



ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY IN MANAGING SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Firoj Alam¹, Dr. Mohammad Imran²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Education, University of Lucknow

²Assistant Professor, Department of Education, A.N.D Teacher's Training (P.G.) College,
Associated to University of Lucknow

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ABSTRACT

Social Media has become deeply embedded in the academic and social lives of college students. With the rise of WhatsApp, Facebook, and TikTok, there is an increased risk of students becoming addicted to social media. As a result, social media addiction has become a major concern because of its adverse effects on students' academic performance, sleep patterns, level of emotional stability, concentration levels, and general mental health. Educational psychology focuses on understanding the various aspects of student behavior and offers treatment and counseling to students facing social media addiction. This paper discusses the importance of educational psychology in recognizing, preventing, and managing social media addiction among college students. The paper also addresses psychological treatment, counseling, theories relating to social media addiction, and the roles of teachers, parents, and educational psychologists in managing social media addiction.

KEYWORDS: Educational Psychology, Social Media Addiction, College Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has witnessed significant technological advancements that have facilitated increased internet penetration and social media engagement levels among college students. With the rise of applications such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitter, and other emerging digital platforms, has come the prevalence of social media addiction. The addiction results from students interacting with these applications in excess and to the level that it affects their academic performance, social life, and mental health. Although social media has offered several benefits to college students, it has also caused several adverse effects on the affected students.

Social media addiction is characterized by the inability to control the urge to use social media networking sites to the level that it affects the addicts' social life, mental health, and general well-being. Studies have shown that social media addiction among college students is associated with higher rates of depression, poor self-esteem, poor academic performance, and lack of self-control (Parveen S. Singh & Sagar, p. 949). Students in college are highly likely to develop social media addiction because of increased academic-related stress, emotional problems, and social pressures.

Educational psychology focuses on helping educators understand the behavior of students and offers insight into managing and treating social media addiction. Educational psychology involves studying the cognitive, behavioral, and social aspects of students in a classroom or college environment and offers solutions based on individual needs. Educational psychologists work closely with students to help them acquire proper motivation, discipline, and improved mental health.

Therefore, educational psychology can be applied to manage social media addiction among college students.

This paper discusses the role of educational psychology in managing social media addiction among college students. The paper addresses the objectives of managing social media addiction among college students and goes on to explain the role of educational psychology in addressing the issue.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the concept and causes of social media addiction among college students.
- To examine the educational and psychological impact of social media addiction.
- To analyze the role of educational psychology in managing addictive behavior
- To identify psychological treatments and strategies for healthy social media usage.
- To suggest recommendations for educational institutions and counselors.

III. MEANING OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

Social media addiction is a behavioral disorder characterized by excessive and uncontrollable use of social media sites and applications, which leads to adverse effects on individuals' social life, academic performance, and overall mental well-being. The addiction is associated with individuals developing anxiety or feeling anxious when they are not able to use social media or access it. Individuals addicted to social media find themselves prioritizing online interactions over other aspects of their lives.



Some of the common symptoms of social media addiction include:

- Screen addiction.
- Lack of focus or concentration on studies.
- Anxiety and depression.
- Mood swings.
- Poor mental health.
- Poor sleep patterns or insomnia.
- Poor academic performance.
- Unhealthy social life.

IV. MEANING OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Educational psychology is a specialized field of psychology that focuses on studying the learning behavior of students, their motivations, and how external factors influence their social and learning behavior. Educational psychology has been used by teachers and counselors to understand student behavior, classroom management, personality, and adjustment, among other issues. Educational psychology also assists educators in coming up with strategies to boost performance in academics and discipline in institutions. Educational psychology has played a significant role in exploring and offering solutions to issues affecting social media addicts. Educational psychologists explore ways to help patients overcome unhealthy social media habits while also ensuring they do not develop secondary mental health problems. Educational psychology offers the best strategies to address the addiction problem among college students.

A few of the objectives of educational psychology include:

- Understanding student behavior.
- Improving teaching methods.
- Boosting motivation levels.
- Enhancing proper adjustment of students.
- Promoting mental health and emotional well-being.
- Understanding child development.
- To help develop an appropriate curriculum.
- Offering guidance and counseling services.

V. CAUSES OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

There are several psychological, educational, and social factors that contribute to social media addiction among college students.

• Psychological Factors

Some of the common psychological factors that contribute to social media addiction among students include depression, anxiety, and lack of self-confidence and esteem. Poor self-control among students also increases the likelihood of developing social media addiction. Students who experience low self-esteem and self-confidence develop trust issues and deal with their insecurities by developing an addiction to social media (Parveen S. Singh & Sagar, p. 949).

• Social Factors

College students experience increased social pressure among their peers, which leads them to develop social media addiction.

The pressure emanates from trying to maintain friendships or avoid feeling lonely. Another social factor that contributes to social media addiction is habitual exposure to phones and other devices used to access social media. Students develop addiction due to constantly being exposed to social media. Their interaction with the application becomes routine-like and difficult to break without proper interventions.

• Need for Attention and Validation

Social media users often experience validation through the likes, dislikes, sharing, and interaction of social media content. Likes and shares make individuals feel good about themselves and therefore trigger them to seek further validation through posting more content on social media. Students develop an addiction to social media because they seek attention and validation from their friends through online interaction.

• Academic Factors

Students who face increased levels of academic stress and anxiety are more likely to develop social media addiction. These students use the application to seek relaxation and escape from the pressures of academics. Such students become addicted to social media and lose track of their studies over time.

• Influence of Digital Culture

There has been a significant influence of digital culture among college students, resulting in them embracing social media activities and behaviors. Increased online interaction and content sharing have led to social media addiction levels rising among the students.

VI. IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION ON COLLEGE STUDENTS

• Academic Impact

The impact of social media addiction on students is that it results in decreased academic performance for the affected individuals and negatively impacts their ability to concentrate on their studies. Students who spend long hours on the application and do not engage in proper study skills record poor results due to losing track of the study schedule.

• Mental and Emotional Impact

Social media addiction has a negative effect on the mental and emotional well-being of college students. Some of the major impacts include depression, poor self-esteem, anxiety, and poor self-confidence.

• Lack of Good Social Life

Social media addiction results in students spending long hours on their phones interacting using the applications. Such students lack a good social life due to not engaging in real-time interactions like before. Students who are addicted to social media tend to be in their rooms more often than not and away from family and friends. Their level of socialization decreases significantly due to them only being exposed to technology through the applications.

• Cyber-bullying and Online Harassment

Social media students become exposed to cyberbullying and abuse from online friends. They are also subjected to threats and privacy issues, which may adversely impact their mental well-being. Students develop fear and low self-esteem, which affect their social and academic lives.



VII. ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY IN MANAGING SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Educational psychology explores the best ways of treating students suffering from social media addiction and offers effective interventions that reduce social media addiction levels among the affected students.

• Understanding Student Behaviour

Educational psychology assists in understanding the different behaviors that college students portray when they are addicted to social media. Lack of social confidence, low self-esteem, stress, and mental health problems are some of the behavioral attributes that contribute to students developing the addiction. Educational psychologists analyze the behaviors and offer suitable interventions based on the findings.

• Boosting Self-control and Regulation

One of the primary roles of educational psychology is to assist students in boosting their self-control and regulation in relation to social media usage. Students are advised to engage in goal-setting, which also helps them to maintain self-control. Educational psychology encourages students to boost discipline and adherence to set rules in order to prevent social media addiction.

• Motivational and Adjustment Skills

Social media addiction has a major impact on students' ability to concentrate on their studies. Educational psychology assists students in acquiring better motivational skills, which increase their chances of being able to avoid social media addiction. The students' adjustment skills are improved so that they can engage in academic activities instead of spending more time on the application. Educational psychologists encourage students to actively participate in classroom activities and avoid engaging in social media activities to help reduce the addiction.

• Guidance and Counseling

Educational psychologists provide guidance and counseling services to students who face behavioral problems resulting from increased social media usage. The guidance helps in addressing mental health problems such as anxiety and depression and assists them in adjusting to the new approaches for addressing the addiction. Guidance and counseling programs are among the most effective interventions in reducing social media addiction.

• Digital Literacy and Awareness Programs

Educational psychology encourages the use of digital literacy and awareness programs to help students understand how to use technology appropriately. Such programs also help students understand the benefits and harmful effects of social media, which may help reduce addiction levels.

• Sports and other Co-curricular Activities

Sports and other co-curricular activities help students develop social interaction skills and boost emotional wellbeing, which reduces social media addiction. Educational psychology encourages students to engage in such activities.

• Role of Teachers

Teachers should offer their support in helping to address issues of student social media addiction. Teachers can help address some

of the issues contributing to the addiction and encourage the students to participate in more social activities.

• Role of Parents

Parents should monitor the amount of time spent by their children on social media. Parents should also encourage outdoor and social activities among the children and offer moral support when needed.

VIII. INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR COLLEGES

• Digital Wellbeing

Colleges should encourage digital wellbeing by conducting workshops for students to help them understand the use of technology effectively.

• Counseling Centers

College administrators should support the establishment of counseling centers to offer assistance to students dealing with social media addiction.

• Sports and other Extracurricular Activities

Colleges should encourage participation in sports, cultural performances, and other extracurricular activities.

• Classroom Rules and Regulation

The administration should encourage strict rules and regulations concerning the use of mobile phones during class.

• Mindfulness Training

Colleges should encourage mindfulness training to help students develop emotional control and reduce social media addiction levels.

• Screen Time Monitors

The use of monitors that record the amount of time spent on social media and other applications should be encouraged.

IX. SUGGESTIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Colleges and other institutions should establish digital counseling centers to help students deal with social media addiction.
- Educational psychologists should conduct frequent workshops to sensitize the students on the need to avoid developing social media addiction.
- The availability of counseling services should be made easily accessible to students and affordable.
- College students should participate in more extracurricular activities.
- Teachers and parents should work together to ensure that students avoid social media addiction.
- Colleges should incorporate mental health awareness programs into the curriculum.
- Counseling Awareness should be continuously increased among students about the need to develop healthy social media engagement.
- Students should embrace self-regulation and mindfulness while using technology.
- Administrations and government should encourage healthy digital citizenship among students.



X. CONCLUSION

Social media addiction has significantly affected the academic and general well-being of college students. The addiction affects their mental health, academic performance, and social life. Educational psychology plays a vital role in analyzing, understanding, and addressing social media addiction among students and provides effective treatment services. Colleges and other institutions should incorporate psychological services in order to help manage social media addiction among the affected students.\

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