DO SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IMPACT THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF EMERGING ADULTS DURING EARLY ADULTHOOD? A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

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Abstract

Social networking sites wield a profound influence on an individual's psychological well-being, serving as a significant feature in our daily existence. This study delves into the impact of social networking sites on the psychological well-being of college students within the realm of emerging adulthood. Employing a survey methodology, data were gathered through Ryff's Psychological Well-being scale and Social Networking Sites scales, focusing on a sample size of 117 respondents within the emerging adulthood age group. Utilizing the Pearson Correlation method for analysis, the results find a noteworthy correlation between social networking sites and psychological well-being. Further exploration reveals that factors such as autonomy and cognitive need, environmental mastery and affective need, autonomy and personal integrative need, diversion and social integrative need, as well as social integrative need and affective need, are all significantly influenced. This suggests that social networking sites contribute positively to the psychological well-being of emerging adults, impacting areas such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, relationships, sense of purpose, and self-acceptance. This study sheds light on the positive perception of utilizing social networking sites, emphasizing the notion that the relationship between social networking sites and the well-being of emerging adults is a healthy one. It reinforces the idea that young adults are cognizant of both the advantages and drawbacks of engaging with social networking platforms.

Keywords: social networking sites, PWB, autonomy, personal growth, social integrative needs, positive relations, purpose in life, self-acceptance

I.   INTRODUCTION

Today's young adults and adolescents find themselves deeply immersed in the world of social networking sites (SNS) (Karácsony et al., 2020), shaping a significant part of their daily lives. The

allure of these platforms, often characterized by constant connectivity and dynamic interactions, captivates their attention and time (Adorjan and Ricciardelli, 2021). Engaging in a multitude of activities, from sharing moments to participating in online conversations, they derive a sense of satisfaction from this digital social sphere (Stahl and Literat, 2023). However, the question remains unanswered as to the profound impact of these virtual engagements on their psychological well-being. While the satisfaction is evident, the intricate interplay between their mental health and the virtual world awaits further exploration, prompting a closer examination of the complex relationship between social networking and the psychological dimensions of today's youth. Social media networking sites are the result of a collective social gathering on the Internet, where a sufficient number of individuals engage in a public discourse for a specific duration, infused with genuine human emotions (Can and Alatas, 2019). This interaction leads to the formation of networks and connections, establishing personal relationships within the cyber domain. (Hu et al., 2017). A wide spectrum of content producers and users have opportunities to explore social media (Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021).

SNS are web-based services that enable users to create public profiles, share connections, and read and navigate their own and others' connections. Students may keep in touch with their classmates, keep up with current affairs, and add the most recent to their websites, for instance, by using social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and others. Facebook not only fulfils its fundamental purpose of reconnecting with old friends but also provides a plethora of features, such as sharing photographs and videos, engaging in conversations, storytelling, updating statuses, direct messaging, tagging, and notably, live streaming (Junco, 2013). In addition to these, Facebook offers a diverse range of activities including gaming and gambling (Griffiths, 2014, 2015). In a manner reminiscent of Facebook, Instagram is another prominent social networking site known for image-sharing. With 500 million members, it sees a staggering 95 million photographs and videos being posted regularly (Instagram, n.d.). Researches by twitter usage statistics states that over 350,000 tweets are sent every minute, 500 million tweets per day, and over 200 billion tweets annually (Twitter usage statistics). Thirty million individuals in the US, or nearly 10% of the population are between the ages of 18 and 24, according to the US Census of 2010. (Howden & Meyer, 2011). By the end of 2019, it is anticipated that the count will excel beyond 21 million college students in the United States alone, a quantum leap of a huge increase of about five-million since 2008. (Renn & Reason 2013).

A study finds entertainment as the most potent predictor of sites in social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. Self-documentation was also related with users who often used Facebook and Instagram, but convenience was connected with those who frequently used platforms like Twitter and Snapchat. (Alhabash and Ma 2017). Academicians from all around the world have conducted study on the psychological impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on a variety of groups. Social media has an impact on students in both favourable and detrimental ways. Social

media platforms, for instance, might be utilised to compile social and practical data that helps individuals evaluate their level of pleasure.

Students, on the other hand, identify negatively with their schoolwork and waste time on social media. Students can network more easily thanks to social media. Sports-enthusiasts, for instance, could read the news feeds of their idols and even publish and share their knowledge. (Kim et al., 2017).

Due to the diverse vocabulary used in academia and practice in describing them, the exactness and precise definition of SNS is not easy to define and therefore the term 'social media' is justly preferable. (Wolf et al., 2018). SNS and social media sites are terminology that are widely used to characterise online engagement and networking (Kapoor et al., 2018; Oestreicher-Singer and Zalmanson, 2013). Although all sites enable users to establish profiles and leave comments, they are not all SNS.

SNS can be identified based on three key features, as proposed by Boyd and Ellison (2013). Firstly, SNSs involve the creation of user-generated public or semi-public profiles. Secondly, they facilitate the establishment of connections or linkages between users within the system. Lastly, SNSs provide users with the ability to view their own list of connections, as well as connections formed by other users within the system. After gaining significant consensus, a revised and broadened conceptualization was proposed for a communication platform that facilitates interaction among its members. SNS possess distinct profiles that are composed of content supplied by users, content contributed by other users, and/or system-level data. These profiles have the ability to publicly express connections that can be observed and navigated by others. Additionally, these sites have the capacity to consume, produce, and/or engage with streams of user-generated content that result from interactions on the platforms (Ellison and Boyd, 2013). Prominent examples of SNS include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and MySpace, with approximately 30 operational SNS worldwide (Sorensen, et al., 2014).

This study aims to investigate the complex relationship between SNS and the psychological well-being of young adults in the process of transitioning into adulthood. The fundamental objective is encompassed inside the overarching goal, with the intention of elucidating the essence of this association. In order to accomplish this, the study outlines distinct objectives: firstly, to determine the frequency of social media platforms visited by emerging adults; secondly, to assess the degree of psychological well-being within this demographic group; thirdly, to evaluate the extent of utilisation of SNS; and finally, to discern the correlation between SNS and the psychological well-being of emerging adults. The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the intricate relationship between online social engagement and the mental and emotional well-being of persons in the crucial stage of emerging adulthood.

The primary focus and originality of this study reside in its thorough investigation of the intricate connection between social networking platforms and the mental well-being of young adults in the process of transitioning into adulthood. The study offers a comprehensive analysis by establishing particular objectives to examine the frequency of social media site usage, evaluate degrees of psychological well-being, and comprehend the amount of social networking site utilisation. This research aims to untangle the complex factors that influence the mental and emotional health of individuals during the key phase of emerging adulthood, employing a nuanced approach to identify the intricate nature of this relationship. This study makes a vital contribution to the current body of literature by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the effects of online social engagement on psychological well-being. The findings of this research offer significant insights for both scholars and professionals working in this domain.

1.1 Social networking usage and Self

In recent years, the digital landscape has witnessed a surge in the popularity of SNS, with platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Weibo emerging as prominent attractions for netizens worldwide (Craig and Lin. 2021). The intersection of social networking usage and self is a compelling arena for exploration in today's digital age (Jarzyna, 2021). SNS, including popular platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Weibo, have become integral to the lives of netizens globally. Beyond serving as tools for connectivity, these platforms play a significant role in shaping and expressing individual self-identity. Facebook's feature allows for the prediction of personality traits based on user social behaviour and linguistic patterns, providing a fascinating aspect of digital self-exploration. Jenkins (2014) highlights the complex process of self-identity formation, highlighting the interplay between self-definition and external social perceptions, particularly in the digital sphere. Identity theorists, such as Stets and Burke (2000), contribute to this discourse by conceptualizing the self as a reflective being capable of categorizing itself in relation to various social categories. This dynamic interaction between the self and social constructs on digital platforms goes beyond mere virtual interaction; it becomes a complex dance of self-expression and influence. As users engage with SNS, they navigate the delicate balance of projecting their identities while being shaped by the digital tapestry of interactions. The study of social networking usage and self is crucial for understanding digital behaviour and revealing the evolving nature of identity in the digital age (Granic, et al., 2020). Platforms like Facebook are transforming beyond connectivity, enabling personality prediction based on user social behaviour and linguistic patterns. Jenkins (2014) highlights the intricate process of self-identity, which is not only self-defined but also influenced by external social context perceptions. Identity theorists, such as Stets and Burke (2000), posit that the self is a reflective entity capable of categorizing itself in relation to various social constructs. SNS are becoming platforms for personal identity expression and influence, offering a diverse range of psychological exploration and understanding (Huang and Chang, 2020).

1.2 Social networking usage and personality Development

Determining and examining the inclinations that evoke behavioural variations resulting from biological and environmental influences is the main goal of personality psychology. A person's public persona is typically referred to by the term "personality," which comes from the Latin word "persona," which described the masks that ancient Greek theatre performers used. Cervone & Pervin, (2013). The investigation into the correlation between social networking usage and personality development uncovers a captivating interaction within modern psychology. Platforms such as Facebook offer a digital space where personality traits can be anticipated by analysing user behaviour and linguistic patterns. The psychological literature, as shown by Jenkins (2014), emphasises the mutual and interdependent process of developing one's self-identity within the online social environment. Identity theorists, like Stets and Burke (2000), provide valuable insights into how individuals consciously classify themselves with respect to digital social structures. This dynamic interaction on SNS goes beyond simple observation, actively shaping the ongoing narrative of personality development within the interconnected digital world (Johnson, 2021). There are four primary social media characteristics that affect personality development, (Alzahrani S, Bach C., 2014) (i) Culture of Popularity; (ii) Unreal Standards of Appearance; (iii) Approval Seeking Behaviour and (iv) Prevalence of Depression and Anxiety. Studies have been made to examine the relationship between SNS and personality of the user. (Hughes et al., 2012) study explored the impact of personality on social and informative use of Facebook and Twitter, revealing various relationships between personality and these platforms. Conscientiousness and openness to new experiences significantly predict social media use among 503 students using questionnaire models (Güven et al., 2016).

1.3 Social networking usage and Emotional Intelligence

Iqbal et al., (2021) investigate how emotional intelligence influences academic achievement, both directly and indirectly, utilising Academic SNS (ASNS) as a mediator. Data on emotional intelligence, ASNS, and academic performance were collected from a sample of around 305 undergraduate university students using a survey questionnaire comprising of 42 components. The results showed that academic achievement is strongly influenced by emotional intelligence and that it contributes to increased academic accomplishment, both directly and indirectly. Wei et al., (2020) sought to give emotional intelligence prediction models based on sentiment analysis of social networking data in another study. According to the findings, the distribution of the four Emotional Intelligence characteristics among users is typically normal. According to the data, females' Emotional Intelligence ratings were often higher than the boys. Even after going over a slew of examples, one cannot ignore the negative implications of social media platforms and their beneficial impact on emerging adults based on many studies by various academics from all points and perspectives. A study found that social media usage, including hours wasted, activity, and addiction, significantly increases the risk of depression and stress. (Lim et al., 2022). There are different types of social media addictions, such as Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat, and Instagram, and the addiction symptoms can include behaviour issues, mood disorders (or mood swings), physical and psychological discomfort in behaviour, and ignoring social, recreational, and other

activities. Students spend or are driven to spend time on social media (Grau et al., 2019). Norm learning often overshadows reinforcement learning in ideologically extreme networks, where users are less sensitive to social feedback when expressing outrage (Brady et al., 2021).

1.4 Well-being

Prioritizing the well-being of young adolescents and emerging adults is crucial in today's society, encompassing various factors such as comfort, health, and happiness. Webster et al., (2021) define well-being as an amalgamation of individual traits, worldviews, self-awareness, and the pursuit of goals and ideals. Subjective well-being, reflecting one's mental and emotional health, plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's perception of life. Alarming statistics, as indicated by Bentley et al., (2018) and WHO's Adolescent Mental Health report, highlight the escalating rates of mental illness and self-harm, with suicide ranking as the third leading cause of death among 15 to 19-year-olds. In the complex web of factors influencing health and happiness, Greenway (2017) identifies elements like relationships, success, and external influences. The omnipresence of social media poses unique challenges, with college students facing the temptation of multitasking during classes, affecting their attention spans (Erfani et al., 2013b; Reinecke & Trepte, 2014). The intertwined relationship between Internet use and psychological well-being has been recognized since the advent of public Internet access in 1993 (Nabi et al., 2013). Despite advancements, the intricate connection between SNS and psychological well-being remains a nuanced and evolving area, with much still unknown to the academic community.

1.5 Psychological Well-Being

Understanding the complexities of psychological well-being (PWB) during adolescence involves not only the traditional developmental challenges but also the pervasive influence of SNS (Wenninger et al., 2019). This dynamic interplay shapes a distinct digital landscape where adolescents grapple with self-discovery, social connections, and the evolving realms of technology (Moreno and Kolb, 2012). Adolescence, a period crucial for identity formation, aligns with Erikson's psychosocial stages (Knight, 2017) where individuals seek to define themselves and find their place in the world. The advent of SNS introduces new dimensions to the adolescent experience (Valkenburg and Peter, 2009). These platforms become spaces for self-expression, connection, and exploration, positively contributing to the psychological well-being of young individuals. However, the digital landscape also poses challenges (Wong et al., 2020; Tynes et al., 2021). The curated nature of online personas can fuel social comparison and feelings of inadequacy, impacting self-esteem. Cyberbullying and the pressure to conform to online ideals add additional layers of complexity to the adolescent experience (Yang et al., 2022). The constant connectivity provided by SNS blurs the boundaries between the online and offline worlds, affecting sleep patterns and overall well-being. The ease of multitasking during online activities, while seemingly efficient, may compromise attention and concentration. Recognizing the intricate relationship between SNS and psychological well-being is vital. Positive digital engagement can foster supportive communities and creative expression, enhancing adolescents' mental and

emotional health. Simultaneously, addressing challenges like cyberbullying and promoting healthy online behaviors ensures a balanced approach, allowing adolescents to navigate the digital landscape with resilience and positive psychological well-being.

1.6 Outcomes of well-being

According to Diener et al., (1993), subjective well-being is made up of several factors. Studies that looked at mood, self-esteem, loneliness, body image, and life satisfaction were included in a lot of reviews. The state of mind of a person and disposition is referred to as their mood, which is commonly linked to emotions or sentiments. Despite the conceptual parallels between mood and emotional state, it is important to note that mood is characterised by its enduring nature and capacity for evolution over time, distinguishing it from emotions which are more immediate and transient in nature. Emotions are more potent whereas moods appear and disappear without warning (Garrido, 2014) Self-esteem is the idea that one believes oneself to be valuable, proficient and capable. (Coppersmith, 1967). A person's opinion of their own physique is referred to as their body image whether or not that perception is accurate. Body image, according to Alysse, is a collection of attitudes, ideas, beliefs, feelings, and actions that people have regarding their own physique. (Bailey et al., 2017) One of the components of subjective well-being is life satisfaction, which might be described as one's viewpoint towards their existence. The concept of happiness is associated with life satisfaction, which according to Seligman (2018), this phenomenon may be quantified by life satisfaction in the same way as temperature can be determined using a thermometer.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS: RYFF THEORY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Ryff's philosophical exploration (Van and Lam, 2023) of happiness focuses on six foundational components: meaningful existence, healthy relationships, personal development, self-acceptance, autonomy, and environmental mastery. She aims to expand the scope of well-being beyond biomedical boundaries and address empirical gaps in existing theories. Ryff's pursuit was rooted in two fundamental principles—firstly, expanding the scope of "well-being" beyond narrow biomedical confines, and secondly, addressing the empirical gaps in existing happiness theories. The six categories of well-being of Carol Ryff's

1. **Self-Acceptance**
   a. *High Self-Acceptance*: You have a good and sound view on oneself, are aware of many aspects of yourself, both, good and bad, and are optimistic about the past.
   b. *Low Self- Acceptance:* You wish you could be someone else instead of who you are because you are dissatisfied in yourself, annoyed by prior life experiences, worried about some personal traits, and disappointed in yourself.
2. **Personal Growth**

a. *Strong Personal Growth*: You have a strong sense of self-improvement and self-development, are receptive to new experiences, believe in achieving your full potential, and view yourself and your activities as evolving through time.

b. *Weak Personal Growth*: You feel stuck in your life, you don't think you're changing or getting better, you have little interest in anything, and you have trouble acquiring new habits or viewpoints.

3. Purpose in Life

a. *Weak Purpose in Life*: Weak Life Purpose: You have long-term objectives and a feeling of direction; you think your previous and present lives have meaning; you think life is worthwhile; and you have aspirations and goals for living.

b. *Strong Purpose in Life*: You lack a sense of direction in life, few objectives or aspirations, a feeling of purpose, knowledge of the meaning of your past life, and perspectives or beliefs that give life meaning.

4. Positive Relations with Others

a. *Strong Positive Relations*: You communicate with others in ways that are pleasurable, gratifying, and trustworthy; you are interested in their welfare; you have a deep sense of empathy, intimacy, and closeness; and you are aware of how relationships work.

b. *Weak Relations*: You struggle to be warm, open, and compassionate toward others. You feel lonely and uncomfortable in social situations. You have few genuine, trustworthy connections. In addition, you are not willing to give up on connections with people who are significant to you.

5. Environmental Mastery

a. *High Environmental Mastery*: You have influence over a variety of external activities, can make good use of your options, and can choose or design settings that are in line with your tastes and objectives. You feel in charge of the surroundings and are adept at controlling it.

b. *Low Environmental Mastery*: You strain to do routine chores, have little power to improve your surroundings, are unaware of local opportunities, and have little impact on the global condition of affairs.

6. Autonomy

a. *High Autonomy*: You have the ability to take control of your behaviour, you have autonomy and self-determination, you can resist pressure from society to think and act in a certain manner, and you have the ability to evaluate yourself according to your own standards.

b. *Low Autonomy*: You are overburdened and bothered by other people's opinions and expectations, you believe on and accept their assessments when making crucial decisions, and you succumb to societal pressure to think and act in a particular fashion.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In their study, Webster et al., (2021) examined the the correlation between online communities of teenagers and their personal sense of happiness.   Nine research have demonstrated a positive

association between seeking assistance and receiving compliments, resulting in enhanced mood, life satisfaction, and reduced feelings of loneliness. The study conducted by Samad et. al. (2019) examined the influence of students' social networking experiences on social presence and perceptions of the utilisation of SNS for educational objectives. The study elucidated that students exhibited a positive disposition towards social networking for educational purposes.   The study also assessed the influence of SNS on students' scholastic achievement.   The researchers investigated the notable correlation between social presence, social well-being, and academic achievement among students.   In a study conducted by Pang (2018), the author examined the connections between several aspects of social networking site (SNS) interactions and self-reported psychological well-being among Chinese foreign students. The findings revealed a correlation between the utilisation of social media platforms and enhanced overall welfare. Salahshour Rad et al., (2017) proposed a novel framework for the implementation of SNS in Malaysian research institutions and verified that these platforms can enhance students' research performance.   In their study, Samad et. al., (2019) demonstrated that the utilisation of SNS has notably enhanced the social presence of students. According to Andreassen (2015), the excessive and prolonged use of social media by individuals worldwide has a detrimental effect on the lives of millions of people (Singh et al., 2020).   In their study, Joksimovic et al., (2015) examined the influence of social presence markers on academic performance and found that specific social presence markers strongly correlate with students' overall grades.

A study conducted by Güneş et al., (2018) found that an escalation in social media usage could lead to a decline in the quality of sleep. Inadequate sleep quality detrimentally impacts students' academic performance, educational attainment, engagement in activities, and energy levels. Best et al., (2014) conducted an extensive examination of social media, online communication, and the well-being of teenagers. The study reveals a rise in social capital, social support, and self-esteem. According to Leis (2014), pupils who had a strong belief in their own language abilities had enhancements in their study habits and independence by utilising social networking platforms throughout class. Roblyer et al., (2010) conducted a study on students' perceptions of the regular use of SNS. According to the report, students predominantly used Facebook as a social networking platform.

Pempek et al., (2009) examined the Facebook profiles of college students and their corresponding encounters. Following a survey, data was gathered from 92 undergraduate students, revealing that a significant number of students utilise Facebook as a means of communication with their acquaintances.   O'Reilly (2020) conducted a study that revealed the significant importance of social media, which requires practitioners to skilfully evaluate the related dangers. The study investigates the intricate correlation between social media and mental health, employing eight focus groups comprising adolescents aged 11-18. The findings unveil the positive, negative, and detrimental sides of this interaction.   Attendees deliberated on the merits and drawbacks of utilising social media, making a clear distinction between personal and external usage. Meanwhile, mental health experts expressed predominantly unfavourable views, with minimal recognition of

possible advantages. This study provides significant insights into the diverse viewpoints that influence the comprehension of how social media affects the mental well-being of teenagers.

Contemporary studies suggest that there is a direct relationship between the use of social media and one's PWB, which contradicts earlier study that found a negative connection. The references used are Chang & Hsu (2016), Chen & Li (2017), and Wang et al., (2014). Researchers are examining the effects of social media usage on the well-being of teenagers. They have discovered that it improves their impression of developing social connections and satisfaction in Japan (Guo et al., 2014).

Zhan et al., (2016) shown that utilising social media for interaction and engagement can yield substantial social advantages, ultimately resulting in increased life satisfaction for users. A study conducted in Hong Kong has found that the use of mobile social media for communication and self-disclosure has a favourable effect on the development of social connections, the creation of social networks, and overall well-being. (Chen and Li, 2017). The aforementioned research indicates a scarcity of studies on the utilisation of SNS and its impact on PWB. A study conducted by Ivie et al., (2020) found that there is a significant amount of variation and a minimal impact on the connection between self-reported social media usage and depressed symptoms.

The latest research trend suggests a change towards a direct relationship between social media consumption and PWB, in contrast to previous studies that indicated an inverse connection. Nevertheless, the study emphasises a lack of research especially dedicated to examining the relationship between SNS and PWB. Although certain research demonstrates favourable impacts on life satisfaction, bonding, bridging capital, and well-being outcomes, it is also recognised that there is variation and little impact in the connection between self-reported social media use and depressive symptoms. The recognition of a deficiency in the existing body of literature has prompted the necessity for further focused investigation in order to comprehend this intricate correlation.

4. METHODOLOGY

The central focus of this study is to understand the intricate relationship between SNS and the PWB of emerging adults. The primary aim is encapsulated in the overarching objective, which is to elucidate the nature of this relationship. To achieve this, the study outlines specific objectives: firstly, to determine the number of social media sites visited by emerging adults; secondly, to gauge the level of PWB among this demographic; thirdly, to assess the extent of social networking site usage; and finally, to discern the nuanced relationship between SNS and the PWB of emerging adults. Through these objectives, the study seeks to unravel the intricate interplay between online social engagement and the mental and emotional health of individuals in the crucial phase of emerging adulthood.

4.1 Hypotheses:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between SNS and PWB of Emerging Adults.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between Autonomy and Cognitive need of emerging Adults.
- H3: There is a close relationship between Environmental Mastery and Affective need of emerging Adults.
- H4: There is a close relationship between Autonomy and Personal Integrative needs of emerging Adults.
- H5: There is a relationship between Diversion and Social Integrative need of emerging Adults.
- H6: There is a relationship between Social Integrative need and Affective need of emerging Adults.

4.2 Universe:

Emerging Adults - Individuals from 17 - 20 years old who are pursuing their undergraduation

4.3 Sampling method: Random Probability Sampling

4.4 Sample Size: 117, young adults 17-21 years old

4.5 Tools used for Data Collection:

a) The SNS Scale, developed by Orchard et al., (2014) measures respondents' usage and motivation for social networking sites (SNS) among college students and adults, focusing on frequency of access, favourite SNS, and time spent using SNSs.

b) Ryff's PWB Scale

Ryff's PWB scale (brief version) was used for the data collection. The Scale consists of 18 items which can be administered to adults who have the reading ability of 6th to 8th grade students. The duration of the Scale is 3 to 5 minutes. Likert scale format scores from 1 to 7 was used to indicate well-being from strongly agree to strongly disagree Scoring of responses includes both Direct and Reverse scores. Each response carries 1 mark.

4.6 Statistical Analysis

Descriptive Analysis which includes calculation of Mean and Correlation and regression of the variables using SPSS.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

While evaluating the responses on various questions carefully tailored to meet the aim and objective of this study, it was made evident that there is a positive correlation i.e. relationship between SNS and Psychological Wellbeing of emerging adults.

5.1 Number of social media sites frequented by emerging adults-From the total respondents (N = 116) , we can infer that 21.74% of emerging adults using Five social Network sites. 26.09% of emerging adults use Four Social Network sites.17.39% of emerging adults use Three Social Network sites. 13. 04% of emerging adults use two Social Network sites. 21.74% of emerging adults use One Single Social Network (Table 1).

This reveals that all the emerging adults have accounts in at least one Social Networking Site (WhatsApp) because it acts as a medium of communication for personal, educational and other progressive purposes associated with future career and other accomplishments.

Table 1: Number of social media sites frequented by emerging adults

Number of Social Network Sites	Percentage of Respondents
Five	21.74%
Four	26.09%
Three	17.39%
Two	13.04%
One (Single)	21.74%

The provided table (Table 1) illustrates the distribution of the number of social network sites among respondents, revealing intriguing insights into users' engagement with multiple online platforms. Notably, the data showcases that a significant portion of respondents, 26.09%, actively participate on four social network sites, indicating a propensity for diversified online interactions. The second-largest group, at 21.74%, engages with five social network sites, underlining a notable inclination towards a broad social media presence. Conversely, a comparable percentage of respondents, also at 21.74%, opts for a more focused approach, utilizing only one social network site. The data further indicates a middle ground, with 17.39% and 13.04% of respondents utilizing three and two social network sites, respectively. This nuanced distribution suggests a spectrum of user preferences, ranging from concentrated usage on a single platform to more expansive engagement across multiple sites. The findings not only provide insights into the extent of individuals' digital social footprints but also hint at the diverse strategies employed by users to navigate and leverage social media in their online interactions.

5.2 **The extent and categories of social networking site usage**
The table (Table 2) outlines the diverse landscape of social media content categories and their respective percentages, shedding light on the varied preferences and interests that drive online engagement. Notably, social interaction occupies the forefront with 23%, reflecting the platform's fundamental role as a space for interpersonal connections. Entertainment closely follows at 20%, emphasizing the pervasive allure of content designed for enjoyment. Educational content, comprising 15%, underscores the platform's utility as an informational resource and a hub for learning. News and information contribute 12%, indicating a substantial presence of users seeking current events and updates. Career-related content, at 8%, highlights the growing importance of social media in professional networking and job-related pursuits. Health and wellness, fashion and lifestyle, gaming, travel and adventure, science and technology, and food and cooking collectively occupy the remaining percentages, showcasing the multifaceted nature of user interests on social media. These findings not only underscore the platform's versatility in catering to a wide array of

interests but also reveal evolving patterns in how individuals navigate and contribute to the digital social landscape.

Table 2: The extent and categories of social networking site usage

Content Category	Percentage
Social Interaction	23%
Entertainment	20%
Educational Content	15%
News and Information	12%
Career-Related Content	8%
Health and Wellness	7%
Fashion and Lifestyle	5%
Gaming	4%
Travel and Adventure	2%
Science and Technology	2%
Food and Cooking	2%

5.3 Psychological well-being and Social Networking Sites (SNS)

Table3 shows that there is a relationship between PWB and SNS. This reveals an increase in the satisfaction of Cognitive, Affective, Personal Integrative and Social Integrative needs leads to higher level of well-being Psychologically in terms of being independent, learning about the environment, growing personally in terms of self-acceptance, life purpose and relationships. This manifest reveals an emerging adult associated with SNS built in their autonomous status and becoming more self-determined. Above all, there is a visible growth in personality, accepting the self as it is and finding the goal in life.

Table   3:   PWB   and   Social   Networking   Sites   (SNS)

Correlations

		Psychological well-being total	SNS Total
Psychological well-being total	Pearson Correlation	1	.225[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.028
	N	96	96
SNS Total	Pearson Correlation	.225[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	
	N	96	116

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 Autonomy & Cognitive Need

Correlations

		Autonomy Total	Cognitive Need Total
Autonomy Total	Pearson Correlation	1	.436**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	115	115
Cognitive Need Total	Pearson Correlation	.436**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	115	115

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows that there is a relationship between Autonomy and Social Cognitive need. This reveals an increase in the level of Autonomy helps the Emerging Adults to direct them constructively in terms of Gaining Knowledge, Research and Career. This Autonomy helps them to utilise their screen time judiciously as well as effectively.

Table 5 Environmental Mastery & Affective Need

Correlations

		Environmental Mastery Total	Affective Need Total
Environmental Mastery Total	Pearson Correlation	1	.191*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.040
	N	115	115
Affective Need Total	Pearson Correlation	.191*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040	
	N	115	115

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows that there is a relationship between Environmental Mastery and Affective need. This reveals an increase in the level of Environmental Mastery that helps the Emerging Adults to meet their Affective needs Satisfactorily. The affective need includes expressing their emotions to others easily, developing romantic relationships, seeking advice for their problem, expressing their anger where others can sympathise with them.

As a whole the ease to express oneself with their emotions intact and real is highly beneficial as self-expression is not curbed but vented out without hesitation.

Table 6 Autonomy & Personal Integrative Needs

Correlations

		Autonomy Total	Ppersonal Integrative Total
Autonomy Total	Pearson Correlation	1	.215*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021
	N	115	115
Ppersonal Integrative Total	Pearson Correlation	.215*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	
	N	115	115

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows that there is a relationship between Autonomy and Personal Integrative needs. This reveals an increase in the level of Autonomy leads to an increase in their Personal Integrative needs. The Personal Integrative needs includes developing their self-image, favourable approach and approval from friends and to take part in various activities.

Table 7: Diversion and Social Integrative needs

Correlations

		V84	Diversion Total
V84	Pearson Correlation	1	.223*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.017
	N	115	115
Diversion Total	Pearson Correlation	.223*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	
	N	115	115

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 shows that there is a relationship between Diversion and Social Integrative needs. This reveals an increase in the level of diversion leads to an increase in their Social Integrative needs. The Social Integrative needs includes developing new friendships, to find more interesting people and to get through to someone who is hard to reach. The relationship between SNS and the participants belonging to the category of adults gives a holistic development in terms of personality and lifestyle. The positive correlation between Diversion and Social Integrative needs makes an emerging adult to gain good friends, acquaint oneself with newer people having interesting personality and easily mingle with difficult people.

Table 8 Social Integrative need and Affective need

Correlations

		V84	Affective Need Total
V84	Pearson Correlation	1	.195[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.037
	N	115	115
Affective Need Total	Pearson Correlation	.195[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	
	N	115	115

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 8 shows that there is a relationship between Social Integrative and Affective needs. This confirms an increase in the Affective need leads to an increase in their Social Integrative needs where the emerging adults express their emotions, develop romantic relationships leads to know more about people and reach people who are hard to reach.

6. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The theoretical contributions of this paper are noteworthy, as it uncovers and establishes a positive correlation between the usage of SNS (SNS) and the PWB of emerging adults. Through a meticulous analysis of respondents, the study reveals that all emerging adults have at least one SNS account, emphasizing the pervasive role of platforms like WhatsApp in communication for personal, educational, and career-related purposes. The paper further delineates the relationship between the number of SNS used and PWB, demonstrating the impact on cognitive, affective, personal integrative, and social integrative needs. Specific relationships, such as autonomy and cognitive need, environmental mastery and affective need, autonomy and personal integrative needs, diversion and social integrative needs, and social integrative needs and affective need, are explored, shedding light on the multifaceted influence of SNS on emerging adults' autonomy, self-image, emotional expression, and social connections. The findings contribute significantly to understanding how the engagement with SNS positively influences PWB, providing valuable insights for researchers and practitioners in the field.

7. PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The paper's practical contributions extend beyond theoretical insights, offering actionable guidance for individuals engaging in SNS (SNS) and their impact on the PWB of emerging adults. With a focus on informed decision-making, individuals can consciously manage their screen time, striking a balance between online engagement and other constructive activities. The study underscores the practical potential of SNS as platforms for emotional expression and social integration, suggesting that these tools can facilitate meaningful connections and friendships. Importantly, the findings emphasize the role of SNS in maintaining PWB amid uncertain

circumstances, positioning these platforms not only as communication tools but as valuable resources for support and resilience in the face of challenges. In essence, the paper's practical contributions empower individuals to navigate SNS usage in ways that positively influence their overall well-being in real-world situations.

8. CONCLUSION

It is clear from the analysis of the research discussed above and the results that SNS are beneficial for the psychological wellbeing of emerging adults. This reveals that the emerging adults can make decisions and implement effectively. It also helps them to manage their screen time judiciously. It helps them to acknowledge and fulfil their Affective needs such as forming friendships, developing romantic relationships etc.It enables them to maintain their Self-image and receiving favourable approval from others.It engages them to communicate with their social circle i.e. distant friends, relatives , professionals. To conclude, SNS equipped the emerging adults to maintain their PWB intact in spite of the uncertain and difficult circumstances.

9. LIMITATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The study may be expanded to include emerging adults and individuals from a variety of occupations. According to the study, SNS and psychological health go hand in hand. Studying the detrimental consequences of SNS might further it.

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