

“Loneliness in Relation with Social Networking Sites Usage”

A Dissertation Submitted to the Domain of Psychology

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ABSTRACT

Using social networking sites is a trend now days. People who are young are more active in online activities for example Facebook, Orkut, Twitter, to appoint and for connection with family and friends. Social networking sites usage include some advantages and disadvantages for the people who use them; but, there are very few number of researches who discovered that loneliness is also in person who are regularly using social networking sites. The research aim was to find out any relation between social networking sites usage and loneliness, and also the role of gender in loneliness and social networking sites. To assess loneliness, UCLA Loneliness Scale given by Russell, 1996 was used and for social networking sites usage, Facebook intensity scale by Ellison, N.B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. 2007 was applied. Sample was comprised of total 160 undergraduate's students (80 males and 80 females with age range of 18 to 25) from Lovely Professional University. Taking in consideration our objectives and hypothesis, data collection was analyzed by Independent sample t-test and Pearson's product moment correlation. The result revealed that there was a low positive significant relationship between loneliness and social networking sites. The correlation value between loneliness and social networking sites was 0.247**. Through t-test we found that in loneliness ($t(160) = 2.247^*$, $p < 0.05$) males were more lonely ($\bar{X} = 45.21$) than the female ($\bar{X} = 41.93$). In social networking sites ($t(160) = 5.009^{**}$, $p < 0.01$), males ($\bar{X} = 26.86$) were using more social networking sites than the females ($\bar{X} = 21.86$).

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that work entitled “**LONELINESS IN RELATION WITH SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES USAGE**” has been carried out by me under the supervision of **Dr. Komal Rai**, Assistant Professor, Department Of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara. No part of this dissertation has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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Chapter I

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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Human beings always need someone, with whom they can talk and share their problems and feelings. And when there is a lack of communication between family and friends, the individual start feeling lonely. Today, this lack of communication may be occur because the individual is engaged in using social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter and these sites make individual away from their friends and family.

Loneliness

Loneliness is a common problem (**Weiss, 1973**). It is a state of mind, like a state of isolation and aloneness. People in isolation start feeling alone, empty and unwanted. Lonely people always have craved of anyone contact, but their state of mind makes it more hard to form connections with other group.

Humans are social animal by nature. They want to form and continue positive relations with others. The person with loneliness feels the change in their mood, social skill and their sociability (**Johns, Freeman & Goswick, 1981; Karaoglu, Avsaroglu & Deniz, 2009**). All people in this world at some point of their life feel loneliness (**Demir & Fisiloglu, 1999**).

Loneliness is a common feeling. The 25.9% university boys and 16.7% of university girls have severe feeling of loneliness founded by **Knox, Zusman and Vail-Smith**. While, for human being loneliness is a common experience, but it is very difficult to defining loneliness clearly and accurate way. **Peplau and Perlman (1982)** found that in the most definitions of loneliness the social sciences shared three characteristics: loneliness is the outcome of incomplete societal affiliation; loneliness was skewed; and their experiences were harmful.

Being alone is human feeling that is almost universal. Loneliness is a complex and it is unique to each individual. There is no single cause for loneliness and so the treatment and preventions. There is a difference in a lonely child's needs than that an elderly lonely man. Loneliness can exist to the extent that a person's social group interaction is minor or less satisfying than the individual needs. Loneliness somehow reflects the connection among two factors, the preferred social interaction and achieves level of social relations. And the level of social contact a person desires is based on many other factors including their past levels of social contacts and their future expectations for social relations.

The lonely individual develops the feeling of incompetent and feeling of guilt that make them difficult to develop new relations and maintain old relations (**Ozodasik, 2001**). That feelings change individual behavior. According to **Horney (1945)** every person has a fear of loneliness. To overcome this fear, every person gives love to others and maintains friendly relations with others. Many researches are done on loneliness and clear that loneliness is an extremely universal problem in these days (**Rokach, & Brock, 1997; Russell, Peplau, & Cutrano, 1980; Storr, 1988**).

There can be individual characteristics that are making an individual difficult to build and continue acceptable interaction which increase the chance of being alone. The factors which affect loneliness in several related ways are like shyness, self-esteem and physical attractiveness etc. Firstly, reduction in society interest might bound the individual's opportunities or chances of societal relationships; second, many times person's own personality effect a person's behavior in societal conditions; and the third is personal qualities which may determine how a individual will responds to change within person's social relationships and this will affect how successful an individual will avoid, decrease and alleviate isolation.

Forms the whole population, 10% adults are suffering from loneliness (**Page and Cole, 1991**). Loneliness is not just damage our personal life but also cause of other diseases such as depression. The person who cannot handle and tackle difficult situations, after sometime he or she start feeling alone and sad. **Leonard (1979) and Kalliopuska (1989)** found that loneliness is come out in different forms that are deep loneliness which appears with depression, social statue loneliness which comes with the feeling of self separation with society and physical/sensual loneliness which is formed when the person cannot get a respond to his mental expectations even if he is in fine physical and environmental circumstances, and hidden loneliness in which the behaviors are apparently normal.

According to **Weiss (1973)**, there are two kinds of loneliness that are emotional loneliness and social loneliness. Emotional loneliness is associated to lack of emotional attachment with nearest and dearest. Whereas social loneliness is linked with the absence of social network such as friends and community.

In the report of **Oshagan ande Allen (1992)**, the expected range of loneliness in the general population is in between 15% to 28%. Most of examiners stressed that loneliness is more serious and common problem amongst college scholars. In their study, **Knox, Vail-Smith and Zusman** found that in university 25.9% boys and 16.7% girl's students had severe feelings of loneliness. **WcWhirter (1997)** said that in US about 30% students feeling loneliness.

Definitions of Loneliness:

Definitions of loneliness have been offered by social psychologist. It appears that scholars view loneliness into three important ways that is,

1. Loneliness causes from lack in an individual's societal relationship.

2. Loneliness is one-sided incident; it is not equal with subjective societal loneliness.
3. Loneliness is unlikable as well as stressful.

Loneliness is base of being alone but by being without some clear-cut relationshipLoneliness always emerges from the lack of several specific kind of bond or, more over, a reaction to the absence of some specific connection. **(Weiss,1973,17)**

Being alone a feeling of deprivation caused by the lack of certain kinds of human contact, the feeling that someone is missing. And since one has to have had some expectations of what it was that would be in this empty space, loneliness can further be characterized as the sense of deprivation that comes when certain expected human relationships are absent. **(Gordon, 1976)**

According to **Peplau and Perlman (1982)**, “the unpleasant experience that occurs when a person’s network of social relations is significantly deficient in either quality or quantity”. This definition gives three characteristics of loneliness. First characteristic is associated with social life it means loneliness occurs with there is a lack of social relationships. Second, loneliness is a subjective feeling, not same like a social loneliness. Third, loneliness is unpleasant and distressing feeling.

According to **Harry Stack Sullivan**, “the exceedingly unpleasant and driving experience connected with inadequate discharge of the need for human intimacy, for interpersonal intimacy”.

According to **Weiss**, “Loneliness is caused not by being alone but by being without some definite needed relationship or set of relationships.

Gender differences in loneliness

Feeling of being alone can occur at any stage of life, individuals have to face this problem at once or more than one time in their life. **Rokach (2001)** studied the effect of age and sex on coping with loneliness. He compared adolescents (13-18 years old), young adults (19-30 year old), adults (31-58 years old) and seniors (60-80 years old) on the basis of age and sex. He found in this research that adults face more loneliness and females are more able to cope up with loneliness than males (**Rokach 2001**).

There have been a broadly research on gender variations in loneliness. Unluckily, the findings from the researches are unclear. Several studies found that there is no major gender difference in loneliness (**Archibald, Bartholomew, & Marx, 1995; Berg & Peplau, 1982**). Some studies found that males are lonelier than females (**Avery, 1982; Booth, 1983; Russell et al., 1980; Schultz & Moore, 1986; Solano, Batten, & Parish, 1982; Stokes & Levin, 1986**).

According to **Lau and Gruen (1992)**, “the negative connotations and social consequences of being lonely may inhibit people from admitting that they are lonely, and this may be more so for men”. Some studies showed that men might experience loneliness more than women; the reason behind this is that man is not as well socialized as women in social and emotional areas (**Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978; Hill, Rubin, & Peplau, 1976**) so the lack in social and emotional area make men more lonelier (**Jones, Sansone, & Helm, 1983**) instead women are very well in social and emotional areas (**Borys & Perlman, 1985; Wheeler, Reis, & Nezlek, 1983**).

Even though, many researches are conducted on gender differences in loneliness (**Borys & Perlman, 1985; Koenig & Abrams, 1999; Mahon et al., 2006**) still it is not clear whether gender differences exist in loneliness, if it exists then whether men or women are more lonely

(Weeks & Asher 2012). The tools that are using to measure loneliness also affect the finding gender differences. When a researcher use items directly regarding loneliness, the females report more loneliness. On the hand, when researchers not using direct items regarding loneliness then males report more lonely (Borys & Perlman, 1985; Koenig & Abrams, 1999). But, most of the researches on loneliness found there are no gender differences. . DiTommaso and Spinner found that there are no gender differences in family emotional loneliness, but they found that boys were lonelier than girls on social loneliness and romantic emotional loneliness.

Cause of Loneliness:

Individual might be suffering from the feeling of loneliness in their life because of the lack of friends, not accepted by a peer group and nonappearance of the important person, the death of loved one and divorce or any physical and psychological trauma that may be happened in childhood, all these factors may led the feeling of loneliness.

There are many other factors that contribute to an individual to be a lonely. That is personal characteristics, situational and cultural environments, change in an individual's real social relations and changes in a person's social need can all be background of loneliness (Peplau & Perlman, 1982). Loneliness also associated with various negative emotions and behaviors that are suicide and suicide ideation, depression, alcohol abuse and anxiety (McWhirter, 1990).

Many researches are conducted to know the main cause of loneliness. Cultural and situational environments are also cause of loneliness, when a person feels a significant change in his social network and in his personal relations and feel loss of important relations and start feeling lonely, sad and incomplete. Another cause of loneliness is transfer which may involve

separation from most of the person's social network. The other cause may be the individual personality traits such as lack of social skills, fear of rejection and anxiety.

According to **John Cacioppo**, a university of Chicago psychologist and one of the top loneliness experts, genetics have a strong connection with being alone. There are other factors that contributing include situational variable, for example bodily loneliness, separation, and different place and break up. The loss of loved one can also lead the person to feel loneliness. In a psychological disorder, loneliness is one of the main causes of the disorder.

Internal factor can also play an important role in loneliness for example little self-respect. Person with a low self-confidence feel that they are unworthy for others that make them further lonely and isolated.

Loneliness that is experienced by some young internet users might be an indication of psychosocial distress. In a broad term, loneliness is distinct as a sense of withdrawal in one's societal interaction (**Murphy & Kupshik, 1992**). Evidences showed that lonely people may generally feel that they are less socially competent than other people especially in face-to-face situations, (**Leung, 2001; Spitzberg & Canary, 1985**). In their analysis of isolation and societal uses of the internet, **Morahan-Martin and Schumacher (2003)** found that lonely individuals for emotional support used the internet and e-mail more frequently than others. The reason, as explained by **McKenna, Greene and Gleason (2002)**, might be that lonely individuals feel that they are better in expressing their real selves or feelings with others through internet then offline.

Health Consequence of Loneliness:

There are harmful consequences of being alone on psychological and physical health.

Risk factors that connected with loneliness are:

- **Depression** -- The person in loneliness start feel depressed because he or she has no one with whom they can talk and share their problems. They are rejected by their society and friends circle.
- **Suicide** -- The person who is lonely have a tendency of suicide. Because sometime he or she feels that there is no one who loved them and care them so they just want to end their life. They also feel their life as useless. Death become first chooses in life.
- **Increased stress level** – The stress level is also increased in loneliness. Loneliness weak our immune system and also produced the stress hormone in the body. The person with the weak immune system is not able to cope up with the stress. The chance of increasing stress is more in lonely person than in the non- lonely person.
- **Reduced the sense of supervisory** -- The person is not able to take any important decision in loneliness. Because he or she is not able to analysis the critical situation and take right decision for that situation.
- **Alcoholism** – The loneliness is connected with the negative feeling of oneself and the other and also perceived the situation negatively. And they also not able to change the situation, so they start feeling worthless and useless and take a support of alcohol to reduce these feeling.
- **Disturbed sleep** – In loneliness the person is not able to sleep properly that effect both physically and psychologically. At night, they wake up more and sleep less time comparatively to the non lonely person.

- **Cardiovascular disease** – Many studies showed that the main cause behind cardiovascular disease is loneliness. Because of loneliness, blood pressure is increased and they also suffer from the problem of cholesterol. If they are feeling lonely they are not able to work properly and eat properly. So, the chance of heart problem is increased.
- **Decreased memory and Learning** – Many researches showed that the chronic level of loneliness decreased the memory of the individual. Because loneliness decreased the memory so the level of learning is also decreased.
- **Anti social behavior** – In children, the lack of social connection and emotional attachment directly connected with their anti social behavior. They may harm other as well as themselves also.
- **Increased negative feeling** – Individuals may develop the feeling of negativity about oneself. They might be start feeling insignificance and hopelessness. They feel that they have a no any importance in their family and in their society.
- **Socially Withdrawal** – The person in a loneliness start withdrawal from the society. The reason behind this is a lack of confidence and feeling of worthlessness. They are also not comfortable in the group of people.

The person who is lonely are more inactive and nervous (**Bell & Daly, 1985; Berger & Bell, 1988**), and have not much social circle (**Jones, 1992**) and also evaluate their relations with others very negatively comparative to those who are no lonely (**Duck, Pond, & Leathman, 1994; Hawken, Duran, & Kelly, 1991**).

Personal factors that contributes to loneliness:

There are many personal factors that contributing to loneliness. The following are personal factors.

Shyness: As we know shyness is to avoid social interaction amongst groups and the people they exaggerate to participate in social institution, (**Pilkonis, 1977**), and this might be the cause of loneliness. Person who are shy verbally or nonverbally, he may affect his behavior which hinders the social interaction and it would be difficult for the person to cope up with the situation and later it will create a problem for him/her to handle the situation.

Self-esteem: Evidences show that there are a link between low self-esteem and loneliness (**Loucks, 1974; Cutrona, in press**). There is a reciprocal relation among sense of worth and being alone, such that lack of sense of worth may foster or results isolation other than that, at the same time, person with lack of sense of worth can found fault themselves for the societal “collapses” or may also for having low level of societal interaction, which as a result reinforce their own low self opinion.

Social skill: Another factor is lack of social skills which may be associated with loneliness (**Weiss, 1973**). There are chances that persons might not have learned needed or good societal talents. People who are having weak societal talents have very fewer or very less satisfying societal connections, and for the reason that a result may experience loneliness.

Social Networking sites

Now a day's people uses internet as a communication tool. In this 21st century, with the fast development in technology, social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook plays a very important part in life and these sites have brought revolutionary changes in people's communication. These sites provide different resources such as emails, messages in one place. These resources make our communication very fast and easy. Use of social networking sites is increasing very fast day by day from the past few years; with an estimate of 1,114,274,426 users in March 2007 (**Internet World Stats 2007**). This kind of speedy development of social networking sites has increased many researches on equally the advantages and disadvantages of these social networks activities. So many researches already aware about of the negative results of consequences of social networking usages (**Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukopadhyay & Scherlis 1998**), but it was also shown in follow-up result that this negative consequences had dissolute after pass of sometime (**Kraut, Kiesler, Boneva, Cummings, Helgeson & Crawford 2002**). **Kraut et al.** point out in a study that society became more used to by using the internet that possible for harmful psychological and social cost reduced.

The 20th century is the century of technology. But today, it is the age of internet, everyone use internet to get relevant information and connected with the world. By using internet we can solve our ant problem. In short, internet is the very important part of our life (**Amichai-Hamburger & Ben-Artzi, 2003**). But it also developed the internet addiction (**Contarello & Sarrica, 2007**).

Almost 75% teens and young adults using the social media. In present, there are many social networking sites but Facebook Twitter and MySpace are used more. According to the Facebook's factsheet (2011a), "Facebook is a social utility that helps people communicate more

efficiently with their buddies, relatives and colleagues”. At present Facebook have 500 million users and 25 million users who log in daily. Many users not just log in but also spend vast of their time on this site. According to the one report that users spend 700 billion minutes per month **(Facebook, 2011 b)**

Social networking sites (SNS) play a very important role in the lives of many young adults and present them with both risks and opportunities. Individual might meet threats because of these social networking sites; People require support to increase the suitable talents resilience to navigate online social networking opportunities and risks.

Pessimistic views assert that the exploit of the internet and social networking sites (SNSs) have a negative effect on social life. Nie argues that the spending time on the internet displaces time and doing personally activities. Excessive social side’s usages were establish to be linked with reduced communication in family and a decreased societal surround**(Kraut et al., 1998; Nie & Erbring, 2000; Sanders, Field, Diego & Kaplan, 2000)**, plus enhanced depressive and isolation **(Kraut et al., 1998; Ybarra, Alexander, & Mitchell, 2005)**.

The use of Internet can be useful when use it at a average intensity, on the other hand, high intensity of social networking sites which produce many problems in our daily life, such as reduced psychosocial happiness/health, affiliation fail and ignorance’s of household, educational and vocation tasks **(Beard 2002; Weiser 2001; Widyanto & McMurran 2004; Yao-Guo, Lin-Yan & Feng-Lin 2006; Young 1998)**.

There are many benefits of social networking sites including: the capability to facilitate person to accept and provide emotional and social support. The other possible advantages are that the social media give the new information for sources that help peoples.

When any one sees the impact of social networking sites, they found that these sites have equally advantages and disadvantages. Unquestionably these sites have a benefit for youth. Through these social media, they can be in touch and can express their emotions in these sites. Social media facilitate in creating relations with family and friends. This helps person to interact with anyone at anytime and from any place.

There are also some drawbacks of these sites like addiction. They spend most of their time on these sites that harms their mental health for example make them lonely and depressed and harm body too. The social networking sites helps only when a person use these sites wisely, but when person use these social sites more than a interacting face to face with family then these sites make person lonely.

The frequently use of social networking sites are linked with high loneliness, weaker social adjustment and emotional skill. **Moody (2001)** state that high uses of social networking sites are linked to high emotional loneliness but there are low levels of social loneliness.

Today, in the youth life social networking sites become a part of their life. According to the survey in America 90% of people using a social media, three-quarters of them have social networking sites and almost one in three uses these sites many times in a day. The way of using social net working sites such as Twitter and Facebook seen as a like a modern madness. In present, in the life of college student the social networking sites achieved a notable popularity. Facebook is founded in 2004 and it modernized their social activities and networking performs in the youth.

In a Facebook the user make a profile, where they share their personal information and pictures and contact with other users' profiles and interact with them through messages.

According to researcher the average time to use Facebook is from 30 minutes to more than 2 hours in a day. As it is come to know that the Facebook is the first preference in social networking sites among college student and there is a little research on use of Facebook and its relation with psychological well-being.

In the past, the research has broadly studied the effects of social media uses on our social well-being. According to early research, the person who use more internet may found that their family communication, local and distant network size declined. On the base of outcome of the Home Net project, the person who spent and used their large amount of time on social networking sites faced high loneliness and also faced daily stresses than those persons who use social networking sites less. And the greater uses of social networking sites have been linked with a high possibility of depression. The person who is introvert and using social networking sites that sites decreased their societal involvement and increased the level of loneliness, and the person with extrovert who using social networking sites to increasing their involvement in society and decreasing loneliness.

The other researchers also examined a research on association between social networking sites uses and loneliness. The people who send more time on internet have a low social loneliness but have a high level of emotional loneliness. So, the social networking sites are failed to satisfy people need for emotional connections in social interactions (**Moody**).

Social networking sites and loneliness

The Internet permitted youngsters to get pleasure from the extraordinary expediency and happiness brings by current technical evolution in the practical globe of the Internet, especially in education and communication. But this internet has a harmful effect on the all – round psychological growth of the youngsters. Mainly the harmful effect is the internet addiction. This addition has a negative effect on youngster’s cognition and behavior that usually directs the individual away from the society, start feeling lonely and depressed.

Researcher critics the social networking sites because it take away the individuals from human communication and construct effective replacements that sustain emotional detachment. **Sherry Turkle** argue that social networking sites simply present the false impression of friendship and the kind of communication individuals practicing on these social networking sites could not reproduce the original communication.

The possible harmful outcomes of these social networking sites uses could be attached to the fear that individual will be addicted without realizing it. The individual who use too much social networking sites such as Facebook start feeling alone. According to **Stephen Marche**, social networking sites have two sides. These sites help the individual to connect with the friends and family and if the individual use these site more than they make the individual lonely.



Chapter II



Review of Literature

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Loneliness is a painful subjective experience or psychological feeling, which is characterized by the lack of satisfactory relationships with others. Sullivan believes that loneliness is an unpleasant experience arising from unfulfilled relations or close interpersonal needs. Michela et al. view loneliness as the unpleasant experience of individuals brought about by the realization that a gap exist between the expected and actual results in relation to the social network model. But today, some researcher said that the use of social networking sites is also one of the factor and cause of loneliness. The individual who spent more time on these sites are seems to be more lonely than the others.

The study done by **Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukopadhyay & Scherlis (1998)** on internet paradox: A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? In this study 169 people in 73 families, who used the internet and social networking sites for communication were taken. Result showed that greater use of the internet and social networking sites such as Facebook etc, negatively affected the communication between family members, this also showed decline in the size of their social circle, and showed increase levels of depression and loneliness. Further they explore that internet leads to less face-to-face interactions with friends and family. Therefore more used of internet causes the psychological problems like depression, loneliness and relationship problems.

Hardie and Tee (2007) examined a study on excessive use of internet, there were 94 respondents ranging in the age from 18 to 72. The repaid increase of social networking sites usages has increased researches on advantages and disadvantages of excessive use of internet. This study showed that there were 40% for normal social sites users, 52% high-user with regular

problem because of social networking sites use, and about 8% people were having abnormal dependents on online social networks. The over-user and addicts are engaged more in internet. They have higher level of emotional loneliness, neuroticism and low level of extravasations, larger social unease than people who use social networking sites at the average range.

In Carnegie Mellon University, a study conducted by **Burke, Marlow and Lento in 2010** on Social networking activities and social well-being. In their research they found that when individual use Facebook more actively, means posting a pictures, status and liking the others pictures, may increase their well-being and cordiality. And when they are using passively the result come opposite. But their previous research found that the more use of social networking sites may led to turn down the communication between friends and family that may increase the feeling of loneliness and depression.

In Massachusetts Institute of Technology, social psychologist **Turkle** explores that social media is shifting the way individual communicate with their relatives in his new book, “Alone Together” in **2011**. This is based on Meta analyses of person and family studies and researcher meeting with 150 adults and 300 children. According to her who devotes their time on social networking sites are lonelier than the person who uses less social networking sites. And also lead to emotional detachment, mental tiredness and loneliness. Now a day’s individuals feel more connect with their friends, but they are also feeling friendless and isolated.

Research conducted by **Szwedo, Mikami and Allen (2012)** on social networking sites use predicts change in young adults’ psychological adjustment; the research observed peoples’ friends’ relationship also placed images on social media cause for altering in adjustment in due course., about their self-report, Observational and peer-report data were obtained from a

community sample of 89 young adults interviewed at age 21 and again at age 22. The results showed the societal connects that people make on social media, and their style of presentation on social networking sites, may expect rapidly changes in their mental health that the end of the day. The main outcome of this research was that a larger amount of online interaction will negatively effect on future psychological adjustment of young adults.

The study conducted in the University of Michigan by psychologist **Kross, Verduyn, Demiralp, Park, Lee, Lin, Shablack, Jonides, and Ybarrain 2013** on Facebook use predicts declines in subjective well-being in young adults. In this study, there were 82 students, who send message five times a day over a two-week period. Researcher revealed that the people who spend more time on Facebook are lonelier. According to the reports of the study the more people used Facebook at one time point, the worse they felt the next time and the level of life satisfaction declined. This study shows that online social media make us lonelier rather than making more connected and also decrease largely happiness. Facebook might have 1.1 billion users in the world, but this research reveals that, the technology is having an extremely harmful consequence on the way we relate with others, and the way we see our self.

Song, Zmyslinski-Seelig, Kim, Drent, Victor, Omori, Allen (2014) examined a study on Does Facebook make us lonely? Song's research seemed particularly at Facebook that is rising very fast and affects the person's life and societal interaction. Researchers concluded that relationship exists between Facebook and loneliness and lonely person use more online activities, rather than Facebook make them lonely. Her team's meta-analysis results and explained the relation among loneliness and the use of Facebook. With the increasing level of loneliness, the time spend on Facebook also increase. It showed that social networking sites not helping in reducing loneliness although person feel more connect through these sites.

Study examined by **He, Zhou, Li, Cao and Guan (2014)** for exploring the effect of loneliness and social support on depression among internet addicts. In this study, there were 1,024 participants, with ages between 19 and 23. The data were collected through self-report scales. The study shows that the internet causes addiction, which in turn leads to lack of social support. The lack of social support, on one hand, can directly lead to depression; on the other hand, it can indirectly affect depression through the mediation of loneliness.

Ingvadottir conducts a research in 2014 for exploring the relation between Facebook and Loneliness and comparing it with high school students and university students. The data were gathered from the 2089 High – school students the age range between 13 to 16 and the data were collected by using the questionnaire and from 419 University students the data were collected by online survey. For analysis multiple regression was used to. The result revealed that the students who spent more time on Facebook were more lonely.

Gender Differences in Loneliness

Many researches are done on gender differences in loneliness. Some researchers found that girls are more suffering from the feeling of loneliness. Some researchers found that boys are more suffering from the feeling of loneliness.

Borys and Perlman (1985) conducted a study for exploring the gender differences in loneliness. The sample was 36. And divided according to whether they used the ULCA scale (N = 28) and self-labeling measure of loneliness (N = 11). The result showed that, in ULCA Scale, boys had a high score. Boys are more lonely than the girls. In a self – labeling, the girls had a high score. Girls feel more loneliness than boys. Sex role aspects might help to clarify these

apparently opposing results. From the various explanation on gender differences in self labeling, most think that social pressure procedures play a critical part.

Loneliness in girls

Gursoy and Bicakci conducted a research in 2006 for exploring the level of loneliness in Adolescents. The main purpose of this study to explore whether gender, relationship with family and friends and individual socioeconomic status have an effect on the level of loneliness. The data were collected from the 300 adolescent's students, who have a different socioeconomic status. For analyzing data t-test and variance analysis used. The result showed that socioeconomic level and relationship with family and friend play a very important role in cause loneliness. In gender difference, boy's adolescents have a less feeling of loneliness than the girl's adolescents. The girls suffer more from the feeling of loneliness. This study found that boy's participant more in activities and more hang out. That is why they are feeling less loneliness.

Izgar (2007) conducted the study for examining the depression and loneliness level among schools principals. The main motive of this study is to search the association among loneliness and depression on the basis of gender and educational background. In this research data was collected from 232 school principals in whom there were 37 women and 195 men. 36 participants had associate degree, 164 participants had undergraduate degree and 32 participants had graduate degree. To measure loneliness UCLA loneliness scale were used and for depression the Beck Depression Inventory were used. For analyzing data ANOVA, t-test, Pearson moments correlation coefficients and linear regression were used. It was found that females reported more loneliness than the males. And there was no significant difference found in depression and

loneliness on the basis of educational background. But there are positive relation between depression and loneliness.

Bugay (2007) conducted a research for exploring the relationship between loneliness and life satisfaction among student of Turkish University. Three scales were used for gathering data that were the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin, 1985) Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau and Cutrona, 1980) and Demographic information like age, grade and gender. Data were collected from 214 undergraduate students between the ages of 17 to 26. In which 96 were girls and 118 were boys. For analyzing the data mean, standard deviation, independent samples t-test and MANOVA were used. The result found that gender effect loneliness and life satisfaction among students. It was found that the boys have low loneliness and higher life satisfaction compared to the girls who has a more loneliness and less life satisfaction.

Bas (2010) conducted the study for examining the relationship between shyness and loneliness among elementary students of Turkish schools. Data was collected from 470 students of elementary class in which 204 were women and 266 were men. After Pearson moment correlation analysis, independent sample t-test and regression, it was found that shyness and loneliness are positively related. Girls feel lonelier than boys. And boys feel more shyness than girls.

Al Khatib (2012) conducted a study for investigating the relationship among loneliness, self-esteem, self-efficacy and gender in United Arab Emirates College students. The data in this research were collected from 495 by using stratified technique. Female students were 292 (59%) and male students were 203 (41%). The age of the students were falling from 18 to 36. To

observe their marital status, they took 361 (72.9%) single, 112 (22.6%) married and 22 (4.4%) divorced. In the whole sample they were 194 (39.2%) fresher, 132 (26.6%) sophomores, 98 (19.8%) juniors and 71 (14.4%) seniors. For measuring the loneliness the Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3) (Russell, 1996) were used. For self-esteem Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) were used. And for self-efficacy General Self-efficacy Scale (Jerusalem and Schwarzer, 1979) were used. The result of the research showed that the females are lonelier as compared to the males counter mates. The result also showed that the low self-esteem and low self-efficacy was linked with the higher level of loneliness. The research also found that loneliness is associated with many negative behaviors and emotions.

Loneliness in boys

Demirli and Demir (2007) conducted a research for exploring role of gender, attachment dimensions and family environment on loneliness. The data were collected from the 473 university students from different departments, in which 281 were girls and 192 were boys. UCLA Loneliness scale, Family Environment Assessment Scale and Experiences in Close Relationships Questionnaire were used. For analysis the data three-way ANOVA and Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis were used. The result showed that boys' students are lonelier than the girls' students. The families where coherence are high the loneliness level is low than the families with low coherence, where level of loneliness is high. The students who have not secure attachment have a high level of loneliness.

Wiseman, Guttfreund and Lurie conducted a research in **1995**, for exploring the Gender differences in loneliness and depression of university students seeking counseling. The data was collected from the 325 students who were seeking counseling. There were 107 were

boys and 218 were girls. For measuring the loneliness they were using UCLA Loneliness Scale (ULS-8) and for measuring depression they were using the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI). The result showed that boy had a high score in loneliness and girls had a high score in depression. So, they found that boys are lonelier than the girls and girls are more depressed than the boys.

Yang (2009) conducted a research for exploring the role of self esteem, gender and gender role in loneliness. He also explored the various type of loneliness. The data were collected from the 120 students, in which 76 were girls and 44 were boys. The result showed that boys have a more global loneliness compared to the girls. In girls, high level of masculinity was related with reducing the loneliness. The boys might be more suffer from the feeling of loneliness because of the negative evaluation.

The research done by **Srivastava and Agarwalon** loneliness among young adults: A comparative study (**2014**) conducted to evaluate loneliness between young adults across gender. They take a sample of 120 young adults (60 boys and 60 girls) from city of Nawab by using UCLA loneliness scale. They used purposive random sampling technique. Result showed males are lonelier comparative to females. The data also revealed that there was a difference between loneliness across gender. It shows that loneliness level may differ according to gender.

Gender differences in Social Networking Sites

In social networking sites, there is a gender differences in the use of these social networking sites. But it is very difficult to identify the gender. Because some research found males are using more social networking sites and some found that females are using more social networking sites.

ECAR (EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research) conduct a research study on social networking sites in 2010. In their research, they found that 85.2% participants are using one of social networking site. The use of these sites also varies according to the age. They found that 18 to 19 years old participant use more social networking sites than the 30 years old participants and they have a more friends in these sites compared to the old participants. Facebook is the most popular sites that the most participants used. 55.8% participants spend 5 hours on these sites per week, 29.6% spend 6 to 10 hours per week and younger participants spend more time on these sites. Females and old participant use more social networking sites. They are also very worried about the privacy setting of these sites.

Thompson and Loughheed (2012) conducted a research on social networking sites communication because every adult have an account in any one site and exploring the gender difference in social networking sites especially in Facebook among undergraduate boys and girls. The data were collected from the 268 students in which 76% were fresh boys and 53.3% were girls and 76.5% were Caucasian. The age range with mean was 19.10 years. The result showed, the minutes they spent every day on internet are 217.2 (SD = 198.36), on social net working sites are 117.2 minutes (SD = 131.7) and on Facebook are 106.8 minutes (SD = 120.3). They also found that 94% student have a Facebook accounts. In gender difference, they found that girls are using more social net working sites than the boys. Because of Facebook the girl are not sleeping properly, giving more importance to their Facebook friends rather than the friends they met every day. Because of this they sometimes suffer from a stress and become a addicted of Facebook or social networking sites.

Manjunatha S. (2013) conducts a research for exploring the use of Social Networking Sites in the Indian college students. In present, social sites are widespread and used by an every

student. And have an impact on their academic performance. For exploring the gender difference and the time spent by student, he collected data from 500 students, from the age of 18-26 and he selects the sample randomly. The result showed that 80% students are using social networking sites and 20 % are not using social networking sites because they are not interested in these sites. In gender difference, he found that boys using more social networking sites than the girls. 71% are the boys who using these sites and 29% are the girls who using these sites.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

More than 500 million people interact daily with Facebook. Yet, Facebook use influences subjective well-being. Social media is distorting of tweets, shares and content. It is used by the young and the restless. It is worldwide and surrounded in every corner of the network. Social media is growing with Facebook alone adding 16 million new users, since January & that roughly one new user every second. Although, the social networking sites helps us to keep in connect with old friends and colleagues. It also disappoints the person in many ways. As it has been seen that instead of hike in social media users, the loneliness among them also increase. The reason of increasing loneliness is lack of face to face interacting between them and family. There is not emotional bonding with their Facebook friends. Event the individuals are so much engage in social media, they personally and emotionally and socially moving away from their parents and neighborhood. So, the here study is focus to find out the role of usage of social networking sites in loneliness.

OBJECTIVE

Current study starts with the following objectives:-

1. To find out the relationship between loneliness and usage of social networking sites.
2. To examine the gender differences in social networking sites.
3. To study the gender differences in loneliness.

HYPOTHESES

In the light of the review of related literature and the trends that emerged, the following hypotheses are generated.

1. There is a significant relationship between loneliness and social networking sites usage
2. There is a significant difference between gender and loneliness.
3. There is a significant difference between gender and social networking sites usage.

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Chapter III

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Methodology

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done. Research methodology is a systematic procedure which carries on the research work in the scientific and valid manner. It provides tools and techniques by which research problem is dealt with.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The course of this study includes first to select the sampling group to carry out the study. In this case, sample would include a group of young adults of age 18-25. Sample was taken from Lovely Professional University. Then suitable scales were used to assess the variables. For the data analysis, appropriate statistical approach was applied. The present study was the normative survey and was non-experimental in nature.

SAMPLING

The demographic characteristics of age, marital status, educational status, socioeconomic background and place of residence was controlled in the sense that students were taken from the age range of (18-25) undergraduates, unmarried, middle or upper middle income groups, and unemployed and belonged to urban area. It was significant to emphasize that in addition to the homogeneity, which resulted from this type of control, there was also an increased danger of bias.

For the present study, simple random sampling was used. We took sample of total 160 undergraduates (80 males and 80 females) with age range of 18 to 25 young adults. They were recruited from the Lovely Professional University.

TOOLS

Keeping in view, our variable of study to be measured, the aim of study, and the nature of the sample, appropriate instrument with satisfactory psychometric properties were selected. In this study we selected following tools:

- UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA LS; Russell, 1996)
- Facebook Intensity Scale (FBI; Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. 2007)
- **UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA LS; Russell 1996)**

UCLA Loneliness Scale was developed by Russell in 1996. This scale was used to measure the level of loneliness of the individual. In this scale, there were 20 items which start with the phrase “how often do you feel?”. In these 20 items, 11 items were negatively worded and 9 item were positively worded. For example, the negative item, “How often do you feel that no one really knows you well?” and the positive item, “How often do you feel part of a group of friends”? .For scoring four- point Likert scale was used. Give a one score for “never” and four score for “always”. Higher score indicate a higher loneliness.

Psychometric properties: The scale is reliable in internal consistency, the coefficient alpha ranging from .89 to .94) as well as in test – retest reliability correlation of .73. Convergent validity for the scale was indicated by significant correlations with other measures of loneliness. Construct validity was supported by significant relations with measures of the adequacy of the individual's interpersonal relationships, and by correlations between loneliness and measures of health and well-being

➤ **Facebook Intensity Scale (FBI; Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. 2007)**

For measuring the use of Facebook, Facebook Intensity Scale was used. This scale was made by Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., and Lampe, C. in 2007. This scale is not just to measure the frequency and duration on Facebook like the time they spend on Facebook and the number of friend they have on Facebook. This scale also measured the emotional connection with the Facebook. In this scale, there are total 8 items.

Psychometric properties: The Likert scale was used for scoring. From 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. Facebook Intensity Scale is reliable and valid scale. Facebook Intensity Scale have a Cronbach “s alpha = 0.83 (Ellison et al., 2007). David A. Beane (2012) in this research found that Facebook Intensity Scale have a Cronbach “s alpha = 0.87. They also found that this scale have a convergent validity. Facebook Intensity Scale also has discriminant validity (Ellison et al., 2007; Ross et al., 2009).

ADMINISTRATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MEASURES

A rapport was established with the subjects before administering the tests. The subjects were assured that the information was being collected from different schools and would be kept confidential. The tests were administered to students from different schools of Lovely Professional University during their free period. The instructions were provided to students as based on manuals.

DATA ANALYSIS

Keeping in view the variables, objectives and hypothesis and in order to signify our results, we will use following techniques:

- PEARSONS PRODUCT MOMENT METHOD – Significant Correlation
- T-TEST – Significant Difference



Chapter IV



Result and Discussion

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

CORRELATION

Pearson product moment correlation is the most common and appropriate parametric technique to know the relationship between two variables. One of the objectives of the present research was to examine the relationship of loneliness with social networking sites. Therefore, Pearson's product moment correlations were computed between loneliness and social networking sites. The results are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Showing Correlations between Loneliness with Social Networking Sites from the sample (N = 160)

Correlation	Social Networking Sites
Loneliness	0.247**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

The result showed that there is low positive relationship between loneliness and social networking sites. The correlation value between loneliness and social networking sites is 0.247**. So, it showed that the individuals who use more social networking sites are more lonely. There is a less face to face interaction with friends and family, when they are using social networking sites so after some time they start feeling lonely. **Kraut, et al., (1998)** also found that the greater use of the internet and social networking sites negatively affected the communication

between family members, this also showed decline in the size of their social circle, and showed increase levels of depression and loneliness. Further they explore that internet and social networking sites leads to less face-to-face interactions with friends and family.

The individual use social networking sites such as Facebook and twitter etc, to connect with the friend and family. But they forget the future effect of these sites on individual well-being that makes them lonely after some time. **Szwedo, et al., (2012)** also found the same. **Kross, et al., (2013)** found that rather than connected individual with other it makes individual lonely. They also found that the individual who spend more time on these social networking sites are feeling more lonely.

Gender difference t – ratios

One of the objectives of the research was to study the gender difference in loneliness and in social networking sites. For this purpose t-ratio analysis was used to know any significant differences in the boys and girls regarding in the level of loneliness and in the use of social networking sites. Table 4.2 shows the means, standard deviations, and t-ratios of all the measured variables for both the boys and girls.

Through t – ratios analysis, it was found that in loneliness there is a gender difference between boys and girls ($t(160) = 2.247^*$, $p < 0.05$). Boys have a higher score in loneliness ($\bar{X} = 45.21$) than the girls ($\bar{X} = 41.93$). So, the result showed that boys are lonely than the girls. **Demirli and Demir (2007)** found in their study that boys are more lonely and they also found that if in family cohesiveness is high than loneliness is low. The boys might be more suffer from the feeling of loneliness because of the negative evaluation (**Yang 2009**). They are not able to share their problems with friends and family. So, after some time they start feeling lonely.

Wiseman, et al., 2007, found that boys score high in loneliness than the girls and girls score high in depression than the boys. **Srivastava and Agarwalon (2014)** also found in their study that boys are more lonely than the girls.

Table 4.2: Showing Means, Standard Deviation and t-ratios of Samples of Boys and Girls on Different Variables

S. No.	Variables	Boys		Girls		t -ratios
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1	Loneliness	45.21	9.307	41.93	9.197	2.247*
2	Social Networking Sites	26.86	6.566	21.86	6.050	5.009**

Significant at .05 level = 1.98

Significant at .01 level = 2.61

In social networking sites, gender differences is also found there is the gender differences in the use of these social networking sites ($t(160) = 5.009^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). The boys have a high score in social networking sites ($\bar{X} = 26.86$) than the girls ($\bar{X} = 21.86$). **Manjunatha S. (2013)** found in study that boys are using more social networking sites than the girls. Because today it is a trend of these social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter and every individual have an account on these sites. Boys spend more time on these social networking sites.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to find the relationship between loneliness and social networking sites usages and the gender differences in loneliness and social networking sites. And we found that there is a positive significant relationship between loneliness and social networking sites, the individuals who use more social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are lonelier than the person who don't use or use minimal these sites. There is a gender differences in loneliness and in social networking sites. At the end, we can say that these social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter affect our psychological health and make us lonely. And boys are lonelier than the girls and use more social networking sites than the girls. Today, loneliness is a common problem in young adults. Although they have a many friends on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter but still they feel lonely. Increased feelings of isolation and a decreased sense of well-belling seems connected with the way we use social media such as Facebook, or Twitter (Passively or actively). So, our all hypotheses are proved.

FUTURE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In future, this study will help the youth to know the bad impact of social networking sites on our psychological well – being. There is a less face to face interaction between family and friends that make an individual lonely. A lonely person face many problems such as depression, anxiety, heart problem, use alcohol and drugs, family problem and many other problems. The social networking sites have some advantages but it all depend how the individual use them. In future, we can also study the role of social support in loneliness and in social networking sites usages.

Limitations: Every research has some limitations. In my research, there are also some limitations. The following are the some limitations of this study:

1. In this research, the sample size was small; we could not properly generalize our results. So in future, the large sample should be selected.
2. In present study, incidental sampling technique was used but in future probability sampling technique should be used.
3. The sample was collected from only Lovely Professional University. The sample is not heterogenic.



Chapter V



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