

ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN LIFE SATISFACTION, SELF-ESTEEM AND CHARISMA PHOBIA AMONG ADULTS

Zainab Noor^{*1}, Tayyaba Bukhari², Dr. Samira Azmat³

^{*1,2}Student, COMSATS University Islamabad, Islamabad, Pakistan

³Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities, COMSATS University Islamabad, Islamabad Campus, Pakistan

¹noorzainab892@gmail.com, ²tayyababukhari091@gmail.com, ³samira.azmat@comsats.edu.pk

Corresponding Author: *

Zainab Noor

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19627615>

Received	Accepted	Published
19 February 2026	29 March 2026	17 April 2026

ABSTRACT

Investigating the role of social media in life satisfaction, self-esteem and charisma phobia among adults, this research examines the psychological and social consequences of its usage. This study was designed quantitatively by a structured survey method for data collection. Using purposive sampling technique, the data was collected by a sample of 500. The use of scales were made to determine usage of social media, life satisfaction, self-esteem and charisma phobia. The findings demonstrated a negative correlation among social media usage and life satisfaction and a positive correlation between social media and self-esteem and charisma phobia. Further regression analysis proves the predictive role of use of social media on these variables with significant gender differences. This paper delves into discussing theoretical perspective, insight into methodology, the key findings of the study, its practical implications for its literacy, besides its effect on mental well-being of adults.

Keywords: Social media, life satisfaction, self-esteem, charisma phobia, adults, emotional well-being, mental health, social comparison, psychological impacts, self-concept

1. INTRODUCTION:

In this modern digital era, the use of social media is fundamental to one's daily lives getting everything done within seconds, it can be communication, entertainment, seeking information, innovation and many more. Variety of different platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Face book, and snap chat are being used enormously but its pervasive use has raised concerns regarding emotional well-being on life satisfaction, charisma phobia and self-esteem. Life satisfaction and self-esteem shows how people perceive the overall quality of their life, self-worth and self-acceptance whereas charisma phobia (fear of becoming unattractive) is comparatively a recent development. This study

mainly focuses on these dimensions which impart wisdom into the complexities accompanied by social media usage.

1.1., Literature

The emergence of social media has revolutionized our daily lives. It provides different platforms like Instagram, Face book, TikTok and Twitter to connect, making it easy to communicate, share experiences and maintaining good relations. Moreover social media usage can also be a serious threat to one's life satisfaction and self esteem. Some studies have focused on its positive effects like increased life satisfaction by social support and meaningful connections while other studies

highlighted how social comparison and negative self perception can potentially decrease one's well being. (Zhan et al., 2016).

Social media has significant benefits on our social lives which allow building social connections all over the world. For most of the people, it became a source of support where they feel connected with their family and friends which increased their self esteem and overall happiness. Although, some negative impacts do also coexist where users get overwhelmed by information and constant comparison leading towards anxiety, depression and low self esteem. (Mahan et al., 2015).

Social media has a pivotal role in the lives of young adults specially university students. They use social media platforms for educational purpose, entertainment and building social network. Research indicates that by providing entertainment and communication channel it increases life satisfaction but at the same time it also decreases life satisfaction when users constantly compare themselves to others. They encounter filtered images leading them to question their self worth, feelings of inferiority and a prominent decrease in their life satisfaction. (Raza et al., 2020).

Older adults are also engaged with social media usage. Their main aim is connecting with their loved ones, getting healthcare information, and reducing their sense of loneliness. Unlike young adults, who focus on entertainment, education and social connections with constant comparison of themselves online, studies show that by fostering communication and sense of community social media significantly improves life satisfaction among older adults. (Racham et al., n.d.).

One of the most threatening concerns of social media usage is its role in promotion of standards of beauty that are not realistic and may lead to dissatisfaction towards one's body besides low self esteem. The females users especially compare themselves to online idealized images quite often, resulting in negative self perception and contributing to mental health issues like depression. (Abdellatif, 2022).

Research highlights that females are more prone to social media usage for their self representation

and entertainment leading to frequent self comparison and body dissatisfaction which highlights the requirement for targeted interventions helping young women navigating the challenges posed by social media, especially regarding body dissatisfaction and self-esteem. (Hassan & Afzal, 2022).

Self-esteem is a key element influencing that how an individual engage with social media activities. Many Studies suggest a negative correlation addiction of social media and self-esteem, indicating that those individuals who rely on social media for validation might encounter decreased self-worth (Hawi & Samaha, 2017).

The dependency on social media can create a flow where low self-esteem leads to increased social media consumption and more intense feelings of loneliness. A study focused on college students where it finds out that increased social media usage correlates with lower self-esteem and increases body dissatisfaction. Individuals report that even if they reduce time for using social media it could significantly decrease their self-esteem because its usage negatively effects people by constant comparison and watching content that can negatively influence their life (Jan et al., 2017).

These trends emphasize the need for promoting positive social media usage among young adults to reduce these negative circumstances. On the other hand, whereas it is vital to recognize the potential benefits of social media, many studies focus on its negative impact only. Research has shown that it can foster sense of belonging and community in the adults particularly among marginalized groups. Social media can also provide a platform for self-expression allowing individuals to share their talents and get positive feedback from peers and online audience (Chen & Gao, 2023).

For the older adults, increased social media use is linked to higher self-efficacy and reduced loneliness because they socialize with others and communicate easily unlike, trends observed in young adults. Older adults often experience positively the relationship between self-esteem and social media usage, highlighting importance

of these platforms in promoting successful aging (Chen & Gao, 2023).

In conclusion, the impact of social media on life satisfaction and self-esteem may vary across different age groups. Understanding these dynamics, it is important for developing technique and strategies for the promotion of healthier social media usage. As we move forward towards the digital world, it is vital to encourage critical thinking on the social media content and self-perception influence. By promoting self-love among individuals and positive interactions on social media, we can help reduce its negative effects and increase the well-being of users across all age groups. Further research is necessary to explore these complex relationships and develop effective interventions to support mental health in the digital age.

1.2., **Theoretical Perspectives:**

With the increased influence of digital technology, the internet accessibility to every one has become a new hub for communication, entertainment and knowledge-based activity. Here the uses and gratification theory helps to grasp the idea how social media is used to satisfy ones needs. The internet contributes significantly to the audience satisfying their needs through interpersonal communication entertainment and access to the social world (Ruggiero, 2000).

Festinger's original theory of social comparison focused on how social comparison happens in groups and how it leads to group conformity. He proposed that people compare themselves to others when they have doubts about their own abilities or opinions and the comparison is generally upward with those slightly better than them and sideways to similar people, so that social comparison sends a message to people that they have to conform to the group. Social comparison is an effective way of self-evaluation (Suls, J., & Wheeler, L., 2012).

While certain general trends have been found, for example people tend to compare up more often in laboratory settings, the research also indicates that social comparison mechanisms are also very complex (for instance, it is not easy to

distinguish between factors involved in people's underlying motivations). In summary, this has yet to become an atypically active and insightful area of psychological research (Gerber, J. P. 2020).

Happiness is a psychological phenomenon and has a direct and inherent human component and it is affected by social relations. It means that social networks are necessary for people to relate better to meaningful others and can influence people's perception of happiness and satisfaction in their lives. Browne, M. (2021). The development of internet and social media has impacted our connection and communication with other people. New applications of The Uses and Gratification Theory has resultantly emerged. The Uses and Gratification theory is used to help us make sense of why people use social media for its ability to fulfill their needs to communicate, get information, and enjoy themselves. Since the internet offers many ways to make interpersonal communication possible, it allows the user to meet their communication needs in ways not previously possible. Social media effectively divides a large audience into small, targeted groups concentrating on making human connections. This gives individuals greater reach to information (including government resources) and increasing citizen participation (Humaizi, 2018).

Social networking sites (SNS) have become an important part of individuals' life through as they use them to express themselves, connect and share information. The Uses and Gratification Theory shows how people explore different social media to satisfy their need for social interaction (i. e. SNS help in quick and effective communication and the usage increases users' social satisfaction).. They also allow individuals to built their identities, which can enhance their social status and self-esteem. While some may view online friendships as superficial compared to "real" world connections, research supports the success of SNS in building and maintaining relationships and promoting self-expression (Urista et al., 2009).

Social media effects the variables of life satisfaction and self-esteem, both positively and negatively. For one thing, it can lead to a sense of

belonging in society and promote increased satisfaction with life. However an excess of its use may lead to feelings of loneliness, isolation and depression in societies which eventually leads to decrease in life satisfaction (Musa et al., 2016). In the same way, social media can provide a platform to express oneself and improve self-esteem, but can also cause negative comparisons and feelings of failure in people's lives and decrease level of self-esteem (as users tend to compare their life to the idealized versions of themselves which decrease level of self-esteem).

Another fear has been reported as charisma phobia – social media provides a means of self-expression that may reduce some of these anxieties, but it can also aggravate them. For those who experience constant feedback and examination from social media, anxiety stemming from how they look can further intensify, limiting interaction with others (Ruggiero, 2000).

As a result, people may find it difficult to engage in social interactions because they feel insecure about how they look. Women response to images of themselves as compared with the images displayed in magazine advertisements, can be greatly impacted by social media. A study revealed that where women only compared themselves in terms of their appearance or intelligence, both form of comparison negatively related to their mood. Thus encouraging women to make social comparisons about other personality traits would lower the negative effects of idealized media exposure (Tiggemann & Polivy, 2010). Overall, understanding these things is a necessary for a better insight into the working of social media besides understanding how social comparison might affect people 's online experiences which leads to better online self-concepts.

1.3. , Research Questions:

1. Among adults, what is the linkage of social media usage and life satisfaction?
2. Among adults, what is the correlation between self-esteem and social media usage?
3. Among adults, what is the relationship between use of social media and the charisma phobia?
4. Do demographic characteristics influence social media usage, life satisfaction, self-esteem and charisma phobia among adults?

2., Methodology:

The current research aims to inquire into the relationship between social media, self-esteem, life satisfaction and charisma phobia among adults. It used quantitative methods and chose a survey-based structured questionnaire. The data is collected through physical means as well as online surveys. It has a sample size of 500. The targeted population is adults including both males and females belonging to different socioeconomic status, educational levels who use social media. The minimum age requirement is 18 years for those who use social media. The sample is selected from Islamabad Pakistan. Social media usage was an independent variable measured by using SMUS Social Media Usage Scale, life satisfaction, self-esteem and charisma phobia were dependent variables of the study, measured by Satisfaction with Dr. Sukoon's Charisma Phobia Scale, Life Scale (SWLS), and Self-Esteem Scale of Rosenberg.

Purposive sampling was used to survey the target audience, and data was analyzed with IBM SPSS after cleaning for missing responses. Statistical methods applied included Pearson correlation, descriptive analysis, simple linear regression, and independent t-tests.

3., Results:

3.1., Table1.

The Relationship Between Social Media Usage, Self-Esteem, Life Satisfaction, , and Charisma Phobia (N=463)

Sr.No.		TSMUS	TSWL	TRSE	TCPS
1.	TSMUS	-	-.142**	.185**	.332**
2.	TSWL		-	-.358**	-.110*
3.	TRSE			-	.198**
4.	TCPS				-

(p < 0.01) TCPS (p < 0.01) (p < 0.01) and TCPS (p < 0.05). TRSE (p < 0.01).

Key:

- TSMUS: Total for Social Media Usage Scale
- TSWL: Total for Life Scale Satisfaction
- TRSE: Total for Self-Esteem Scale of Rosenberg
- TCPS: Total for Charisma Phobia Scale

The above table shows the relationship between three variables of self-esteem, life satisfaction, charisma phobia and social media usage. It shows that this usage is significantly negatively associated with life satisfaction, although its association with self-esteem and charisma phobia is significantly positive.

3.2. Table2.

Simple Linear Regression of Social Media usage and life satisfaction (N=463)

	B	β	SE
Constant	22.513		0.753
Social media usage	-0.074	-0.142	0.024
R ²	0.020		

(p = 0.002)

The above table shows the simple linear regression of the use of social media and the satisfaction of life. High usage is associated with less life satisfaction, as indicated by the negative

coefficient. The R² value of 0.020 suggested that the predictor variable explained 2 % variance in the outcome variable.

3.3. Table 3.

Simple Linear Regression of Social Media usage and self-esteem(N=463)

	B	β	SE
Constant	22.449		0.439
Social media usage	0.056	0.185	0.014
R ²	0.034		

(p = 0.000)

The above table shows the simple linear regression of use of social media and self-esteem.

There the relationship between the two is significantly positive, with a single-unit increase

in usage of social media linked to an increase in self-esteem. The R^2 value of 0.034 suggested that

the variable explained 3.4 % variance in the outcome variable

3.4. Table 4.

Simple Linear Regression of Social Media usage and Charisma Phobia(N=463)

	B	β	SE
Constant	33.998		1.711
Social media usage	0.409	0.332	0.054
R^2	0.11		

($p = 0.000$)

The above table shows the simple linear regression of use of social media and charisma phobia. It shows significant positive relationship between use of social media and charisma phobia

with increase in social media usage associated with increase in charisma phobia. The R^2 value of 0.110 suggested that the variable explained 11 % variance in the outcome variable.

3.5. Table 5.

Mean comparison of male and female on social media usage, self-esteem, life satisfaction, and charisma phobia (N=463)

	Male		Female		t (461)	P	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Social media usage	29.56	12.001	28.85	12.233	0.625	0.532	0.0585
Life Satisfaction	19.83	6.476	20.79	6.087	-1.624	0.105	0.152
Self-esteem	21.61	3.548	22.48	3.751	-2.531	0.012	0.238
Charisma Phobia	43.10	14.656	48.19	14.830	-3.692	0.000	0.345

TSMUS, ($p < 0.001$). for TSWL, ($p < 0.001$). For TRSE and TCPS, ($p < 0.05$).

Table 5. Shows the comparison, standard deviation (SD) of different variables among male and female. Based on t -values and p -values, The table shows significant relationships between self-esteem and charisma phobia. However, no

significant relationship is however found between social media usage and life satisfaction

4. Discussion and Conclusions:

The interrelated effects of social media usage on life satisfaction, self-esteem and charisma phobia

among adults have been examined in the present study. It – although not scientifically supported – provided concrete evidence for the linkage between social media usage and life satisfaction and the positive correlation between social media use and charisma phobia. However, the relation of the use of social media with self-esteem is far more complicated than that of the two associations found for other types of associations. Feminine personality differences were also found for both self-esteem and charisma phobia in the adults studied. However, it was not found that gender differences (decreased social media use or less life satisfaction) had been observed among males and females respectively.

This study supports the first hypothesis for adults of a negative correlation between social media use and life satisfaction. It also supports other study reports, that while scrolling on social media people stay alone for a great deal of time, while the content they consume changes their mood and quality of life is reduced (Longstreet & Brooks, 2017). The second hypothesis that social media use is positively correlated to charisma phobia in adults is supported by this study. The findings revealed a highly positive correlation with charisma phobia, similar to study from earlier studies, that because of social media usage people engage in social comparisons and the bodily concerns (males as well as females are affected by the grooming behaviors) Kim & Chock (2015). The result of this study did not support the third hypothesis, that there is a negative correlation between social media use and self-esteem in adults. This contradicts research that people engage in social comparisons upwards that lead to a decrease in self-esteem. Tibber et al. (2020). Moreover, it shows a considerable gender difference in self-esteem and charisma phobia. While females have high level of self-esteem and charisma phobia as compared to males. However, there is no significant gender differences in social media usage and life satisfaction. This contradicts study reports, that there will be significant gender difference in social media usage and life satisfaction. But supportive that there will be significant gender differences in self-esteem and charisma phobia in adults in consistent with

earlier study report, that females engage in social media usage for mood stability and for occupation purpose in a greater ratio than males. (Köse& Doan, 2019) and (Gorman, 2015) study that males have lesser body image concerns and negative relationship between self-esteem and body image for both genders. This study supports the fifth hypothesis that the use of social media negatively impacts self-esteem and life satisfaction among adults. This is consistent with the study that social media applications that cause problems for many people. More social media usage decreases life satisfaction because the individual spends more time on social media and think the reality is what I see on social media. As well, negative comments and hate spread through social media impact individual lifestyle, their life satisfaction. According to longitudinal study due to loneliness the individual more engaged in social media applications which slowly disturb their mental peace and life satisfaction. This study also concludes that direct use of social media didn't affect that much life satisfaction there are also mediating factors that influence. (Marttila et al., 2021) and the other study explaining that because of low self-esteem people use more social media and compare themselves with others. The results indicate that individuals with orientation of high social comparison tend to use heavily the social media like Facebook. (Vogel et al. , 2015).

The hypothesis that the usage of social media predicts charisma phobia positively among the adults is supported by this study. Its findings suggest a considerable positive relationship between charisma phobia and social media. According to seventh hypothesis, lower self esteem adults are quite likely to develop charisma phobia due to social media use. This hypothesis is consistent with Fox's study that the fear of becoming unattractive and the psycho social implications in relation to beauty consciousness and attraction. Increased social media usage tends to increase charisma phobia. Adults who use social media at length to see different influencers and try to copy them and compare their beauty with others increasing fear of becoming unattractiveness (Fox, 2020).

In spite of its a small sample size with focus on a particular region, the study underlines the importance of media literacy in helping individuals find the complexities of social media. It focuses on a need for more research on charisma phobia besides and checks its long-term on mental health. Eventually, its findings suggest that the social media helps in making social connections stronger, allowing for better self-expression for people, but at the same time posing risks that can negatively impact self-esteem and life satisfaction. The study indicates a need for balanced approach towards a healthy social media usage in our daily lives.

REFERENCES:

- Abdellatif, M. (2022). The impact of Instagram on body dissatisfaction and self-esteem: A study among young women. *Journal of Media Psychology*, 34(1), 45-58. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-1105/a000288>
- Chen, Y., & Gao, Q. (2023). Social media use and psychological well-being in older adults: A study of self-efficacy, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. *Journal of Aging and Health*, 35(1-2), 140-158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08982643221145398>
- Fox, B. (2020). Associations between social media use and loneliness, body image and disordered eating: A qualitative study of British young adults. *Food, nutrition and the media*, 287-311.
- Gerber, J. P. (2020). Social comparison theory. *Encyclopedia of personality and individual differences*, 5004-5011.
- Gorman, S. (2015). The effects of media on body image and self esteem. DBS School of Arts, Dublin.
- Hassan, A., & Afzal, M. (2022). Gender differences in the use of social media and their impact on body image and self-esteem. *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences*, 12(3), 53-60. <https://doi.org/10.5923/j.ijpbs.20221203.02>
- Hawi, N. S., & Samaha, M. (2017). The relations among social media addiction, self-esteem, and life satisfaction in university students. *Social Science Computer Review*, 35(5), 576-586. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439316660340>
- Humaizi. (2018). *Uses and gratifications theory*. USU Press.
- Jan, M., Soomro, S., & Ahmad, N. (2017). Impact of social media on self-esteem. *European Scientific Journal*, 13(23), 329-341. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2017.v13n23.p329>
- Köse, Ö. B., & Doğan, A. (2019). The Relationship between Social Media Addiction and Self-Esteem among Turkish University Students. *Addicta: The Turkish Journal on Addictions*, 6(1), 175-190. <https://doi.org/10.15805/addicta.2019.6.1.0036>
- Kim, J. W., & Chock, T. M. (2015). Body image 2.0: Associations between social grooming on Facebook and body image concerns. *Computers in human behavior*, 48, 331-339
- Longstreet, P., & Brooks, S. (2017). Life satisfaction: A key to managing internet & social media addiction. *Technology in Society*, 50, 73-77.
- Longstreet, P., & Brooks, S. (2017). Life satisfaction: A key to managing internet & social media addiction. *Technology in society*, 50, 73-77.
- Marttila, E., Koivula, A., & Räsänen, P. (2021). Does excessive social media use decrease subjective well-being? A longitudinal analysis of the relationship between problematic use, loneliness and life satisfaction. *Telematics and Informatics*, 59.
- Mahan, J. E., Seo, M., Jordan, J. S., & Funk, D. C. (2015). Exploring the impact of social media overload on the social media user: A cognitive perspective. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 49, 352-357. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.03.031>

- Olivos, F., Olivos-Jara, P., & Browne, M. (2021). Asymmetric social comparison and life satisfaction in social networks. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 22, 363-384.
- Ruggiero, T. E. (2000). Uses and Gratifications Theory in the 21st Century. *Mass Communication and Society*, 3(1), 3-37. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327825mcs0301_02
- Raza, S. H., Qazi, W., & Shah, N. (2020). Social media, knowledge sharing, and academic performance: A study of university students in Pakistan. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 34(5), 927-942. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-03-2019-0101>
- Ractham, P., Kaewkitipong, L., & Firpo, D. (n.d.). The use of social media in the elderly: A focus on Thailand. PACIS 2012 Proceedings. <https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2012/30>
- Suls, J., & Wheeler, L. (2012). Social comparison theory. *Handbook of theories of social psychology*, 1, 460-482.
- Sim, P. P., & Prihadi, K. (2020). Social comparison and life satisfaction in social media: The role of mattering and state self-esteem. *International Journal of Public Health Science*, 9(3), 245-254.
- Tibber, M. S., Zhao, J., & Butler, S. (2020). The association between self-esteem and dimensions and classes of cross-platform social media use in a sample of emerging adults - Evidence from regression and latent class analyses. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106371>
- Urista, M. A., Dong, Q., & Day, K. D. (2009). *Explaining why young adults use MySpace and Facebook through uses and gratifications theory. Human Communication*, 12(2), 215-229.
- Vogel, E. A., Rose, J. P., Okdie, B. M., Eckles, K., & Franz, B. (2015). Who compares and despairs? The effect of social comparison orientation on social media use and its outcomes. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 86, 249-256. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.06.026>
- Zhan, M., Sun, Y., Wang, F., & Zhang, X. (2016). Understanding the influence of social media on people's life satisfaction through two competing explanatory mechanisms. *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, 68(3), 347-361. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-12-2015-0195>