62
3	I do self-enrichment program with family and friends	70
4	I try to socialize and engagement myself in social activity	65

Note: N=431, decimals of the factor loadings are omitted.

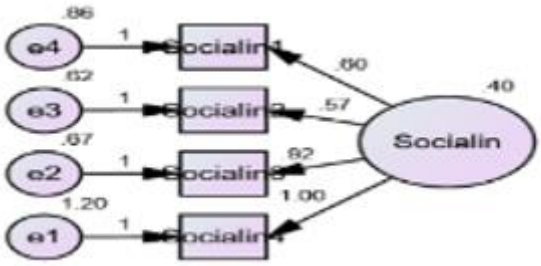

Figure 2. Latent factor structure of single factor for social engagement scale

Mental-Physical Health Measure

Factor structure was extracted to accept a given structure of Mental-Physical Health Issues, which explains the maximum percentage of variance and reflects semantic closeness of items within a given factor that attribute about mental- physical health issues of the employees. Factor analysis revealed single factor of related items (Table 3). Further, The model fit indices also suggested that the measurement model was a good fit to the data, Comparative Fit Index (CFI)= 1.00, Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) =.953, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)=.05, Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 1.00 (Figure3). Thus, single factor emerged to measure the mental-physical health issues. (Figure 3).

Table 3: Factor Loading Physical-Mental Health Issue

Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading
1	I have developed physical problem like backache/neck ache/headache and other physical health issues	83
2	I have developed issues like anxiety/ anxiousness/insomnia/depression/ and other mental health issues	90
3	I get angry and frustrated frequently on trivial issues	74

Note: N=431, decimals of the factor loadings are omitted

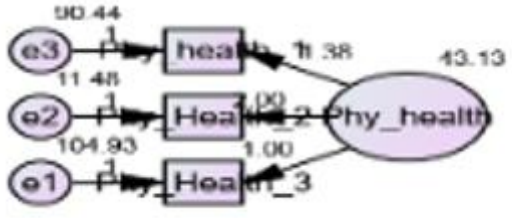

Figure 3. Latent factor structure of single factor for Physical-mental health issues.

Relationship among use of social media, social engagement and Mental-physical health issues of Young employees –

Pearson product correlation coefficient r=.465**, revealed the strong positive relationship between use of social media and mental -physical health issues. Demonstrating that increased use of social media is growing the mental-physical health issues among younger employees. However, the correlation between social engagement and mental physical health problems of the employees (r=-.144**)found to be negatively associated , signifying that employees who are high on social engagement have fewer mental-physical health issues. Further, use of social media and social engagement found to be negatively (r=.115**) related, suggesting

that excess user of social media are lacking on social engagement. Result of Pearson product correlation coefficient found to be strongly related with use of social media, virtual socialization with physical-mental health of the respondents (Table 4).

Table 4. Descriptive statistics & Inter-correlation among use of social media, social engagement and mental-physical health issues of the employees

Factors	Mean	SD	Social Media	Social engagement	Mental-Physical Health Issues
Social Media	2.21	1.15	.81	-115**	.465**
Social engagement	2.73	1.08	-.115**	.60	-.144**
Physical Health	2.74	1.22	.465**	-144**	.78

Note: N=431, correlation coefficient is significant at $p \leq = 0.01$ level. Diagonal entry**

The structural model with CFI=.842, NFI= 794, TLI= .772, RSMEA =09 revealed positive relationship between use of social media and mental-physical health issues among the employees. Suggesting that more excess use of social media will increase the Mental-physical health issues among employees (Figure-4). However, the result of structural model with CFI=.803, NFI=.803, RSEMA=.09 , established the negative relationship between social engagement and health issues, signifying that more social engagement will reduced physical-mental health issues (Figure-5) .

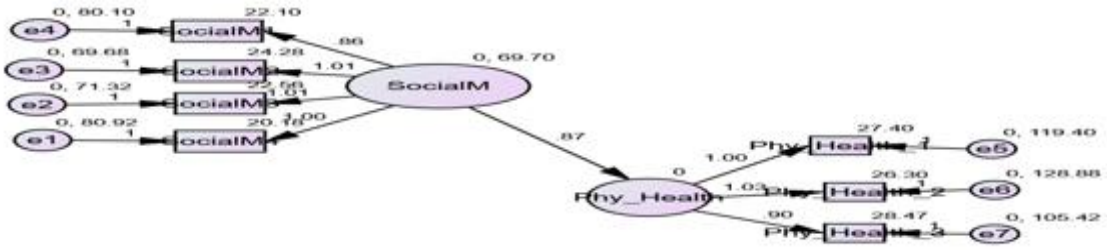

Figure 4. A path diagram of structural equation model. Causal relationships and associations between Use of Social Media and Mental-Physical Health issues of the employees.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether excessive use of social media and social engagement have an impact on the mental and physical health of employees, especially young ones. The statistical analysis, which included the Pearson Product coefficient correlation and Structure equation model, showed a positive correlation between social media use and increased mental-physical health problems among young employees. Although social media use is inevitable, it is crucial to raise awareness among young employees about its negative consequences. Prolonged use of social media can lead to physical health issues such as backache, neck ache, and headache, among others. Similarly, increased mental health issues such as insomnia, anxiousness, depression, and frustration are also prevalent among employees. Other studies have also supported this finding, indicating that excessive exposure to social media is linked to mental health problems (Wong N., et. al., 2022).

The study found that there is a negative correlation between social engagement and physical and mental health-related problems. This supports previous research that shows socially connected individuals have a support system that leads to fewer mental and physical health issues (Holt-Lunstad J., 2022; Lem K, 2021). Supportive engagement helps them to cope with hard times, stress, anxiety, and depression. Interestingly, the study found a negative correlation between social media and social engagement. This suggests that if employees spend too much time on social media, they may not have time or interest in social activities with family, friends, and neighbours. This correlation supports the finding that high use of social media can lead to more physical and mental health issues, whereas active social engagement can help reduce these issues.

Implication of the study

The implications of the present study are diverse. It will help us understand the importance of social engagement among young professionals in particular and for all generations in general. Nowadays, young professionals are living in the virtual world, disconnected from the real world, and therefore suffering from physical and mental health issues. It is necessary to train young employees on careful and evaluative social media usage, and they should avoid spending unnecessary time on social media platforms. Instead of spending unwarranted time on social media for virtual socialization and interaction, employees should be encouraged to involve themselves in physical interaction with family members, neighbours, and other associates of society and be socially engaged. It is of utmost importance to make the younger working population mentally and physically healthy for the better progression of the nation and nation-building. Social engagement was studied for the older generation, but the importance of this

concept is equally significant for young professionals. To lead a healthy professional and personal life, achieve better health outcomes, overcome seclusion, and improve their quality of life, young professionals should be socially engaged.

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