



Social Anxiety and Its Relationship with Social Media Addiction Among Adolescents and Young Adults

Lidya Lolo Marimbunna¹, Jusuf Tjahjo Purnomo¹

¹Program Studi Psikologi, Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: Lidya Lolo Marimbunna

Email: lidyalmarimbunna@gmail.com



Article Info

Article history:

Received 26 May 2026

Received in revised form 17

June 2026

Accepted 20 July 2026

Keywords:

Social Anxiety

Social Media Addiction

Adolescents

Young Adults

Abstract

This study is motivated by the increasing use of social media among adolescents and young adults, which may be associated with social anxiety. Individuals with social anxiety tend to avoid direct social interactions and prefer online communication, which may increase the risk of social media addiction. This study aims to examine the relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction among adolescents and young adults. This research used a quantitative method with a correlational design. The participants consisted of 434 adolescents and young adults who actively use social media. Data were collected using social anxiety and social media addiction scales and analyzed using correlation analysis. The results showed a positive and significant relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.161$ and a significance value of $p < 0.05$, indicating a weak relationship. In addition, most participants were categorized at a moderate level for both variables. These findings indicate that higher levels of social anxiety are associated with higher tendencies toward social media addiction, although the relationship is not strong. The implication of this study highlights the importance of individuals' awareness in managing social media use to maintain a balance with direct social interactions.

Introduction

In today's digital era, social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter have become an inseparable part of daily life, especially for adolescents and young adults. In addition to serving as communication tools, social media now also plays a role in fulfilling psychosocial needs such as identity exploration and social recognition. However, excessive use can develop into social media addiction (SMA), a condition in which individuals become excessively attached to social media and experience difficulty controlling its use despite being aware of its negative consequences (Shoukat et al., 2026). SMA is often associated with various psychological symptoms such as stress and anxiety, as well as decreased academic achievement. Research shows that social media addiction is related to increasing psychological problems and declining academic engagement and performance (Jahagirdar et al., 2024; Mou et al., 2024). Adolescents and young adults are particularly vulnerable because they are in a phase of emotional and social development that is still unstable. One contributing factor is social anxiety, namely anxiety in social interactions that encourages individuals to feel more comfortable interacting through social media rather than face-to-face communication. Studies indicate that social anxiety can encourage the use of social media as a coping strategy to reduce discomfort in direct interactions, which in the long term may increase the risk of excessive use leading to addictive behavior (Dong et al., 2024; Mou et al., 2024). Therefore, understanding SMA among this age group is important as a psychological challenge in digital life.

The use of social media has grown rapidly and become an integral part of everyday life in many parts of the world, including Indonesia. According to the Global Overview Report Digital 2024 by Data Reportal, more than 5.04 billion people worldwide now use the internet, with 62.3% actively engaging on social media platforms (Kemp, 2024). In countries such as South Korea, Japan, and the United States, average daily social media use exceeds two hours, with significant increases among individuals aged 18-29 years. This increase has also raised concerns regarding SMA. Meta-analysis studies show that the global prevalence of social media addiction reaches approximately 24%, with higher rates among adolescents and university students, negatively affecting their mental well-being (Cheng et al., 2021). In Indonesia, social media plays a major role in digital society. Data from We Are Social indicate that more than 167 million Indonesians actively use social media, with an average usage duration of 3 hours and 5 minutes per day (Thompson, 2024). This places Indonesia among the countries with the highest duration of social media use in the world, emphasizing the importance of further research on SMA among university students, considering its impact on academic and psychological aspects.

SMA has been proven to have detrimental effects on various aspects of individuals' lives. Psychologically, SMA contributes to increased emotional disorders such as anxiety and depression, often associated with feelings of isolation or lack of appreciation when not active on social media platforms (Kircaburun et al., 2019). Furthermore, individuals with high levels of social anxiety tend to experience poorer sleep quality, which in turn may worsen mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety (Ma et al., 2024). This decline in physical well-being may also lead to increased stress and mental tension (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2023). Social factors, particularly the quality of family relationships and social connectedness, also play important roles in influencing social media addiction. Research by (Topino et al., 2023) demonstrated that family relationship quality, such as cohesion and flexibility, has a protective role against social media addiction. Individuals who have warm, supportive, and adaptive family relationships tend to have their social connectedness needs fulfilled and therefore are less dependent on social media. Conversely, disconnection or poor-quality social relationships within the family can increase feelings of social isolation. The negative impacts of SMA are not limited to mental and physical health but also affect academic functioning, where students experiencing social media addiction tend to show lower engagement and motivation in academic activities (Mou et al., 2024).

SMA is influenced by various interacting internal and external factors. One significant internal factor is social anxiety. Individuals with social anxiety tend to seek comfort and recognition on social media platforms because they find it easier to interact online rather than directly (Choi et al., 2023). They often use social media as a means to relieve anxiety and obtain social validation, although this may actually worsen their psychological condition. In addition, low self-esteem also contributes to SMA; individuals with low self-esteem frequently use social media to build self-image and gain recognition, which eventually encourages addictive behavior (Shoukat et al., 2026). Feelings of loneliness or alienation from meaningful social relationships encourage individuals to seek connections through social media. Individuals who feel lonely tend to use social media more intensively to reduce these feelings, which in the long term can increase the risk of social media addiction (Wu et al., 2024).

From the external perspective, high accessibility to social media through mobile devices encourages constant engagement, increasing the likelihood of addiction (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2023). Technologies designed to capture user attention, such as instant notifications and personalization algorithms, further strengthen attachment to digital platforms (Naranjo-Zolotov et al., 2021). Intense social comparison is also an important factor because users feel

pressured to present idealized versions of themselves in order to gain social recognition. In this context, choosing social anxiety as the independent variable is relevant because of the increasing prevalence of social anxiety among younger generations in the digital era. Social media is often considered a safe space for interaction, yet it frequently reinforces maladaptive social avoidance patterns (Cheng et al., 2021). Moreover, studies show that social anxiety not only predicts excessive social media use but also strengthens the effects of other psychological factors such as fear of missing out (FoMO) and the need for social validation (Lee et al., 2023). Therefore, examining social anxiety provides a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying SMA.

According to (Andreassen, 2015) social media addiction is a condition in which individuals use social media excessively and compulsively to the point that it interferes with daily life. This addiction is characterized by six main symptoms measured through the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS): salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse. This condition reflects unhealthy social media use and is often triggered by certain psychological factors, one of which is social anxiety. Social anxiety is a form of anxiety that arises in social situations, especially due to fear of being negatively evaluated by others. According to (La Greca & Lopez, 1998) social anxiety is a persistent fear of social situations, particularly those involving self-presentation in front of others and the possibility of being judged. Individuals with this anxiety usually feel anxious when becoming the center of attention and fear embarrassment or humiliation. This anxiety consists of three dimensions: fear of negative evaluation, social avoidance and distress in new situations, and distress-general. Previous studies have shown that social anxiety has a significant relationship with SMA among university students. (Mou et al., 2024) demonstrated that social anxiety encourages students to use social media as an escape, worsening addiction and reducing academic engagement. (Dong et al., 2024) added that loneliness and negative coping styles mediate this relationship, while (Stănculescu & Griffiths, 2022) found that individuals with high social anxiety, especially women and younger individuals, tend to belong to high-risk groups for SMA. These findings provide an important basis for research on the relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction among university students.

The phenomenon of social media use among adolescents and young adults shows a strong tendency toward addictive behavior. Social media has become an inseparable part of their daily activities. As expressed by the third informant, aged 20 years, “It feels like something is missing if I haven’t opened social media, especially Instagram and TikTok.” This statement demonstrates how social media has become a psychological need that is difficult to ignore. In addition, the third informant, aged 20 years, also stated that social media often disrupts important activities, especially when completing assignments, because the temptation to open social media applications is very strong. The informant stated, “I am often distracted while doing assignments because I am tempted to open social media.” This illustrates how social media can become a significant source of distraction. Addiction to social media is also evident in the strong curiosity toward information circulating on these platforms. The first informant, aged 21 years, revealed, “I’m always curious and want to know what’s happening there. It becomes really hard to detach from social media.” This statement emphasizes the existence of emotional dependence that triggers excessive social media use.

This dependence is reinforced by the role of social media as a source of entertainment and emotional escape. The second informant, aged 18 years, stated, “Social media is the only entertainment in my life,” and also experienced anxiety and restlessness when unable to access social media for several hours. This indicates that social media functions as an emotional escape while simultaneously reinforcing addiction. They also admitted difficulty in stopping

social media use even when they initially intended to access it only briefly. This is caused by continuously engaging content and fear of missing out on the latest information. All three informants stated that the intensity and nature of the content caused their social media usage time to become longer than planned. Overall, these statements reflect a strong urge to remain constantly engaged, emotional dependence, and procrastination of important activities all of which are characteristic indicators of addictive social media behavior among adolescents and young adults.

Although many studies support a positive relationship between social anxiety and SMA, research by (Sun, 2023) showed different findings. In an experimental study involving university students in China, digital mindfulness-based interventions significantly reduced levels of social anxiety without directly affecting reductions in SMA. This suggests that although social anxiety may decrease through certain psychological approaches, SMA levels do not necessarily decline as well. These findings challenge the assumption that social anxiety is the primary cause of SMA and highlight the possibility that other factors, such as digital lifestyle, academic stress, or technology habits, may play a greater role. Thus, social anxiety may not be the sole strong determinant in the development of SMA, and the relationship between the two may be indirect or dependent on broader cultural and psychosocial contexts.

Although many studies have discussed the relationship between social anxiety and SMA, several aspects remain insufficiently explored in depth. Most studies, such as those by (Boursier & Gioia, n.d.; Hussain & Griffiths, 2018; Shensa et al., 2017), only explain the relationship between variables without describing in detail how social anxiety increases vulnerability to SMA, especially among adolescents and young adults. In addition, most studies have been conducted abroad in different cultural settings, while research in Indonesia despite its very high rate of social media use among these age groups remains limited and has not comprehensively addressed psychological aspects. Therefore, this study offers novelty by specifically examining the role of social anxiety in encouraging addictive social media behavior among Indonesian adolescents and young adults, while considering the unique cultural and social contexts that have not been widely investigated in previous studies.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative correlational approach. This approach was chosen because the study aims to determine the relationship between two variables, namely social anxiety as the independent variable (X) and Social Media Addiction as the dependent variable (Y). Data obtained from questionnaire distribution were analyzed to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the two variables. The population in this study consisted of adolescents and young adults aged 18 to 24 years who are active social media users. This age range refers to the expanded definition adopted by several studies and institutions, such as the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine, which includes individuals aged 18 to 24 years as part of the young adult category to reflect the developmental transition from adolescence to adulthood. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling method, namely selecting samples based on specific criteria in accordance with the research objectives. This method was chosen because the targeted population possesses specific characteristics, namely being academically active and routinely using social media in daily life, making it easier for researchers to recruit relevant participants. This approach is consistent with the study by (Haripriya et al., 2024) which also used purposive sampling to examine Social Media Addiction (SMA) among adolescents aged 18 to 20 years in Coimbatore, India, involving 100 participants assessed using the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS), thereby supporting the relevance of the method and sample characteristics in this study.

The Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A), developed by (La Greca & Lopez, 1998) consists of 18 items within three main dimensions: Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE), Social Avoidance and Distress New (SAD-New), and Social Avoidance and Distress General (SAD-G), using a 4- or 5-point Likert scale. This instrument has been widely used in various countries and demonstrates high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha > 0.80). In Indonesia, (Apriliana, 2019) adapted the SAS-A through confirmatory factor analysis, and the final version consisted of 11 items that met model fit criteria such as RMSEA < 0.08, CFI ≥ 0.90, and SRMR < 0.08, indicating that the instrument is valid and suitable for use within the Indonesian cultural context. Furthermore, a study by (Kurniawan et al., 2024) showed that the complete version of the SAS-A used among Madrasah Aliyah adolescents demonstrated very high reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.855, indicating that the instrument is highly appropriate for measuring social anxiety among adolescents in the Indonesian context.

Table 1. Blueprint of the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A)

No	Aspect	Favorable Items	Unfavorable Items	Total
1	Fear of Negative Evaluation	1, 3, 5, 7, 8	2, 4, 6	8
2	Social Avoidance and Distress in New Situations	9, 10, 11, 14	12, 13	6
3	Social Avoidance and Distress in General	16	15, 17, 18	4

This study used the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) developed by (Andreassen, 2015) consisting of six items representing the six components of addiction according to (Griffiths et al., 2005) namely salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse. Each item is answered using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Very Rarely) to 5 (Very Often). This instrument was adapted into Indonesian by Sumaryati, Sirodj, and Gadama (2024) following procedures from the International Test Commission (ITC) and tested on 483 university students. The analysis results indicated that all items were significantly valid ($p < 0.05$), with high reliability (CR = 0.91; VE = 0.65) and a well-fitting measurement model (RMSEA = 0.016; CFI = 0.998). A study by (Maharani et al., 2023) adapted the BSMAS and tested it on 193 preclinical students at a private medical faculty in Jakarta. The reliability test results showed that the BSMAS instrument had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.857, indicating high internal consistency. This strengthens the conclusion that the BSMAS is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing the tendency toward social media addiction among university student populations in Indonesia. Therefore, the BSMAS can be concluded to be a valid and reliable instrument for identifying tendencies toward social media addiction.

Table 2. Blueprint of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS)

No	Aspect	Indicator	Item Number
1	Salience	Constantly thinking about social media, becoming the main focus	1
2	Mood Modification	Using social media to improve mood	2
3	Tolerance	Needing longer or more frequent use of social media	3
4	Withdrawal	Feeling uncomfortable or restless when not using social media	4

5	Conflict	Experiencing conflicts with others or disrupting other activities	5
6	Relapse	Failing to reduce or stop social media use	6

The collected data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis to determine the relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction. Before conducting the correlation analysis, statistical assumption tests, namely normality and linearity tests, were first performed. Data processing was conducted using statistical software such as Jamovi.

Results and Discussion

Research Participants

The participants in this study consisted of late adolescents and young adults aged 18 24 years who were active users of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp. The characteristics of the research participants are presented as follows:

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Research Participants

No	Participant Classification	Description	N	Percentage
1	Gender	Female	307	70.7%
		Male	127	29.3%
	Total		434	100%
2	Age	18 24 years	434	100%
	Total		434	100%
3	Last Educational Background	Junior High School	2	0.7%
		Senior High School	432	99.3%
	Total		434	100%
4	Current Residence	Living with parents	174	40.2%
		Boarding house (kost)	226	52.4%
		Rental house	13	2.8%
		Living with guardian	13	2.8%
		Own house	8	1.8%
	Total		434	100%

Based on the demographic data, the total number of participants in this study was 434 individuals. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were female, consisting of 307 participants (70.7%), while male participants numbered 127 individuals (29.3%). All participants were within the age range of 18 24 years, totaling 434 individuals (100%), indicating that the respondents belonged to the late adolescent and young adulthood groups. Based on educational background, almost all participants had a senior high school educational background, totaling 432 individuals (99.3%), while only a small number had completed junior high school, namely 2 individuals (0.7%). In terms of current residence, most participants lived in boarding houses (kost), totaling 226 individuals (52.4%), followed by participants living with their parents, totaling 174 individuals (40.2%). Meanwhile, participants living in rental houses and with guardians each numbered 13 individuals (2.8%), while participants living in their own houses totaled 8 individuals (1.8%). Overall, these findings indicate that the research participants were predominantly female young adults with a senior high school educational background, and most lived independently in boarding houses.

Descriptive Statistical Results

To provide an overview of participant characteristics based on levels of Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction, the researcher presents the categorization tables of Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction in this section. The categorization was conducted by dividing participants into three categories: low, moderate, and high, so that the distribution of social anxiety and social media addiction levels among participants could be clearly observed. The presentation of these categorization tables aims to demonstrate the tendency of Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction levels among research participants, which subsequently serves as the basis for presenting data analysis results and discussion of the study.

Table 4. Categorization of the Social Anxiety Scale

Interval	Category	F	Percentage
≥ 66	High	5	1.2%
42 65	Moderate	425	97.9%
≤ 41	Low	4	0.9%
Total		434	100%

Mean = 54; Min = 18; Max = 90; SD = 12

The data in the Social Anxiety categorization table show that participants' Social Anxiety levels were divided into three categories: high, moderate, and low. In the high category, there were 1.2% of participants (5 individuals). This indicates that only a small proportion of participants had high levels of Social Anxiety, which may potentially hinder their ability to interact socially in an optimal manner. In the moderate category, 97.9% of participants (425 individuals) were classified as having moderate Social Anxiety. These findings indicate that nearly all participants experienced Social Anxiety at a reasonable level. Individuals in this category are generally still able to engage in social interactions, although in certain situations they may experience discomfort, nervousness, or concerns regarding social evaluation from others. Meanwhile, in the low category, there were 0.9% of participants (4 individuals). This indicates that only a small number of participants had low levels of Social Anxiety, suggesting the ability to interact socially with confidence and minimal anxiety in social situations.

Table 5. Categorization of the Social Media Addiction Scale

Interval	Category	F	Percentage
$X < 14$	High	109	25.1%
$14 \leq X \leq 22$	Moderate	222	51.2%
$X < 14$	Low	103	23.7%
Total		434	100%

Mean = 18; Min = 6; Max = 30; SD = 4

The data in the Social Media Addiction categorization table indicate that participants' levels of social media addiction were divided into three categories: low, moderate, and high. In the low category, there were 23.7% of participants (103 individuals). This suggests that some participants had relatively controlled social media use and had not shown significant tendencies toward addictive behavior. This group tended to be able to regulate the duration and intensity of social media use in daily life. In the moderate category, 51.2% of participants (222 individuals) were classified as having moderate levels of social media addiction. These findings indicate that most participants used social media quite intensively, but still within relatively reasonable limits. Individuals in this category generally use social media routinely for social and entertainment purposes, although there is potential for dependency if usage is not managed

properly. Meanwhile, in the high category, there were 25.1% of participants (109 individuals) who demonstrated high levels of Social Media Addiction. This condition indicates that some participants had tendencies toward excessive social media use, which may interfere with daily activities, social functioning, and psychological well-being. The high level of social media addiction in this group suggests the presence of addictive behavior risks that require further attention.

Assumption Testing

This study applied assumption testing, including normality testing using the One-Sample Kolmogorov Smirnov method and linearity testing. The implementation of these assumption tests aimed to ensure that the obtained data met the prerequisites for statistical analysis, allowing them to be appropriately used in the process of hypothesis testing.

Normality Test

Table 6. Results of the Normality Test between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction

Variable	N	Test Statistic (D)	Sig. (p-value)	Conclusion
Social Anxiety	434	0.988	0.001	Normal
Social Media Addiction	434	0.983	< 0.001	Not Normal

Based on the table above, the significance value (p-value) for the Social Anxiety variable was greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), while the Social Media Addiction variable had a significance value of < 0.001 . Since one variable had a p-value smaller than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), it can be concluded that the data were not entirely normally distributed. Therefore, further analysis in this study used a non-parametric method, namely Spearman's Rank Correlation, to examine the relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction.

Linearity Test

The linearity test basically aims to determine whether there is a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables, which is one of the important assumptions in parametric correlation analysis such as Pearson correlation. However, in this study, the results of the normality test indicated that the data were not normally distributed. Therefore, data analysis was conducted using the non-parametric method of Spearman's Rank Correlation, which does not require assumptions of normal distribution or linear relationships between variables. Thus, a linearity test was not conducted because it was irrelevant and unnecessary for the analytical approach used in this study.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study aimed to examine the relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction. Considering that the results of the normality test showed that the research data were not normally distributed, data analysis was conducted using the non-parametric method of Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient.

Table 7. Results of the Spearman Correlation Test between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Sig. (p-value)	Interpretation
Social Anxiety	Social Media Addiction	0.161	< 0.001	Weak Positive Correlation

Based on the results of the Spearman correlation test, the correlation coefficient value (ρ) obtained was 0.161 with a significance value of $p < 0.001$. These results indicate that there is

a weak positive relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction. The correlation coefficient value, which is close to zero, indicates that the relationship between the two variables is relatively low. Nevertheless, because the significance value is smaller than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), it can be concluded that the relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction is statistically significant. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted, meaning that there is a significant relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction, although the strength of the relationship is weak.

The results of this study indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction among young adults aged 18-24 years. Based on the Spearman correlation test, the correlation coefficient obtained was $\rho = 0.161$ with a significance value of $p < 0.001$. These findings indicate that the higher the level of Social Anxiety experienced by individuals, the higher their tendency to experience social media addiction. Thus, the hypothesis in this study can be accepted, although the strength of the relationship found is relatively weak.

Based on the categorization results, it was found that most participants were in the moderate category of Social Anxiety. This indicates that the majority of individuals in this study experienced social anxiety within a reasonable range and were still able to function in daily life. In the Social Media Addiction variable, most participants were also categorized as moderate. This condition indicates that participants' social media use was relatively intensive but had not yet reached an extreme level. The distribution of data, which tended to be concentrated in the moderate category, caused the variation of scores among individuals to be relatively small, resulting in a weak relationship between the variables.

Theoretically, the positive relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction can be explained through the tendency of individuals with social anxiety to avoid direct interaction. Individuals with Social Anxiety usually fear negative evaluation, feel anxious during face-to-face interactions, and have concerns about social rejection. Therefore, social media becomes a more comfortable alternative because it allows individuals to communicate without direct pressure. Social media provides greater control over how individuals present themselves, thereby reducing the anxiety they experience. This condition encourages individuals with social anxiety to use social media more frequently, which may ultimately increase the risk of addiction.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies showing that Social Anxiety has a positive relationship with Social Media Addiction. Individuals with higher levels of social anxiety tend to use social media as a means of fulfilling their social interaction needs indirectly. This is supported by research demonstrating a significant relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction among university students (Salim & Fikri, 2022). Furthermore, more recent studies also indicate that social anxiety serves as an important psychological factor influencing excessive social media use. Individuals with high social anxiety tend to use social media as a coping mechanism to avoid direct interaction, which ultimately increases dependency on social media (Oral & Karakurt, 2024). Other findings also reveal that anxiety, including social anxiety, is associated with increased problematic social media use as well as psychological disorders such as stress and depression, thereby reinforcing the notion that Social Anxiety is one of the important factors contributing to the emergence of Social Media Addiction. Nevertheless, the strength of the relationship in this study was relatively weak. This indicates that Social Anxiety is not the only factor influencing Social Media Addiction. There may be other more dominant factors, such as self-control, social media usage habits, entertainment needs, loneliness, and academic pressure. In addition, technological

development and ease of internet access also contribute to the high level of social media use regardless of individuals' levels of social anxiety.

The characteristics of participants within the age range of 18-24 years may also have influenced the results of this study. During early adulthood, individuals are generally in the process of identity exploration and have a strong need to establish social relationships. On the other hand, individuals at this age also begin to develop better self-regulation abilities compared to adolescents, so social media use is not entirely influenced by social anxiety alone. This may explain why the relationship found in this study was significant yet weak. In addition, the large number of participants in this study also influenced the significance results. With a large sample size, even a weak relationship can produce a high significance value. Therefore, it is important not only to consider statistical significance but also to pay attention to the strength of the relationship obtained.

Based on the overall results and discussion, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction among young adults aged 18-24 years, with a positive direction but weak strength. This indicates that individuals with higher levels of social anxiety tend to have a greater tendency toward social media addiction, although the influence is not strong. Therefore, future research is recommended to consider other factors that may influence Social Media Addiction, such as self-control, emotion regulation, loneliness, and social media usage patterns, in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that Social Anxiety has a significant relationship with Social Media Addiction among young adults aged 18-24 years who actively use social media. The relationship found was positive, indicating that the higher the level of social anxiety experienced by individuals, the higher their tendency to experience social media addiction. Most participants in this study were categorized as having moderate levels of Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction. This condition indicates that the social anxiety experienced by participants was still within a relatively adaptive range, while social media use was fairly intensive but had not yet reached an extreme level. The concentration of data within the moderate category also influenced the strength of the relationship identified in this study. The correlation analysis results showed that the relationship between the two variables was positive but weak in strength. These findings suggest that Social Anxiety is one of the factors contributing to the tendency toward Social Media Addiction, although it is not the only dominant factor. Therefore, Social Media Addiction can be understood as a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors beyond Social Anxiety alone. This study contributes empirically to enriching the discussion regarding the relationship between psychological aspects and social media usage behavior among adolescents and young adults. The findings demonstrate that Social Anxiety is one of the relevant psychological aspects in explaining tendencies toward excessive social media use. Thus, this study emphasizes the importance of considering psychological factors in understanding patterns of social media use. Social Anxiety plays a role in shaping tendencies toward Social Media Addiction, and these findings may serve as a basis for developing more comprehensive prevention efforts and intervention strategies aimed at encouraging healthier and more adaptive social media use.

Based on the findings of this study, young social media users are encouraged to be more aware of their social media usage patterns, particularly those related to social anxiety, so that they can balance online interaction with direct social communication. Educational institutions are also

expected to provide greater attention to the psychological aspects of social media use by encouraging healthy digital behavior and facilitating activities that strengthen face-to-face social interaction among adolescents and young adults. Furthermore, future researchers are recommended to explore the relationship between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction more deeply by considering additional factors that may influence addictive social media behavior, in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the second author, Jusuf Tjahjo Purnomo, from the Psychology Study Program, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, for his valuable guidance, support, and contributions throughout the completion of this research. His insights and encouragement greatly contributed to the development and completion of this study.

References

- Andreassen, C. S. (2015). Online social network site addiction: A comprehensive review. *Current Addiction Reports*, 2(2), 175–184. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40429-015-0056-9>
- Apriliansa, I. P. A. (2019). A confirmatory factor analysis of social anxiety scale for adolescence in Indonesian form. *Konselor*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.24036/0201983105819-0-00>
- Boursier, V., & Gioia, F. (n.d.). Women's pathological narcissism and its relationship with social appearance anxiety: The mediating role of body shame. *Clinical Neuropsychiatry*, 17(3), 164–174. <https://doi.org/10.36131/cnfioritieditore20200304>
- Cheng, C., Lau, Y., Chan, L., & Luk, J. W. (2021). Prevalence of social media addiction across 32 nations: Meta-analysis with subgroup analysis of classification schemes and cultural values. *Addictive Behaviors*, 117, 106845. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2021.106845>
- Choi, J. R., Hong, S., & Kim, J. (2023). Does social capital matter to the Millennials? Social capital and user engagements in online video platforms. *Telematics and Informatics*, 80, 101967. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2023.101967>
- Dong, W., Tang, H., Wu, S., Lu, G., Shang, Y., & Chen, C. (2024). The effect of social anxiety on teenagers' internet addiction: The mediating role of loneliness and coping styles. *BMC Psychiatry*, 24(1), 395. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-024-05854-5>
- Griffiths, M. D., Szabo, A., & Terry, A. (2005). The exercise addiction inventory: A quick and easy screening tool for health practitioners. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 39(6), e30–e30. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bjsm.2004.017020>
- Haripriya, Shruthi, & Thaarikaa. (2024). A study on social media addiction among adolescents. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(4). <https://doi.org/10.25215/1204.179>
- Hussain, Z., & Griffiths, M. D. (2018). Problematic social networking site use and comorbid psychiatric disorders: A systematic review of recent large-scale studies. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2018.00686>
- Jahagirdar, V., Sequeira, L. A., Kinattungal, N., Roohi, T. F., Alshehri, S., Shakeel, F., & Mehdi, S. (2024). Assessment of the impact of social media addiction on psychosocial behaviour like depression, stress, and anxiety in working professionals. *BMC Psychology*, 12(1), 352. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01850-2>
- Kemp, S. (2024). *Digital 2024: Global overview report*. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report>

- Kircaburun, K., Griffiths, M. D., & Billieux, J. (2019). Trait emotional intelligence and problematic online behaviors among adolescents: The mediating role of mindfulness, rumination, and depression. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 139, 208–213. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2018.11.024>
- Kurniawan, V. E., Putra, K. W. R., Sari, G. M., & Vidhiastutik, Y. (2024). Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A): Reliability test. *Literasi Kesehatan Husada: Jurnal Informasi Ilmu Kesehatan*, 8(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.60050/lkh.v8i1.19>
- La Greca, A. M., & Lopez, N. (1998). Social anxiety among adolescents: Linkages with peer relations and friendships. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 26(2), 83–94. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022684520514>
- Lee, D., Wut, T. M., & Wan, C. (2023). The effect of fear-of-missing-out (FOMO) laden influencer marketing on travel destination promotion. *Global Marketing Conference*, 118–118.
- Ma, Y., Li, J., Zhang, M., Zuo, T., Kong, L., & Yang, Y. (2024). Relationship between social anxiety and sleep quality in depressed adolescents: The mediating role of internet addiction. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 15, 1416130. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2024.1416130>
- Maharani, C., Suryani, E., & Mahaputra. (2023). Hubungan self-esteem dan adiksi media sosial pada mahasiswa kedokteran. *Jurnal Kedokteran Meditek*, 29(2), 150–157. <https://doi.org/10.36452/jkdoktmeditek.v29i2.2365>
- Mou, Q., Zhuang, J., Wu, Q., Zhong, Y., Dai, Q., Cao, X., Gao, Y., Lu, Q., & Zhao, M. (2024). Social media addiction and academic engagement as serial mediators between social anxiety and academic performance among college students. *BMC Psychology*, 12(1), 190. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01635-7>
- Naranjo-Zolotov, M., Turel, O., Oliveira, T., & Lascano, J. E. (2021). Drivers of online social media addiction in the context of public unrest: A sense of virtual community perspective. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 121, 106784. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106784>
- Oral, M., & Karakurt, N. (2024). The effectiveness of group interpersonal therapy on burnout among long-term care workers. *International Journal of Older People Nursing*, 19(5), e12639. <https://doi.org/10.1111/opn.12639>
- Przybylski, A. K., & Weinstein, N. (2023). A large-scale test of the Goldilocks hypothesis: Quantifying the relations between digital-screen use and the mental well-being of adolescents. *Psychological Science*, 28(2), 204–215. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797616678438>
- Salim, S. S. M., & Fikri, S. M. S. A. (2022). The relationship between social anxiety, happiness, and intimacy with social media addiction. *Jurnal EVOLUSI*, 2(1). <https://eprints.uptm.edu.my/2179/>
- Shensa, A., Escobar-Viera, C. G., Sidani, J. E., Bowman, N. D., Marshal, M. P., & Primack, B. A. (2017). Problematic social media use and depressive symptoms among U.S. young adults: A nationally-representative study. *Social Science & Medicine*, 182, 150–157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.03.061>

- Shoukat, A., Shakoor, A., Ali, S., & Irfan, M. (2026). Learning, networking, and venture aspirations: Understanding social media's role in student entrepreneurial intentions. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 6(1), 17-33. <https://doi.org/10.62843/jssr.v6i1.647>
- Stănculescu, E., & Griffiths, M. D. (2022). Social media addiction profiles and their antecedents using latent profile analysis: The contribution of social anxiety, gender, and age. *Telematics and Informatics*, 74, 101879. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2022.101879>
- Sun, L. (2023). RETRACTED ARTICLE: Social media usage and students' social anxiety, loneliness and well-being: Does digital mindfulness-based intervention effectively work? *BMC Psychology*, 11(1), 362. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01398-7>
- Thompson, A. (2024, July 31). *Digital 2024 July global statshot report*. We Are Social Indonesia. <https://wearesocial.com/id/blog/2024/07/digital-2024-july-global-statshot-report/>
- Topino, E., Gori, A., Jimeno, M. V., Ortega, B., & Cacioppo, M. (2023). The relationship between social media addiction, fear of missing out and family functioning: A structural equation mediation model. *BMC Psychology*, 11(1), 383. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01409-7>
- Wu, P., Feng, R., & Zhang, J. (2024). The relationship between loneliness and problematic social media usage in Chinese university students: A longitudinal study. *BMC Psychology*, 12(1), 13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01498-4>