

Impact of Social Media Usage on Psychological Well-Being among State University Students in Sri Lanka: The Case of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The rapid growth of social media usage has raised significant concerns regarding its influence on psychological well-being, particularly among state university undergraduates in Sri Lanka. Despite the widespread adoption of social media, limited empirical research exists in the Sri Lankan context to examine its psychological implications. This study addresses this gap by investigating the relationship between social media usage and psychological well-being among undergraduates of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. The independent variables explored include duration of usage, purpose of usage, and social media addiction, while the dependent variable, psychological well-being, was assessed through the dimensions of self-acceptance, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and personal growth, based on Ryff's framework. A deductive research approach was employed, with hypotheses formulated from the existing literature. The study adopted a quantitative explanatory design and utilized quota sampling to select 369 respondents. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire, and statistical analyses, including correlation and regression, were performed using SPSS Software. Findings indicate that both the duration of usage and social media addiction significantly influence psychological well-being, while the purpose of usage also demonstrates a notable direct impact. Although the methodology is robust, limitations related to sampling and generalizability should be acknowledged. By offering new insights into how digital behavior affects student mental health within Sri Lankan higher education, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge and provides practical implications for educators, mental health practitioners, and policymakers to support student well-being in the digital era.

Keywords: mental health, psychological well-being, social media addiction, social media usage, university students