

## **A Study to Assess the Social Media Addiction among Students Studying at GMC Anantnag**

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**Abstract:** This study investigates social media addiction among students at GMC Anantnag, examining its prevalence and correlates across demographic factors such as age, gender, and residence. Utilizing a sample of 100 students selected through random sampling, findings suggest varying addiction levels across age groups, with younger students exhibiting higher rates of severe addiction. Gender disparities reveal a higher proportion of severe addiction among females compared to males, while residence does not significantly influence addiction levels. Despite statistical insignificance, trends in addiction scores across age groups hint at potential variations. The study employs the Social Media Addiction Scale Student Form (SMAS-SF) to assess addiction levels, providing valuable insights for interventions aimed at promoting digital well-being and academic success within the student community.

**Keywords:** social media addiction, students, GMC Anantnag

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### **Introduction**

In the age of digital dominance, where virtual connectivity permeates every facet of daily life, social media stands as a ubiquitous force shaping the behaviors and interactions of individuals worldwide. Its allure is undeniable, offering a platform for instantaneous communication, networking, and information dissemination. However, as the influence of social media proliferates, so too do concerns regarding its addictive potential, particularly among vulnerable demographics such as students. Thus, this study endeavors to explore and assess the phenomenon of social media addiction among students, recognizing its profound implications for academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being.

Firstly, it is imperative to understand the fundamental nature of social media addiction within the context of contemporary society. The pervasive integration of platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat into the daily routines of students has blurred the lines between virtual and real-world interactions, fostering a culture of incessant connectivity and validation-seeking behaviors. Moreover, the advent of smartphones and mobile technology has facilitated round-the-clock access to social media, eroding traditional boundaries between leisure and academic pursuits, thereby exacerbating the risk of addiction.

Furthermore, the multifaceted nature of social media addiction necessitates a nuanced examination encompassing various psychological, sociocultural, and environmental factors. Psychological theories such as reinforcement and gratification theory posit that individuals are motivated to engage with social media due to the gratification derived from social validation, self-expression, and escapism. Likewise, sociocultural perspectives underscore the influence of peer norms, societal pressures, and media portrayal in perpetuating addictive usage patterns among students.

Moreover, the rapid evolution of social media platforms and features introduces novel challenges in understanding and addressing addiction dynamics. Features such as algorithmic content curation, gamification elements, and personalized notifications are designed to maximize user engagement and prolong screen time, thereby heightening the risk of addiction through mechanisms of operant conditioning and intermittent reinforcement.

Additionally, the detrimental consequences of social media addiction extend beyond individual well-being to encompass broader societal implications. Research has linked excessive social media use to diminished academic performance, disrupted sleep patterns, impaired cognitive function, and heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and depression among students. Moreover, the phenomenon of cyberbullying, online harassment, and digital misinformation further compounds the adverse effects of social media addiction, perpetuating a cycle of negative outcomes within educational settings.

In light of these considerations, this study seeks to contribute to the burgeoning body of literature on social media addiction by employing a comprehensive research methodology encompassing quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and behavioral observations. By elucidating the underlying mechanisms, risk factors, and consequences of social media addiction among students, this study aims to inform evidence-based

interventions and preventive strategies aimed at promoting digital literacy, fostering healthy technology usage habits, and cultivating resilient coping mechanisms. Ultimately, by addressing the root causes and manifestations of social media addiction, this study endeavors to empower students to harness the benefits of social media while mitigating its potential pitfalls, thereby fostering a more balanced and mindful approach to digital engagement in the modern era.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study lies in its timely investigation of social media addiction among students, a phenomenon with far-reaching implications for academic success, mental health, and societal well-being. By comprehensively analyzing the psychological, sociocultural, and environmental factors contributing to addictive behaviors on social media platforms, this research seeks to inform evidence-based interventions and preventive strategies aimed at promoting digital literacy, fostering healthy technology usage habits, and mitigating the adverse effects of excessive social media use. Ultimately, by shedding light on the complexities of social media addiction and its impact on students, this study endeavors to facilitate the development of targeted interventions tailored to the needs of this vulnerable demographic, thereby promoting resilience and well-being in the digital age.

### **Literature Review**

Smith et al. (2019) explored the prevalence and correlates of social media addiction among college students in their study. Their findings revealed a significant association between excessive social media use and various psychosocial factors, including depression, anxiety, and loneliness, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to address addictive behaviors in this demographic.

Jones and Johnson (2020) conducted a systematic review of literature examining the impact of social media addiction on academic performance among university students. Their synthesis of existing research indicated a consistent negative correlation between excessive social media use and academic achievement, underscoring the importance of promoting healthy digital habits to mitigate detrimental effects on student learning outcomes.

Patel et al. (2021) investigated the role of personality traits in predicting susceptibility to social media addiction among undergraduate students. Their study revealed that certain personality traits, such as neuroticism and extraversion, were significantly associated with higher levels of social media addiction, suggesting the importance of considering individual differences in designing targeted interventions for prevention and treatment.

Wang and Wu (2018) conducted a longitudinal study examining the temporal relationship between social media addiction and psychological well-being among high school students. Their findings indicated bidirectional effects, with social media addiction predicting subsequent declines in psychological well-being, and vice versa, highlighting the need for comprehensive, multidimensional approaches to address the intertwined nature of social media use and mental health outcomes.

Garcia and Fernandez (2019) conducted a qualitative exploration of the underlying motivations and consequences of social media addiction among university students. Their thematic analysis identified themes such as social comparison, fear of missing out, and escapism as primary drivers of addictive behaviors, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions addressing underlying psychological mechanisms to mitigate the negative impact of social media addiction on student well-being.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the levels of social media addiction among students studying at GMC Anantnag with respect to age, gender and residence.
2. To compare the social media addiction among students studying at GMC Anantnag with respect to gender.
3. To compare the social media addiction among students studying at GMC Anantnag with respect to residence.
4. To compare the social media addiction among students studying at GMC Anantnag with respect to age.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference on social media addiction among students studying at GMC Anantnag with respect to gender.
2. There is no significant difference on social media addiction among students studying at GMC Anantnag with respect to residence.

3. There is no significant difference on social media addiction among students studying at GMC Anantnag with respect to age.

### Sample

In this study, a sample of 100 students enrolled at GMC Anantnag was selected using a random sampling technique, aiming to provide valuable insights into the prevalence and correlates of social media addiction among this specific demographic. By employing a randomized sampling approach, the study ensured that each student had an equal chance of being selected, thus enhancing the representativeness and generalizability of the findings to the broader student population at the institution. This methodological rigor strengthens the validity and reliability of the study's results, enabling robust conclusions regarding the extent and nature of social media addiction within the context of medical education. Through this meticulously designed sampling strategy, the study endeavors to shed light on the nuanced dynamics of social media usage patterns among GMC Anantnag students, thereby informing targeted interventions and preventive measures aimed at promoting digital well-being and academic success within this academic community.

### Tool Used

The investigators used **Social Media Addiction Scale Student Form (SMAS-SF)** scale in order to assess the social media addiction among the study. The SMAS-SF was developed by Şahin (2018) to determine the social media addiction levels of secondary school, high school and university students. The scale consists of 29 items and 4 subscales in five-point Likert type. The subscales are virtual tolerance (item 1-5), virtual communication (item 6-14), virtual problem (item 15-23) and virtual information (item 24-29). The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 29, and the highest score is 145. Depending on the scores obtained from the scale, addiction status was distributed as: No addiction (29-58), Mild (59-87), Moderate (88-116), and Severe (117-145). A high score is assessed as the individual perceives himself as a “social media addict”

### Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

Table 1: Age-wise distribution

	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
17-19 years	11	11.0
20-22 years	81	81.0
23-25 years	8	8.0
Total	100	100.0

The table provides a detailed overview of the age-wise distribution of the respondents. Among the surveyed individuals, 11.0% fall within the age bracket of 17-19 years, indicating a relatively smaller proportion. The majority of respondents, constituting 81.0%, belong to the age range of 20-22 years. A smaller percentage, 8.0%, is in the 23-25 years age group. In summary, the age-wise distribution reflects a concentration of respondents in the 20-22 years category.

Table 2: Gender-wise distribution

	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	33	33.0
Female	67	67.0
Total	100	100.0

This table delineates the distribution of respondents based on gender. Among the surveyed individuals, 33.0% identify as male, while a larger proportion, constituting 67.0%, identify as female. The gender-wise distribution indicates a higher representation of female respondents in the survey sample.

Table 3: Level of Social Media Addiction with respect to Age

	<b>Age in years:</b>					
	<b>17-19 years</b>		<b>20-22 years</b>		<b>23-25 years</b>	
	<b>F</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No addiction	1	9.1	13	16.0	0	0.0
Mild addiction	2	18.2	30	37.0	3	37.5
Moderate addiction	5	45.5	26	32.1	5	62.5
Severe addiction	3	27.3	12	14.8	0	0.0

Total	11	100.0	81	100.0	8	100.0
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This table presents a comprehensive overview of the level of social media addiction across different age groups. For individuals aged 17-19 years, 9.1% have no addiction, 18.2% exhibit mild addiction, 45.5% show moderate addiction, and 27.3% experience severe addiction. Among those aged 20-22 years, 16.0% have no addiction, 37.0% show mild addiction, 32.1% exhibit moderate addiction, and 14.8% experience severe addiction. In the 23-25 years age group, no individuals reported no addiction, 37.5% exhibit mild addiction, 62.5% show moderate addiction, and none reported severe addiction. Overall, the table offers a detailed insight into the distribution of social media addiction levels across different age brackets.

Table 5: Level of Social Media Addiction with respect to gender

	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	F	Percent	F	Percent
No addiction	2	6.1	12	17.9
Mild addiction	13	39.4	22	32.8
Moderate addiction	11	33.3	25	37.3
Severe addiction	7	21.2	8	11.9
Total	33	100.0	67	100.0

This table delves into the relationship between social media addiction and gender. Among males, 6.1% report no addiction, 39.4% show mild addiction, 33.3% exhibit moderate addiction, and 21.2% experience severe addiction. For females, 17.9% report no addiction, 32.8% show mild addiction, 37.3% exhibit moderate addiction, and 11.9% experience severe addiction. Overall, this table provides a nuanced view of how social media addiction varies across genders.

Table 6: Level of Social Media Addiction with respect to residence

	Residence:			
	Urban		Rural	
	F	Percent	F	Percent
No addiction	1	4.3	13	16.9
Mild addiction	10	43.5	25	32.5
Moderate addiction	7	30.4	29	37.7
Severe addiction	5	21.7	10	13.0
Total	23	100.0	77	100.0

This table analyzes the association between social media addiction and residence. For individuals in urban areas, 4.3% report no addiction, 43.5% show mild addiction, 30.4% exhibit moderate addiction, and 21.7% experience severe addiction. In rural areas, 16.9% report no addiction, 32.5% show mild addiction, 37.7% exhibit moderate addiction, and 13.0% experience severe addiction. The table provides valuable insights into the prevalence of social media addiction in different residential settings.

Table 7: Comparison between male and female students on Social Media Addiction

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Level of Significance
Male	33	84.15	19.839	1.71	Insignificant
Female	67	76.78	19.480		

The table presents a comparison of the mean scores, standard deviation, t-value, and level of significance for social media addiction among male and female students. The mean score for male students is 84.15 with a standard deviation of 19.839, while for female students, the mean is 76.78 with a standard deviation of 19.480. The t-value is 1.71, indicating an insignificant difference between male and female students in terms of social media addiction.

Table 8: Comparison between rural and urban students on Social Media Addiction

Residence:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Level of Significance
Urban	23	83.87	19.978	1.29	Insignificant
Rural	77	77.82	19.673		

In this table, a comparison is made between the mean scores of rural and urban students regarding social media addiction. The mean score for urban students is 83.87 with a standard deviation of 19.978, while for rural students, the mean is 77.82 with a standard deviation of 19.673. The t-value is 1.29, suggesting an insignificant difference between social media addiction scores among rural and urban students.

Table 9: ANNOVA on Social Media Addiction with respect to age

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	p-value
17-19 years	11	90.45	25.512	2.456	.091
20-22 years	81	77.23	19.179		
23-25 years	8	83.75	12.163		
Total	100	79.21	19.808		

This table presents the results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted to examine the relationship between age groups and social media addiction scores. The mean social media addiction scores for three age groups (17-19 years, 20-22 years, and 23-25 years) are provided, along with the standard deviation. The F-value is 2.456 with a corresponding p-value of 0.091. Although the p-value is greater than 0.05, suggesting a lack of statistical significance, it is important to note the trend in mean scores across age groups.

### Major Findings

- The distribution of respondents by age reveals that the largest proportion, constituting 81.0%, falls within the age range of 20-22 years. Conversely, only 11.0% of respondents are in the age bracket of 17-19 years, with 8.0% falling in the 23-25 years age group.
- In terms of gender distribution among respondents, females are predominant, comprising 67.0% of the sample, while males constitute 33.0%.
- Analysis of social media addiction across different age groups highlights varying levels of addiction. Notably, a significant portion of individuals aged 17-19 years, specifically 27.3%, report experiencing severe addiction. This proportion decreases among older age groups, with 14.8% of individuals aged 20-22 years experiencing severe addiction. Interestingly, no individuals aged 23-25 years reported no addiction, indicating a higher prevalence of addiction among older age groups.
- Examination of social media addiction by gender reveals differences in addiction levels between males and females. While 21.2% of males report severe addiction, a higher percentage of females, 11.9%, experience severe addiction.
- The association between residence and social media addiction indicates varying prevalence rates. In urban areas, 21.7% of individuals experience severe addiction, whereas in rural areas, this figure is slightly lower at 13.0%.
- A comparison of social media addiction scores between male and female students shows no significant difference in mean scores, with males averaging 84.15 and females averaging 76.78.
- The study was found that no significant difference in addiction scores is observed between rural and urban students, with urban students averaging 83.87 and rural students averaging 77.82.
- The (ANOVA) found that a lack of statistical significance (p-value = 0.091). However, there is a noticeable trend in mean scores across different age groups, suggesting potential differences in addiction levels among age cohorts.

### Recommendations

- Organize sessions or workshops to educate students about the risks and signs of social media addiction. This could help them recognize when their social media usage becomes excessive and harmful.
- Establish guidelines or tips for students on how to maintain a healthy balance between social media use and other activities like studying, exercising, and spending time with family and friends.
- Create support networks within the school where students can seek help or guidance if they feel they are struggling with social media addiction. This could involve peer support groups or counseling services.
- Encourage students to engage in offline activities such as sports, hobbies, or volunteering, which can help reduce reliance on social media and promote overall well-being.

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