

# Effect of Social Media on Emotional Maturity Among Adolescents

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## Abstract

Present study is intended to see the effect of social media on emotional maturity among adolescents. For this purpose, a sample of 300 school students, in which 150 were males and 150 were females (age range 16-19 years), was selected from 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> classes of different schools of Meerut city by Stratified Random Sampling method. Data were collected by Emotional Maturity Scale, developed by Roma Pal. To meet the objectives of the study, obtained data were analysed through t-Test and Two-Way ANOVA. Results of the study revealed that there is no significant gender difference in emotional maturity among adolescents while use of social media is negatively affecting emotional maturity of adolescents i.e., higher the use of social media more will be the emotional instability. The interactional effect of gender and social media on emotional maturity was also found significant.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Emotional Maturity, Adolescents.

## Introduction

“As a part of society, we train our kids to be critical thinkers and hard-working humans, but we ignore or discourage anything involving feelings or emotion. Therefore, most of the people have underdeveloped levels of emotional maturity” (Wignall, 2019).

Today's society can be called technology-based society as technology is everywhere in society. Now-a-days social media has become an unavoidable part of our lives. No one can even imagine his or her life without using social media. Social media is changing the way how we think, feel and behave. Among people of all ages, adolescents are the main users of social media. Adolescents constitute about one-fourth of India's population. According to the Census 2011, the absolute number of adolescents in India is 25, 31, 60,473 (20.9 percent) (Adolescents in India, 2013).

The use of social media is a potentially influential force to affect the behaviour of adolescents. Therefore, it is an important question whether social media use has an impact on emotional behaviour of adolescents. Though many researches have done to study the effect of social media on emotional maturity of adolescents but these studies show mixed results. Some studies show that social media negatively affects emotional maturity, while other show that emotional maturity is positively affected by social media usage. Among all the studies on social media and emotional maturity of adolescence are conducted in foreign countries. In India, these studies are still in infancy.

## Social Media

Social media is defined as the means of digital interactions among people in which they create, share or exchange information, career interests, and ideas in virtual communities and networks through various social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, Pinterest, Sharecloud, Orchutetc. (Wikipedia, 2021).

## Adolescence

Adolescence can be defined as a transitional period between childhood and adulthood. It is a period of many physical, psychological, social, cultural and cognitive changes. This is a crucial phase of human life where self-control and self-discipline are needed to adjust appropriately in the society. In India, the age range of adolescence is 13-18 years.

## Emotional Maturity

According to Banday (2019) Emotional Maturity is defined as the characteristic of an individual that does not allow him or her to react or respond in an excessive manner and to behave in a balanced way in social situation.



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Emotional Maturity is not based on real or chronological age of an individual rather than it is automatic and acquired.

**Review of Literature**

**Gender and Emotional Maturity**

Banday (2019) found in his study that females are more aware of their emotions and are more empathetic as compared to males. Males are more confident, adaptable and optimistic as compared to females. Males use internal and cognitively driven mechanisms for managing emotions. Shafiq and Khan (2016) found that there is gender difference in emotional maturity due to gender norms and socialization process. Male adolescents are higher on emotional maturity than female adolescents. Komentar (2013) and Majinder (2001) found in their studies that emotional maturity is not affected by gender rather than social atmosphere, communities related to the socialization processes, physical, psychological, school and social environment of the adolescents and their I.Q. level, are closely associated with their level of emotional maturity.

**Social Media and Emotional Maturity**

Senad (2018) observed that Internet non-addicted students are emotionally more mature than internet-addicted students. It indicates that there is a significant difference between internet addict and non-internet addict College going students in respect to their emotional maturity.

Christofferson (2016) concluded, on the basis of a systematic review of fifteen articles, that there are both risks and benefits of using social media to teenager's social and emotional development. Oskbeny et al (2015) revealed that social media leads to emotional instability.

**Objective of the Study**

1. To study the gender difference in emotional maturity of adolescents.
2. To study the effect of social media use on emotional maturity of adolescents.
3. To study the interactional effect of gender and social media on emotional maturity of adolescents.

**Hypotheses**

1. There will be no significant gender difference in emotional maturity of adolescents.
2. There will be no significant effect of the usage of social media on emotional maturity of adolescents.
3. There will be no significant interactional effect of gender and social media on emotional maturity of adolescents.

**Methodology**

**Sample**

Three hundred students of 11-12<sup>th</sup> standard of different schools of Meerut city were selected for present study in which 150 were males and 150 were females. These two groups of participants were further categorized on the basis of their scores on social media use questionnaire. Each gender group has three sub-groups, including 50 participants in each group i.e., high social media users, moderate social media users and low social media users. Thus, the final sample consisted of 300 participants. Stratified Random Sampling technique was used to select the sample units.

**Variables**

**Independent Variables**

1. Gender
2. Social Media

**Dependent Variables**

1. Emotional Maturity

**Research Design**

This study was intended to find out the effect of gender and social media on emotional maturity of adolescents; hence, the Experimental Research with Factorial design was conducted. In the present study 2x3 Factorial Design was applied. The first I.V. was Gender, having two levels i.e., A1-Males, A2-Females. The second I.V. was Social Media, having three levels i.e., B1- High Users, B2- Moderate Users and B3- Low Users.

**Measuring Tools**

**Social Media Use Questionnaire**

To provide a reliable and valid base for the present study a questionnaire of the use of social media was prepared by the investigators. Social media use was confirmed by filling out the social media use questionnaire.

**Emotional Maturity Scale**

It is constructed and standardized by Roma Pal (1984). It consists of 40 items and 5 Dimensions. Its Test-Retest Reliability ( $r_{tt}$ ) is 0.77 and Content Validity is 0.84. High scores on emotional maturity scale indicate lower emotional maturity and vice-versa.

**Statistical Analysis Techniques**

The collected data were analysed keeping in view the objectives and design of the study. The data were analysed by using SPSS-25 Computer Software. The following statistical techniques were employed for analysing the data:

1. t-Test
2. Two Way ANOVA

**Results**

**Table-1**  
**Comparison of Variance of Gender and Social Media Among Adolescents in respect to their Emotional maturity**

Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Gender	134.67	1	134.67	1.29	NS
Social Media	885.047	2	442.52	4.25	Significant*
Interaction between Gender and Social Media	1176.5	2	588.25	5.65	Significant*
Error	30634.38	294	104.199		
Total	32830.597	299			

\*Significant at 0.01 Level

Results as summarised in Table-1, presents an overview of the F-values of social competence among adolescents with respect to their gender and emotional maturity. As is evident from the table the F-value of emotional maturity, in respect to gender (1.29) is not significant at any level of significance. This indicates that adolescents do not differ significantly on emotional maturity, in respect to their gender. Thus, our First Hypothesis that, "There will be no significant gender difference in emotional maturity among adolescents", proves right and that's why is selected. The above table also represents that the F-value of emotional maturity (4.25), in respect to social media usage, is significant at  $p > 0.01$  level of significance. This indicates that adolescents significantly differ on emotional maturity in respect to social media usage. Thus, our Second Hypothesis that, "There will be no significant effect of the usage of social media on emotional maturity of adolescents", does not prove right. This table also represents F-value of emotional maturity, in respect to gender and social media usage (5.65) is also significant at 0.01 level of significance. It indicates that interaction of gender and social media usage affects emotional maturity. Thus, our Third Hypothesis that, "There will be no significant interactional effect of gender and social media usage on emotional maturity of adolescents", does not prove right.

**Table-2**  
**Comparison of t-Values on Emotional maturity among adolescents with respect to the usage of Social Media**

Social Media Usage	A	B	C
High users (A)		1.896	2.728*
Moderate users (B)			0.963
Low users (C)			

\* Significant at 0.01 level.

Table-2 presents an overview of the t-values of emotional maturity among adolescents with respect to the usage of social media. As is evident from the table the t-value of emotional maturity between high and low users (2.72) is significant at  $p > 0.01$  level of significance. This indicates that high and low users of social media differ significantly on emotional maturity. While the t-values between high and moderate users, and moderate and low users are not found significant at any level of significance. It indicates that high and moderate users and moderate and low users of social media do not differ significantly on emotional maturity.

**Discussion**

The purpose of the present study was to study the gender difference in emotional maturity among adolescents and another objective was to study the effect of social media use on emotional maturity of adolescents.

It was found that there is no significant gender difference in emotional maturity among adolescents. The results are in line with the studies conducted by Majinder (2001) and Komentar (2013) which reveal that gender does not affect emotional maturity; there are many other factors like Social atmosphere communities related to the socialization processes, physical, psychological, school and social environment of the adolescents and their I.Q. level,

are closely associated with their level of emotional maturity

It was further found that there is a significant difference among social media users in respect to their emotional maturity. In other words, it can be said that high usage of social media leads to lower level of emotional maturity. These findings are consistent with studies conducted by Senad (2018), Christofferson (2016) and Oskeny et al (2015), which show that social media usage affects the emotional maturity negatively. Higher the social media usage, lower the emotional maturity.

The statistical analysis also represents that the interaction between gender and social media significantly affects emotional maturity. But there is a lack of the studies, showing interactional effect of gender and emotional maturity on social competence. Hence there is a huge need to study this interaction effect in future.

**Conclusion**

After analysing the data, the following findings are obtained-

1. Gender does not significantly affect emotional maturity of adolescents.
2. Emotional maturity is significantly affected by social media usage. Higher the social media usage, lower the emotional maturity and vice-versa.
3. Interaction between gender and social media usage significantly affects emotional maturity of adolescents.

**Implications**

The results of the study will be helpful for educational administrators, policy-makers and parents to better understand the effects of social media use on emotional maturity of adolescents. Indeed, this may contribute to control adolescents' social media usage and to better adjust themselves emotionally.

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