

## Social Media Addiction, a Sense of Identity and Well-Being among Emerging Adults

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Social media has become extremely popular with its escalated usage. While social media provides many new opportunities for communication, its addiction can cause severe psychological problems. The present study aimed to understand the relationship between social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being. To measure social media addiction, Social Media Addiction Scale (Shahnawaz & Rehman, 2020) was used, to measure sense of identity, Self-Concept and Identity Measure (Kaufman et al., 2015) and to measure well-being, WHO- Five Well-Being Index (WHO, 1998) was employed. 119 participants participated in the study from Delhi-NCR region aged between 15-24. The result revealed that there is a positive correlation between social media addiction and identity confusion, a negative correlation between social media addiction and well-being and a positive correlation between identity confusion and well-being. Further linear regression revealed that social media addiction impacts a sense of identity and well-being, also identity confusion impacts well-being. Differences in the three variables of implied in the study based on sex, age and number of social media sites used was also determined.

**Keywords:** Social media addiction, sense of identity, well-being, adolescents.

### **Social Media Addiction**

Social media is defined as a medium that *“enables users to connect by creating personal information profiles that can be accessed by friends and colleagues, and by sending emails and instant messages between each other”* (Hamm et al., 2013, p.2). Social networking site (SNS) addiction which is problematic use of social media sites falls under the broad category of internet addiction and under ‘online relationship addiction category’ according to Young’s classification of various subtypes of internet addiction (Young, 1999). Out of 4.95 billion internet users, there are around 4.62 billion social media users around the world which is about 58.4% of the total population. In India, 33.4% of the total population are social media users. Heaviest users of social media are aged between 20-29 years and again there is gender difference with males being on the upper side (18.1%) and females on the lower (14.1%). In one year, there have been 424 million new social media users which 10.1% increase. (Kemp, 2022).

### **Self-Identity**

Erik Erikson (1950) a psychoanalyst, developed the theory of identity within the frameworks of psychoanalysis under ‘ego psychology’. According to him ego develops in eight stages and the development is a lifelong process known as ‘psychosocial stages of development’. In his theory, he named the fifth stage as the ‘Identity versus Role confusion’ which occurs during the adolescent time period. Ego identity and identity diffusion is the psychosocial crisis that occurs during late adolescence. He believed that this time period can roughly last till 24 years of life (Erikson, 1958). Adolescence is the time period when the young have to make any choices and decisions such as which career to follow, what ideologies to adopt, which will eventually lead to self-definition. They have to successfully integrate their own desires and the expectations of the society. This time is marked by successful maturation of genitals. The identity development is bipolar, on one end it’s ‘identity achievement’ which means that the adolescent is able to

successfully form a stable, well integrated identity and is committed to an occupation and does not feel overwhelmed with changes in the environment or responsibilities. On the other end is 'identity diffusion' which is marked by an unsuccessful and unstable formation of identity and there's a lack of commitment. Additionally, in order to form a lasting and stable identity some adolescents have to once again deal with the issues of the earlier stage. (Erikson, 1968).

### **Well-Being**

Well-being refers to the positive appraisal and evaluation of one's life in all aspects such as physical, mental, psychological, and spiritual (Tov, 2018). It includes absence of illness, but it is not limited to just that (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It comprises an optimistic viewpoint- an expectation that one will most likely experience positive outcomes as compared to negative outcomes in life (Carver & Scheier, 2003). An approach to well-being known as subjective well-being or hedonic well-being (HWB) emphasized on positive feelings. Genesis of this approach can be traced to Greek philosopher Aristippus who conceptualized that human tend to maximize the amount of pleasure and happiness in life. According to Diener (1984), it encompasses assessment of life on the two spheres- emotional and cognitive. The emotional or affective component includes the experiences of pleasant (positive emotions) and unpleasant feelings (negative emotions) such as joy, contentment, happiness on the pleasant end and anger, sadness, resentment on the unpleasant end. On the other hand, the cognitive component incorporates the judgment regarding one's goals, standards and desires which is usually known as life satisfaction. It includes frequency of pleasant feelings, infrequency of unpleasant feelings and judging one's life as satisfying.

A study in Malaysia with University students (n=501) as their sample aimed to investigate the mediating role of identity confusion and materialism in the relationship between social networking site (SNS) excessive usage and online compulsive buying among young adults. The study found that young adults who excessively consume social networking sites

are prone to identity confusion which could be attributed to the exposure to various identities on SNS. Individuals with high SNS may also have a high number of online friends and followers which can lead to high availability of feedback for their own identity furthering leading to more confusion (Sharif & Khanekharab, 2017).

This research was a PhD thesis and was purely qualitative in nature. The study aimed to identify the role of social media in identity formation and development of self-esteem in adolescents. The data was collected from 15 British adolescents (age range from 12 to 17). An interview and focus group discussions were conducted to understand the aim of the study. The study revealed that social media use is negatively impacting the development of a stable sense of self or identity and also leading to a poor mental health or psychological well-being. Adolescents are highly sensitive to the feedback they receive on social media platforms (Ward, 2017).

A research conducted in India aimed to explore the relationship between internet addiction and self-concept of adolescence found a significant relationship. The analysis revealed that there was a negative correlation ( $r = -.60$ ) between internet addiction and self-concept meaning that as the addiction increases, the self-concept of adolescents decreases (Agarwal et al., 2014).

A study conducted in Northern India aimed at investigating Internet addiction among college students in Delhi (n=377), and its relationship with several psychiatric conditions. The prevalence of Internet Addiction was 25.3% according to the research. They found an association between Internet Addiction, high family income and high screen time. There was a strong positive correlation between Internet Addiction and depression and anxiety, depression being the predictor of Internet Addiction. It was seen that people with depression were vulnerable to Internet Addiction which could be because they found online communication to be easier than face-to-face communication (Gupta et al., 2018).

Another study conducted in India in 2013 aimed to investigate the prevalence of internet addiction and associated existing

psychopathology in adolescents. 74.5% participants were moderate internet users and 0.7% can be classified as addicts. Gender played a role in addiction; men were significantly more addictive than females. A common theme was usage was found in the moderate internet users and possible addicts, they mostly consumed the internet for social networking, academic use, chatting, gaming, communication purpose and for downloading and they tend to use the internet mostly at evening and nighttime. The addicts showed high scores on depression and anxiety (Goel et al., 2013).

The above studies suggest that there is a relationship between social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being. A positive correlation is usually found between social media addiction and identity problems. Social Media addiction also leads to poor well-being because of its strong associations with depression and anxiety.

### **Objectives**

Considering the conceptualization of social media addiction, self-identity and well-being and review of relevant literature, the current study has been conducted with the following objectives:

1. To understand the relationship between social media addiction and sense of identity and whether social media addiction has an impact on sense of identity.
2. To understand the relationship between social media addiction and well-being and whether or not social media addiction has an impact on well-being.
3. To understand the relationship between sense of identity and well-being and whether a sense of identity has an impact on well-being.
4. To understand the role of gender in social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being.
5. To understand the role of age in social media addiction, a sense of identity and well-being.
6. To understand the role of a number of social media sites used on social media

addiction, a sense of identity and well-being.

### **Hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1 - There is a significant positive relationship between social media addiction and identity confusion among the youth of Delhi-NCR.

H<sub>1.1</sub>- Social media addiction has an impact on the sense of identity among the youth of Delhi-NCR.

H<sub>2</sub>- There is a significant negative relationship between social media addiction and well-being in the youth of Delhi-NCR.

H<sub>2.1</sub>- Social media addiction has an impact on well-being among the youth of Delhi-NCR.

H<sub>3</sub>- There is a significant negative relationship between identity confusion and well-being.

H<sub>3.1</sub>- Identity confusion has an impact on well-being among the youth of Delhi-NCR.

H<sub>4</sub>- There is a significant sex difference in social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being among the youth of Delhi-NCR.

H<sub>5</sub>- There is a significant age difference in social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being among the youth of Delhi-NCR.

H<sub>6</sub>- There will be a significant difference in social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being between people who use more social media sites and people who use fewer social media sites.

### **Method**

#### **Sample**

The study employed purposeful and snowball sampling to collect data. The number of samples included in the study is 119. Initially data was collected from 125 participants but out of them 119 met the inclusion criterion for the study. The sample was collected from individuals residing in Delhi-NCR, India and falling between the age

range of 15-24. The participation was consensual and without any rewards. Characteristics of the participants is tabulated in Table 1.

**Table 1: Characteristics of Final Sample**

		Number of participants	Percentage of participants (%)
Sex	Female	79	66.4%
	Male	40	33.6%
Age	15-19	36	30.3%
	20-24	83	69.7%

### **Tools employed**

Social Media Addiction Scale (SNAS), developed in 2020 in India by Shahnawaz & Rehman was utilized. The scale is 7-point Likart scale with two extreme responses, 1 meaning strongly disagree and on the other end 7 meaning strongly agree. The scale has a total of 16 items. A total score is obtained by summing up all the items. The scores can range between 21 to 147 and higher the score, the more severe the addiction. Any score which is greater than 84 can be interpreted as social media addiction. The test is highly reliable with 0.88 test-retest reliability coefficient. The scale also has high validity. The scale is standardized on the Indian population, especially the northern Indian region by the authors.

Self concept and Identity Measure (SCIM), a self-report scale used to assess the dimensions of identity (healthy or unhealthy) was used. The scale was developed by Erin A. Kaufman, Jenny M. Cundiff and Sheila E. Crowell in 2015. The scale contains 27 items, and the responses are on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The scale is scored by summing up all the scores. Higher score marks greater identity disturbance and high probability of disturbed identity, unconsolidated identity, and lack of identity. The test is highly reliable with Cronbach's alpha 0.88 and has high validity. High scores on SCIM is associated with clinical problems and has been associated with all forms of psychopathology, especially Borderline Personality Disorder and emotional dysregulation (Linehan, 1993).

WHO-5 Well-Being Index, a short 5-item self-report questionnaire developed in 1998 by the World Health Organization to assess well-being was utilized. The responses can vary from 0-5, 0 denoting 'at no time' and 5 denoting 'all of the time'. The total score is calculated by adding all the responses, the scores can range between 0-25. Higher score indicates good and desirable well-being. The scale has been validated many times, Topp et al. (2015) did a systematic review of the studies which validated the scale, capability of the scale to screen depression and its effectiveness and applicability across field studies. The scale has high clinimetric validity, construct validity and predictive validity. The scale can also be used as a screening tool for depression and has been used for the same purpose in many clinical trials as it has high sensitivity meaning that the high percentage of people screen positive. Other than depression, the scale has also been used in relation to alcohol use and substance use disorders (Topp et al., 2015).

### **Procedure**

Participants of the study were residents of Delhi-NCR emerging adults. Their age ranged between 15 to 24 years. Sampling methods employed were purposeful and snowball methods. The questionnaire for the purpose of the study was prepared on google forms. The participants were approached via their social media accounts such as Instagram and WhatsApp by the researchers and were provided with the link to the questionnaire. Also, the questionnaire was posted on Facebook and LinkedIn so that anyone interested and met the criterion for the study could participate. A few participants were also asked to forward the link to their friends. The participation in the study was totally voluntary and no coercion means was employed to gain participation. They were informed about the confidentiality and the fact that they can withdraw from the study at any time. A total of 119 individuals participated in the study by filling the google forms.

### **Results**

According to the results, all the participants (100%) use social media sites on a regular basis and reside in the Delhi-NCR area. Instagram is

the most frequently used application reported by people, 104 (87.4%) participants reported using it. Following Instagram WhatsApp is the second most frequently used application used by 82 (68.9%) participants. Then is Snapchat which is used by 43 (36.1%) participants followed by LinkedIn by 27 (22.7%) participants, Facebook by 18 (15.1%) participants, Twitter by 15 (12.6%) participants, and Reddit by 13 (10.9%) participants. The least used applications are Tumblr - 6 (5%) participants and Other sites by 6 (5%) participants.

Majority of the participants used Social media sites for the purpose of 'watching content', 104 (87.4%) participants reported the same. Other than watching content participants also engage on social media sites for communication purpose (68 participants, 57.1%), posting pictures and videos (49 participants, 41.2%), business related purpose (17 participants, 14.3%), making new friends (12 participants, 10.1%) and for other reasons is reported by 6 (5%) participants. Other reasons reported are like for education purposes, shopping, news etc.

**Table 2: Highly used Social Media Sites and the Reasons to use Social Media**

	Number of participants	Percentage of participants (%)
<i>Highly used social media site</i>		
Instagram	104	87.4
WhatsApp	82	68.9
Snapchat	43	36.1
LinkedIn	27	22.7
Facebook	18	15.1
Twitter	15	12.6
Reddit	13	10.9
Tumblr	6	5
Other	6	5
<i>Most frequent reason to use social media</i>		
Watching Content	104	87.4
Communication Purpose	68	57.1
Posting pictures and videos	49	41.2

For business purpose	17	14.3
Making new friends	12	10.1
Other reasons	6	5
For Education	1	0.8
News, shopping, articles etc	1	0.8

A total of 119 people participated in the research. Table 4.1 entails the descriptive statistics of the data. The mean score on the Social Media Addiction scale is 71.58 with 23.723 standard deviation. Self Concept and Identity Measure's mean score was computed to be 109.30 with 17.940 standard deviation. The mean score on Five Well-Being Index is 16.20 with 4.500 standard deviation.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Social Media Addiction	119	71.58	23.723
Identity	119	109.30	17.940
Well-being	119	16.20	4.500

The correlation analysis between social media addiction and identity confusion revealed that there is a positive correlation,  $r = .512$ . The correlation is also statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ) level, therefore hypothesis 1 is accepted. The relationship between social media addiction and well-being is also statistically significant and a negative correlation coefficient was found,  $r = -.295$ , therefore the second hypothesis is accepted. The correlation between identity confusion and well-being is  $-.245$ , a negative correlation which is significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ) level, therefore the third hypothesis is also accepted. The summary of all correlation is tabulated in table number 4.

The impact of social media addiction on sense of identity was calculated using linear regression on SPSS. The F and t values are 41.495 and 6.442 respectively which are significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ) level of significance. The R square value is .262 which implies that social media addiction explains 26.2% variance on identity with a beta coefficient of .512, or we

can say that 26.2% change in identity can be accounted for by social media addiction. The analysis implied that the impact of social media addiction on sense of identity is statistically significant therefore hypothesis 1.1 is accepted.

**Table 4: Correlation Analysis**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (Pearson)	Significance
Social Media Addiction and Identity	.512 **	.000
Social Media Addiction and Well-Being	-.295 **	.001
Sense of Identity and well-Being	-.245**	.007

\*\* Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed)

The impact of social media addiction on well-being- The F and t values are 11.120 and -3.335 respectively with a significant value of .001. The R square value is .087 which means that social media addiction explains 8.7% variance on well-being with beta coefficient of -.295 or simply put, 8.7% change in well-being can be accounted by social media addiction. We can say that social media addiction has an impact on the well-being of the youth of Delhi-NCR and therefore hypothesis 2.1 is retained.

Impact of identity confusion on well-being- The F value is 7.495 and t value is -2.738 and both the values are statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ) level. The R square value is .060 which implies that sense of identity explains 6% variance on well-being with beta coefficient of -.245, in other words 6% change in well-being can be accounted for by sense of identity. The analysis suggests that there is an impact of sense of identity on well-being and therefore hypothesis 3.1 is retained. The summary of Regression analysis is given in Table 5.

To understand the role of sex in social media addiction, individual sample t test was employed. The summary of the analysis is given in table 6. In the current study, the total number of female participants were 79 and 40

were male participants. Mean score of social media addiction in females is 74.76 and for male is 65.30 and t score computed is 2.084 with significance value of .039 which is statistically significant at 0.05 ( $p < .05$ ) level of significance. So, there is a significant difference in social media addiction on the basis on sex of a person therefore, hypothesis 4 is accepted. Further, the mean score of females is greater than that of males, it can be said that female population has a greater level of social media addiction as compared with males. Sense of identity did not differ for biological sex because the difference was not found to be statistically significant. There was a difference in well-being based on sex. The t value is -.2.987 which is statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ) level of significance. So, there is a difference in well-being based on sex of the participants. Further, it can be said that male participant's well-being is higher than that of female participants because males' mean score is greater than females' mean score. So, females have poor levels of well-being as compared to males.

The summary for t test for age difference is given in table 7. In the current study, there was no statistically significant difference in social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being in two age groups 15-19 and 20-24.

The summary for t test analysis for difference based on Number of Social Media Sites used in Social Media Addiction, Identity and Well-Being is given in table 8. The current study revealed no difference.

## Discussion

The present study aims to understand the relationship between social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being. A total of 119 samples were employed belonging to Delhi-NCR, India region aged between 15-24. To measure social media addiction "Social Media Addiction Scale" (Shahnawaz & Rehman, 2020) was employed, to measure sense of identity "Self Concept and Identity Measure" (Kaufman et al., 2015) was used and to measure well-being "WHO- Five Well-Being Index" (WHO, 1998) was used.

**Table 5: Regression Analysis**

Variables	R	R Square	F	Beta	t	Significance
Predictor- SNS Addiction Dependent Variable- Identity	.512	.262	41.495**	.512	6.442**	.000
Predictor- SNS Addiction Dependent Variable- Well-Being	.295	.087	11.120**	-.295	-3.335**	.001
Predictor- Identity Dependent Variable- Well-being	.245	.060	7.495**	-.245	-2.738	.007

\*\* Regression significant at .01 level

The first objective of the study was to understand the relationship between social media addiction and sense of identity. Social media addiction was positively correlated to identity confusion, meaning that with increase in social media addiction, identity confusion increases and with decrease in social media addiction, identity confusion also decreases. Also, social media addiction has an impact on the identity of a person. Similar result was reported by Sharif & Khanekharab (2017) who concluded that young adults who have excessive consumption of social networking sites are prone to identity confusion. One reason they reported was because of the exposure to the various identities on social networking sites, in addition to this, the online world provides with greater feedback for their own identities which can further create more identity confusion. People tend to internalize the opinions and feedback of others which can influence a person's self-esteem and has an impact on the way an individual perceives themselves (Cooley, 1902). Another study reported that internet addiction

can lead to less mature identities in young adults. They explained this effect could be due to the fact that people who heavily consume the internet have less chance for physical interaction with people and poor social learning which could be leading to less mature identities in them (Mazalin & Moore, 2004).

The second objective of the study was to understand the relationship between social media addiction and well-being. Social media addiction and well-being is negatively correlated, meaning that as social media addiction increases, well-being decreases and if social media addiction decreases, well-being increases. Further, social media addiction also has an impact on the well-being of adolescents. Depression is the most common disorder which correlates with internet addiction (Goel et al., 2013; Kircaburun, 2016; Kawabe et al., 2016; Leménager et al., 2018; Schønning et al., 2020). Many researchers have established that internet addiction leads to poor mental health and interferes with professional performance, academic work and daily routine (Satici & Uysal, 2015; Schønning et al., 2020).

**Table 6: t test for Sex difference in Social Media Addiction, Identity and Well-Being.**

Variables	Sex	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t (equal variance assumed)	Significance
Social Media Addiction	Female	79	74.76	22.884	2.084*	.039
	Male	40	65.30	24.457		
Identity	Female	79	108.86	19.504	-.376	.708
	Male	40	110.18	14.555		
Well-Being	Female	79	15.35	4.627	-2.987**	.003
	Male	40	17.88	3.757		

\* t value significant at .05 level; \*\* t value significant at .01 level

**Table 7: t test for Age difference in Social Media Addiction, Identity, and Well-being.**

Variables	Age	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t (equal variance assumed)	Significance
Social Media Addiction	15-19	36	69.64	28.565	-.586	.559
	20-24	83	72.42	21.429		
Identity	15-19	36	112.81	21.041	1.409	.162
	20-24	83	107.78	16.324		
Well-Being	15-19	36	15.81	5.585	-.632	.529
	20-24	83	16.37	3.965		

**Table 8: t test for difference based on Number of Social Media Sites used in Social Media Addiction, Identity and Well-Being.**

Variables	No. of social media sites	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t (equal variance assumed)	Significance
Social Media Addiction	1-3	84	72.58	24.624	.713	.477
	4-6	35	69.17	23.085		
Identity	1-3	84	107.79	18.429	.454	.651
	4-6	35	108.14	16.910		
Well-Being	1-3	84	16.46	4.367	.986	.326
	4-6	35	15.57	4.810		

Internet addiction also correlates with loneliness, depression, and compulsive behavior (Kim et al., 2006). A study has shown that excessive use of the internet can lead to withdrawal symptoms (physiological effects) when one stops using it. Such physiological effects are also accompanied by feelings of anxiety (psychological effect) (Reed et al., 2017). Further, people who use social media excessively report greater feelings of social isolation. Spending more time on the social media sites ultimately decreases the time spent in real social experiences and interactions which can truly decrease social isolation, this could be one of the factors why social media addiction is causing the feelings of social isolation. Also, social media offers a wide variety of content and one can come across pictures and videos of certain events that they were not invited to which can lead to a feeling of 'being left out', 'envy', 'jealousy' and comparison of one's life. More the person consumes these platforms, the more envious they feel. Also, envy mediates between social media and depression symptoms (Tandoc et al., 2015).

The third objective of the study was to understand the relationship between sense of

identity and well-being. Sense of Identity and well-being are negatively correlated, meaning that greater the identity confusion, lesser the level of well-being. Additionally, a sense of identity has an impact on the well-being of a person. Similar findings were reported by Sharma and Chandiramani (2021), adolescents who do not form stable and mature identities (identity diffusion according to Macia's theory) are prone to various behavioral and adjustment problems such as they poorly cope with stressful situations, display wide range of interpersonal issues and also struggles to form new romantic/intimate relationships as well as exhibit poor levels of well-being as compared to those who form a stable identity (identity achievement). Moratorium status which is identified by identity crisis which also negatively correlates with well-being. Also, adolescents with diffused and moratorium identities may have greater tendencies towards alienation (Sandhu & Tung, 2004). Identity confusion has been negatively associated with psychological well-being and also there's a positive correlation between identity confusion and psychopathology such as anxiety, depression and impulsivity (Schwartz



et al., 2009).

The fourth objective of this study was to understand the role of biological sex in social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being. The results revealed that there is a difference in social media addiction and well-being based on gender but no difference was found for sense of identity. Male participants are more addicted to social media as compared to female participants, or that male participants have greater levels of social media addiction. Similar findings were reported by Upadhyay & Guragain (2017), they reported that males tend to have a higher level of addiction compared to females. In the case of well-being, male population has better or higher well-being as compared to the female population. Akhter (2015) conducted a study in India and reported that there is statistically significant gender difference in psychological well-being.

The fifth objective of the study was to understand the role of age in social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being. There was no significant difference in any of the three variables based on age in the present study. Similar results were reported by Altin and Kivrak (2018), they concluded that there's no difference in social media addiction among different age groups (17-22, 23-28 and 29 and above age groups) as all three of them have similar levels of addiction. One of the reasons for no difference could be because the age groups in the present study i.e., 15-19 and 20-24 are very close to each other and all fall under the wide category of youth.

The sixth and the last object of the present study was to understand the role of the number of social media sites used on social media addiction, a sense of identity and well-being. There was no difference between samples who use less social media sites (1-3) and the ones who use more social media sites (4-6) on the social media addiction, a sense of identity and well-being. No literature could be found for these results. One limitation of this study which should be considered in accordance with this result is that the distribution of sample in groups of number of social media sites used is not evenly distributed i.e., there are only 35 participants

belonging to the group of 4-6 social media sites used and a whole lot of 84 participants in the 1-3 social media sites used group. Such a limitation can have an impact on the result.

### **Limitations**

The study has a few limitations. First, the data was collected from Delhi-NCR, India region only so it does not have wide applicability as it cannot be applied to the whole country at large. Therefore, the study can only be generalized to the Delhi-NCR region. Secondly, the data was divided into various groups such as gender, age and number of social media sites used. But the division of the sample into various groups was not equal. There were only 40 males and 79 females, only 36 participants belonging to the age group of 15-19 and 83 belonging to the age between 20-24 and only 35 participants used 4-6 social media sites and 84 used 1-3 social media sites. The results concluded based on these groups should be considered with caution because of the uneven distribution of samples which is the threat to the external validity of the research.

### **Implications**

The study exhibits various negative impacts of social media addiction such as social media addiction affects our sense of identity as well as well-being and also a poor sense of identity or identity confusion impacts our well-being. Internet addiction is considered to be very similar to other substance addictive disorders because it shares a similar mechanism. Social media addiction is one form or type of internet addiction. Though, internet addiction is not yet added in any diagnostic manuals and not considered as a psychological disorder but with a growing body of research it may soon be treated as a disorder.. The future research should aim to understand the mechanism of the effect so that effective treatment programs and preventive programs can be generated.

The scale used to measure identity of the participants in the current study highly correlates with certain diagnostic tools such as Beck's Depression Inventory and Borderline Symptoms List-23 and also with emotional

dysregulation. Therefore, high scores on the scale could indicate certain psychopathology or borderline psychopathology and could be alarming (Kaufman et al., 2015). Because social media addiction impacts the identity of a person according to the present study, social media addiction could also be impacting psychological health of a person through identity confusion. Further research is required to understand the role of identity as a mediator between social media addiction and well-being. Additionally, the scale used to measure well-being in the study is used for depression screening. Therefore, social media addiction and depression have a very strong connection.

### Conclusion

Social media addiction and a sense of identity have a relationship, higher the social media addiction, higher the identity confusion. Further, social media addiction impacts the identity of a person. Social media addiction and well-being also shares a relationship, there is a negative correlation between the two. As social media addiction increases, the level of well-being decreases. Additionally, social media addiction impacts the well-being of a person. A sense of identity and well-being also shares a relationship (negative correlation). As identity confusion increases, the level of well-being decreases. Also, identity impacts well-being.

The study also unfolded a sex difference in social media addiction and well-being. Females as compared to males have greater levels of social media addiction and males have a greater level of well-being when compared with females. Social media addiction, sense of identity and well-being did not differ for age and number of social media sites used.

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