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Exploring User Predispositions, Usage Patterns, and the Bandwagon Effect on Instagram and Snapchat

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This study investigated the impact of addictive social media use, age, and academic level on the bandwagon effect among undergraduate students. The study hypothesized that addictive social media use would predict a higher bandwagon effect, while age and academic level would not. Data was collected from 659 undergraduate students using a questionnaire measuring social media addiction, bandwagon effect, age, academic level, and demographic information. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses. Results indicated that addictive social media use was a significant predictor of the bandwagon effect, confirming Hypothesis 1. However, neither age nor academic level were found to be significant predictors, rejecting Hypothesis 2. The study concluded that frequent and excessive social media use can lead to a stronger tendency to follow trends and conform to peer pressure. This has implications for understanding the influence of social media on individual behavior and decision-making.

1. Introduction & Literature Review

Ephemeral media are platforms that show content for a limited period and have become an important entity in social media ecology. Snapchat is a popular ephemeral social media platform which is highly adaptable and popular among youth. This phenomenon is also commonly known as burn after reading. Ephemeral media is sending self-destructing content to your friends and social media contacts. The content whether it's a picture or a message is deleted or dies automatically after a certain period of time (van Nimwegen & Bergman, 2019). The content is self-destructed after the time limit set by the sender. These ephemeral social media platforms became an important entity of the social media ecosystem (Bayer et al., 2016). With every passing day social media users are taking more interest in ephemeral social media applications like Snapchat, YikYak, SlingShot, FranklyChat.

Internet users are linking to it because often it is linked with anonymity and privacy. Studies show that ephemeral content facilitates users who are more interested in privacy compared to those platforms that offer content to stay permanently (Kaun & Stiernstedt, 2014). A study proves that ephemeral content promotes the habit of using Instagram stories (Kircova et al., 2020). Because of the association with anonymity and privacy, it is generally what people are linking to when they use that phrase. Research says that it encourages people who value more on privacy rather than those platforms which give the option to content stay forever an example of this type is Instagram stories, these floats are events in a day-2-day life and its moments which they do not want to keep them permanently on their story (last for only 24 hours). That is why dermal content has become the latest craze (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

The option of ephemerality social media platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram provide is related to self-disclosure more and less related to self-presentational aspects of edited pictures and content (Kofoed & Larsen, 2016). Since the story feature was introduced in Instagram and Snapchat, it has overtaken news feed enormously and approximately 500 million users are using it daily and it has created a rift between ephemeral content and the archival culture of social media (McLachlan, 2022). Similarly, users are taking deep interest in stories on other platforms like Facebook. A recent study explored frequency of Facebook story updates and time reading story updates reveals that Facebook stories are more addictive and usage behavior linked to stories predicted narcissism (Yu & Chen, 2020). With special reference to brands on social media ephemeral content generates more exclusive ap peal compared to archived content on social media (Lim et al., 2021). Another study shows that in advertising placement of ephemeral content placement is more viable option compared to traditional placement and effect of ephemerality is associated with an increased processing effort (Ali at al., 2022). That is why ephemeral content is getting huge popularity in brands (Campbell et al., 2021).

1.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the use of social media mobile applications and the level of bandwagon effect on undergraduate students.
2. To explore the motivations behind maintaining a streak on Snapchat.

3. To find the motivation behind using Cat and Dog Filters on Snapchat.
4. To explore the relationship between age, gender, and education level and its relationship with the bandwagon effect among undergraduate students.
5. To see at which age, academic rank, and gender distribution level of the bandwagon is high.

1.2 Research Questions

Is there any relationship between current academic rank, age, and social media addiction, Bandwagon in undergraduate students?

Is there any relationship between current academic rank, age, and social media addiction, Bandwagon Effect?

Is there any relationship between the academic faculty of students and the Bandwagon effect?

2. Bandwagon Effect

The bandwagon effect often referred to contagion effect is a phenomenon of public opinion which they believe is accepted by the majority. Bandwagon is a benefit a person enjoys because of others doing the same as he or she does it is an activity, fashion or a movement that has suddenly become desirable because everyone else is doing or adopting it. Historically it dates back to late 18^{th} and early 19^{th} century political campaigns where wagons were used with the music bands which attracted the masses and crowed followed the bandwagons to enjoy the music once the sizeable crowd was gathered by these wagons and music activities then politicians would come and speak to the public. This political phenomenon was often labeled as jumping on the bandwagon. The bandwagon effect is the expression of impersonal influence on people's attitudes and beliefs (Schmitt-Beck, 2015). Most of the time bandwagon effect has been part of the scholarly debate concerning elections where voters tend to vote a candidate with a popular winning perception, they believe that because everyone else is supporting this candidate so they should also vote this candidate.

The same can be applied to referendums where the perception of majority support may win additional votes (Farrell & Schmitt-Beck, 2003). Bandwagon effect is an important area of study in business and product management, and it can be explored by variety of perspective one is product purchasing decisions and attitudes toward a product on an online ecommerce platform (Ahmad et al., 2023;Sundar et al., 2008). Bandwagon is a noteworthy technique in propaganda and persuasion it is usually know as assertion technique which plays on the advantage of individual's desires, and it exploits the herding instinct or herd mentality. Individuals effected by bandwagon effect want to be in majority group and they are afraid of being left alone in simple words bandwagon is the effect where people want to be part of popular opinion just because it is popular among other people. In natural science bandwagon technique is used to gain acceptance for any new concept or theory and because public cannot understand complect scientific issues so group scientists may use bandwagon techniques with appeal in order to secure wide acceptance of their ideas and theoretical framework (Shabo, 2008).

Bull markets also use this psychological technique in asset management and investment and financial institutions are vulnerable to bandwagon effect. Term bandwagon encompasses wide array fields and areas like diet, elections, fashion, music, and social networks (Kendra Cherry, 2020).

Theoretically, bandwagon effect has its ties to theories of conformity (Asch, 1952) the spiral of silence and impersonal influence but there is still confusion among researchers about what actually bandwagon is (GLYNN & MCLEOD, 1984). There are some other underlying effects e.g., the underdog effect which makes it difficult to recognize the bandwagon and it can easily be mistaken for bandwagon effect (Chung et al., 2018; Mutz, 1998).

2.1 Bandwagon Conversion and Mobilization Effect

Concerning elections when a voter votes for a candidate based on someone else is giving the vote to that particular candidate because of his/her popularity (Agranov et al., 2018)

2.2 Static and Dynamic Bandwagon Effect

The other distinction is called the static and dynamic bandwagon effect according to this voters can be influenced based on party position of improving results of a political party (Irwin & Van Holsteyn, 2000). Bandwagon effect can be explained by any of these methodologies but the research on bandwagon effect still has a knowledge gap because a plethora of scholarship discusses bandwagon effect with reference to political parties and voting behavior but in reality this concept can be applied to many field of studies (Barnfield, 2020)

2.3 Bandwagon and Its Relationship to SNS

Cognitive theories of Information processing suggest that social media users are loaded with a mass of information that they cannot process instantly this problem pushes them to make popular choices that were made earlier users or decision-makers. The Magibon video is a great example that took the world by storm a video of a teen age girl who is doing nothing received 50 million views. This kind of click rush are very common in the virtual world of social media. Because users assess material on social media from the surface and if a media artifact is seen a million times by other users it puts them on the same path of being susceptible to their peer choices. A plethora of user-generated content is available online and they cannot see or visit everything so they get referential signals for their content viewing choices (Metzger & Flanagin, 2013). On social media likes, clicks, downloads, comments attached to any media artifact are reference points that effects users' choices and create more appeal. This creates a ripple effect for all new users to mimic existing choices and this is commonly known as choice bandwagon. Mass audience usually gravitate towards the content that has already established popularity because users associate quantity of viewing with the quality of content that means if a content has high ratings and viewing it would be of better quality (Fu & Sim, 2011). Ample research is available that analyzes cognitive heuristics assessing the credibility and quality of online content (Hilligoss & Rieh, 2008).

Bandwagon effect has been area of interest for research scholars who are interested to examine social media and its relationship with psychological bandwagon effect with special reference to rumor spreading. There are three types of bandwagon effects positive bandwagon effect, negative bandwagon effect and conscious bandwagon effect negative bandwagon effect is helpful in spreading rumors (Zhou & Yang, 2020). Creditability of the online content is a pressing issue in online world example can be taken from online news and twitter bandwagon cues trigger credibility processing that means if a lot of people are thinking that a particular story is true then I should also think that this is a true story. This is substantial evidence that online users evaluate the credibility of information and the trustworthiness of a website on the basis network of peers and online applications which is why bandwagon heuristics are powerful cognitive shortcuts to evaluate online news(Lachlan & Spence, 2010; Sundar, 2008).

2.4 Hypothesis

H_1 Addictive use of social media mobile applications will predict a higher bandwagon effect among its users.

H_2 Age and academic level are predictors of the Bandwagon effect.

3. Research Method

Current research has adopted quantitative research methods. This research has used a self-administered survey method for obtaining primary data from the participants. This research uses a positivist approach. The positivist research paradigm proposes and explores the cause-and-effect phenomenon. The final sample for this study consisted of 659 undergraduate students from Pakistani universities. The participants ranged in age from 19 to 30. There were 312 men and 347 women among the total number of participants. All participants must own smartphones, have access to 3G, 4G, or LTE internet, and utilize social networking apps on their phones to be eligible for the present study. Of the total participants, 37.8% were in the 18–20 age range, while 57% were in the 20–25 age range. Only 3% were in the 26–30 age range.

For this specific study, ten universities of Pakistan were selected. The selection was made using the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan's University category list. A list of universities was obtained by the Higher Education Commission's website. Current study used the probability sampling method by applying two step sampling technique initially universities were selected by using simple random sampling technique for the selections of the universities through the Higher Education Commission's category wise list 10 different universities were selected across Pakistan. For the selection of students, a non-probability sampling design is applied, and the students are selected through a purposive sampling technique. The reason for non-probability was to exclude those students who do not use social media mobile applications on smart phones. Questionnaires were distributed to only those students who use 3G,4G, LTE internet and social media mobile applications. A self-developed Bandwagon Effect measure is used in this research to assess the level of bandwagon effect among users of social media. This tool has 15 items having response options of strongly agree, agree, moderate, disagree and strongly disagree which have

been given values as 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. Cronbach's alpha of social media addiction scale is .93. Bandwagon tool is a self-developed tool, and the reliability of this tool is 0.72.

Table No 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Coefficients for Study Variables

Scales	*A*	*K*	*M*	*SD*	*Range*	
					Potential	**Actual**
Social Media Addiction Tool	.911	28	80.37	16.55	28-140	28-140
Bandwagon Scale	.905	15	41.25	11.78	15-75	15-75

Note: a= Reliability coefficient and K= no. of items in the scale

Table No 2: Distribution of Respondents According to Gender

Gender of Participants	**Freq**	**Freq%**
Male	312	47.3**%**
Female	347	52.7**%**
Total	659	100%

Table No 3: Distribution of Respondents According to Academic Rank

Academic Rank	**Freq**	**Freq%**
1st Year	108	16.4%
2nd Year	105	15.9%
3rd Year	153	23.2%
4th Year	**281**	**42.6%**
Missing Value	12	(1.8%)

Table No 4: Usage of Smartphone, Instagram, Snapchat

Usage of Smartphone, Instagram, Snapchat	**Freq**	**Freq%**
Internet Use on Smartphone		
Yes	659	100%
No	0	0%
Use of Snapchat		
Yes	**507**	**76.9%**
No	152	23.1%
Use of Instagram		
Yes	**647**	**98.2%**
No	12	1.8%

Table No 5: Distribution of Respondents According to Frequency of Time

Time Spent on Instagram and Snapchat	Freq	Freq%
Time spent on Instagram.		
1 Hour	**258**	**39.2%**
1-2 Hours	185	28.1%
2-4 Hours	142	21.5%
5 Hours or More	73	11.1%
Time spent on Snapchat.		
1 Hour	**488**	**74.1%**
1-2 Hours	90	13.7%
2-4 Hours	49	7.4%
5 Hours or More	32	4.9%

Table No 6: Descriptive Statistics Frequency of Bandwagon Effect

Variables	Mean	SD	Median	IQR	Frequency	Frequency%
I use social media because everyone is using it						
Strongly Disagree					71	10.8%
Disagree	3.0152	1.1616	3.0000	3.0152	166	25.2%
Neutral					164	24.9%
Agree					**198**	**30.0%**
Strongly Agree					60	9.1%
I often identify people by what they share on their social media						
Strongly Disagree					30	4.6%
Disagree	3.4158	1.0091	4.0000	3.4158	93	14.1%
Neutral					181	27.5%
Agree					**283**	**42.9%**
Strongly Agree					72	10.9%
Before I share, I often observe others what they are sharing on social media						
Strongly Disagree					75	11.4%
Disagree	3.0030	1.1472	3.0000	3.0030	157	23.8%
Neutral					168	25.5%
Agree					**209**	**31.7%**
Strongly Agree					50	7.6%
I often use filters on my pictures my friends are using						
Strongly Disagree					89	13.5%
Disagree	2.9272	1.1750	3.0000	2.9272	160	24.3%
Neutral					173	26.3%
Agree					**184**	**27.9%**
Strongly Agree					53	8.0%
I like to share my brands when my friends are sharing it on social media						
Strongly Disagree	2.4795	1.1261	2.0000	2.4795	134	20.3%
Disagree					**241**	**36.6%**
Neutral					153	23.2%

Agree					96	14.6%
Strongly Agree					35	5.3%
I share photos of my travel because my friends are sharing their photos						
Strongly Disagree					119	18.1%
Disagree	2.7648	1.2599	3.0000	2.7648	**199**	**30.2%**
Neutral					121	18.4%
Agree					158	24.0%
Strongly Agree					62	9.4%
I follow popular brands on social media because everyone is following them						
Strongly Disagree					151	22.9%
Disagree	2.5114	1.2196	2.0000	2.5114	**226**	**34.3%**
Neutral					126	19.1%
Agree					106	16.1%
Strongly Agree					50	7.6%
I always follow trends on social media and approve them for myself						
Strongly Disagree					128	19.4%
Disagree	2.6965	1.1846	3.0000	2.6965	168	25.5%
Neutral					**179**	**27.2%**
Agree					144	21.9%
Strongly Agree					40	6.1%
I always follow my peer group what to post on social media						
Strongly Disagree					112	17.0%
Disagree	2.5539	1.0525	2.0000	2.5539	**219**	**33.2%**
Neutral					201	30.5%
Agree					105	15.9%
Strongly Agree					22	3.3%
I edit my pictures because everyone is doing it on social media						
Strongly Disagree					129	19.6%
Disagree	2.6404	1.2165	2.0000	2.6404	**210**	**31.9%**
Neutral					140	21.2%
Agree					129	19.6%
Strongly Agree					51	7.7%
Filters on Instagram and Snapchat are very cool, and everyone is using them						
Strongly Disagree					62	9.4%
Disagree	3.3809	1.1468	4.0000	3.3809	78	11.8%
Neutral					157	23.8%
Agree					**271**	**41.1%**
Strongly Agree					91	13.8%
I post food, clothing, and accessories' pictures because everyone is doing so	2.3869	1.1929	2.0000	2.3869		
Strongly Disagree					186	28.2%

Disagree					**203**	**30.8%**
Neutral					132	20.0%
Agree					105	15.9%
Strongly Agree					33	5.0%
I rarely purchase the latest fashion until I am sure it is popular on social media.						
Strongly Disagree					176	26.7%
Disagree	2.4173	1.1813	2.0000	2.4173	**201**	**30.5%**
Neutral					147	22.3%
Agree					101	15.3%
Strongly Agree					34	5.2%
I expect a sense of superiority when I purchase the same brand that is popular on social media						
Strongly Disagree	2.4689	1.1272	2.0000	2.4689	150	22.8%
Disagree					**205**	**31.1%**
Neutral					180	27.3%
Agree					93	14.1%
Strongly Agree					31	4.7%
I maintain my Instagram/Snapchat presence because it is in fashion						
Strongly Disagree					156	23.7%
Disagree	2.5933	1.2148	3.0000	2.5933	165	25.0%
Neutral					**170**	**25.8%**
Agree					127	19.3%
Strongly Agree					41	6.2%

1=Strongly Disagree & 5=Strongly Agree

3.2 Interactive Effect of Frequency of SNS Factor and Bandwagon Effect

3.3 Hypothesis 1

H_1 ***Addictive use of social media mobile applications will predict a higher level of bandwagon effect among its users. (Accepted)***

Table No 7: Simple Linear Regression for Predicting Narcissism (N=659)

		Bandwagon Effects		
Variable	**B**	**B**	**SE**	**P**
Addictive Use of Social Media	.438	.615	.022	.000
R^2	.378			
F	399.840			

Simple linear regression was used to analyze the interactive effect of addictive use of social media factor and Stress. Independent variables (addictive use of social media Factor) and dependent variable (Bandwagon Effects) were entered. The results indicated significant impact of addictive use of social media factor ($\beta = .61$, $p < .001$) on Bandwagon Effects by producing

variance of 37 %. The overall model was significant. Addictive use of social media positively predicted Bandwagon Effects, which means the addictive use of social media Bandwagon Effects.

3.4 Hypothesis 2

Table No 8: Simple linear Regression for Predicting Bandwagon (N=659)

	Bandwagon			
Variable	**B**	**B**	**SE**	**P**
Age Level	-.566	-.029	.771	.463
R^2	.001			
F	.539			

Simple linear regression was used to analyze the interactive effect of age level factor and bandwagon. Independent variables (age level Factor) and dependent variable (bandwagon) were entered. The results indicated no positive impact of age level factor (β = -.029 p > .005) on bandwagon by producing variance of 00 %. The overall model was not significant. Age level of respondents was not predictor of bandwagon

3.5 Relationship Between Independent and Dependent Variables

Table No 9: Relationship Between Variables (N=659)

SN.	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	**Age**	--	.099*	.021	.417**	.027	.211**	-.008	.078*	.025	-.033	-.017	-.024	-.029
4	**Academic Rank**	.417**	.094*	-.009	--	.058	.051	-.065	.014	.035	-.014	-.059	-.044	-.022
5	**Academic Faculty**	-.027	.000	-.109**	.058	--	.108**	.011	.088*	.043	-.084*	.138**	-.062	.120**
10	**SM Addiction Tool**	-.033	.192**	.149**	-.014	-.084*	-.054	.131**	.209**	.166**	--	.405**	.489**	.615**
13	**Bandwagon Tool**	-.029	.097*	.193**	-.022	.120**	-.027	.172**	.277**	.287**	.615**	.374**	.614**	--

*Relationship is significant at the level 0.05 (2-tailed)

**Relationship is significant at the level 0.01 (2-tailed)

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Is there any Relationship between Picture Editing and Bandwagon?

Editing pictures means changing the colors, background, and style of pictures for any reason it involves inbuilt mobile applications and applications can be downloaded from the Play Store and other app stores. Snapchat, Instagram and other photo-sharing platforms also offer inbuilt artificial intelligence-based photo editing functionalities as well. This research aims to look

at whether there is a relationship between photo editing on these two famous social media platforms (Instagram and Snapchat) and the bandwagon. To explore this phenomenon Pearson Correlation was applied. Results showed that there was a significant strong relationship between picture editing and the bandwagon effect with the value of .287**. It's because everyone else is editing their pictures so students also feel that they should edit their picture.

This might think that they are not looking good compared to their peer group and they should look more presentable on social media like their friends. It is also related to body dissatisfaction and body ideals, self-esteem results of the study are in line with (Chen et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2021). As shown in most of the students who are using social media for 1 hour are between the age of 20-25. The majority group of the students are using Instagram. Crosstabulations results also show that the majority of male and female students first observe what and how their peer group is sharing they closely monitor and then decide that they should share on their content on the same patterns. Trends in results show that the more they are on social media they will experience an enhanced bandwagon effect and when they see a specific trend on social media and their peer group is following that trend. They also tend to follow the same trend on social media. Cross tabulation and descriptive statistics result clearly shows these trends with acquired data.

4.2 Is there any Relationship between Current Academic Rank, age, and Social Media Addiction, and the Bandwagon Effect?

As it is evident from variables and results of present study that researcher is trying to explore undergraduate students' social media habits and how these habits develop any relationship between bandwagon. In this context it becomes imperative to explore the relationship between students age and their current academic rank with social media addiction, and bandwagon effect. To explore this relationship was applied to above mentioned variables Academic rank has an inverse relationship with social media addiction, narcissism, stress and bandwagon effect with the values respectively -.014, -.059, -.044, -.022. This implies that there is no relationship with the progression of their academic rank and any development or progression in social media addiction, narcissism, stress, and bandwagon effect. On the second stage relationship of above stated variables with age was explored and for this purpose Pearson Correlation was applied to investigate the relationship. Results from the test show that there is an inverse negative relationship between age, social media addiction, and bandwagon effect with the values respectively -.033, -.017, -.024, -.029. That means that with the progression of age there is no progression in social media addiction, narcissism, stress, and bandwagon effect. (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

4.3 Is there any Relationship between the Academic Faculty of Students, and the Bandwagon Effect?

Current research also aims to explore the relationship between bandwagon, social media addiction, and students' academic faculty. Present research believes that it is imperative to understand the levels of bandwagon effect among different faculty. To explore this phenomenon Pearson Correlation was applied to academic faculty and above-mentioned variables. Academic

faculty has an inverse relationship with social media addiction at the level of -.084* which is medium relationship between the two variables and is in inverse position.

It has been observed from the available literature that use of social media has its relationship with bandwagon effect. It has been observed that students who spend more time on social media the explore more about their peer group activities on social media especially Instagram and Snapchat. It has also been observed that students tend to follow trends regarding fashion and products on social media. This study aims to explore the effect of addictive social media on higher level of bandwagon effect. To explore this phenomenon simple liner regression was used to analyze interactive effect of addictive social media use and as the independent variable and dependent variable bandwagon effect were entered. The results from acquired data show us that there is a significant impact of addictive use of social media factor with the value β=.61 and p < .001 on bandwagon effects producing a variance of 37%.

With these results, we can safely say that the overall model is significant. That means addictive use of social media is a predictor of the bandwagon effect. As an undergraduate student, if a student uses social media to an addiction level, he is going to spend more and more time watching content posted by other people and watching popular trends on social media. Previously this research has explored how addictive use of social media corelates with stress narcissism and bandwagon effect. To explore the other dimension this research also aims to investigate the fact that if there are other predictors of narcissism, stress and bandwagon effect. In this regard two independent variables age and academic rank were taken simple liner regression as used to analyze age factor and stress the results indicated that there is no positive impact of age level factor's impact on stress. At the later stage age level factor and narcissism were used to measure the impact. The results of simple linear regression showed there is no positive impact of age on narcissism with the values β=-.024 p> .005. The overall model was not significant and the result shows that age level was not predictor of narcissism. Simple linear regression as applied to age level factor and bandwagon effect. The results showed that there isn't significant impact of age level factor on bandwagon effect. The overall model was not significant with values of β=-.29 p > .005 and a variance of 00%. So current study reached the conclusion that age level is not a predictor of bandwagon effect.

To explore this phenomenon a step further academic level of the undergraduate students was used to analyze the interactive effect of academic level factor and stress. Independent variable academic level factor and stress as dependent variable was used. The results indicated that there is no significant impact of academic level factor β=-.059 p>.005 on stress by producing variance of 00%. The overall model was not significant, and we can safely say that academic level is not a predictor of stress. Levels are stress vary across academic disciplines but there are other factors that predict stress. Simple liner regression was used to analyze interactive effect of academic level of the student's factor and narcissism. For this purpose, independent variable academic level of the undergraduate students and dependent variable narcissism was used to. The result showed no

significant impact of academic level factor on levels of narcissism with values β=-.044 p>.005 by producing a variance of 00%.

The overall model was not significant. Therefore, academic level is not a predictor of narcissism. In the next stage simple liner regression as used to analyze interactive effect of the academic level of the undergraduate students and the dependent variable bandwagon effect. The results indicated that there was no positive impact of the academic level of the students on bandwagon effect with the values β= -.022 p> .005 by producing a variance of 00%. Therefore, this research is on the point of view that academic level is not a predictor of the bandwagon effect. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected that the age and academic level of undergraduate students are predictors of narcissism, stress, and bandwagon effect.

The more he exposures himself to the more he is likely to jump on the bandwagon which means he is more prone to do things that are popular on social media without giving a second thought.

5. Conclusion

This research aimed to investigate the relationship between social media addiction, age, academic rank, and the bandwagon effect among undergraduate students. The study employed a quantitative approach, utilizing a survey questionnaire to gather data from 659 undergraduate students. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between the addictive use of social media and the bandwagon effect. This suggests that students who are heavily addicted to social media are more likely to exhibit bandwagon behavior, conforming to popular trends and opinions without critical evaluation. However, age and academic rank were not found to be significant predictors of the bandwagon effect.

The study also explored the relationship between academic faculty and the bandwagon effect. While no significant correlation was found between these variables, the results suggest that students from different academic disciplines may exhibit varying levels of bandwagon behavior. Overall, the study's findings highlight the pervasive influence of social media on undergraduate students' behavior. The addictive nature of social media can lead to conformity and a lack of independent thought, particularly among those who are heavily invested in online platforms. These findings have implications for educational institutions and policymakers, as they underscore the importance of promoting critical thinking skills and responsible social media use among young people.

Future research directions could delve deeper into the specific factors that contribute to the development of social media addiction and its impact on the bandwagon effect. Additionally, exploring the long-term consequences of excessive social media use on academic performance, mental health, and social relationships would provide valuable insights.

In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into the complex interplay between social media addiction, age, academic rank, and the bandwagon effect among undergraduate students. By understanding these relationships, educators and policymakers can develop strategies to mitigate

the negative consequences of excessive social media use and promote responsible digital citizenship.

5.1 Recommendations

5.1.1 Implement Comprehensive Social Media Education Programs

Educational institutions should integrate comprehensive social media education programs into their curricula. These programs should cover topics such as:

a) Teaching students how to evaluate information critically and identify biases in social media content.
b) Promoting responsible social media use, including setting limits on screen time, avoiding excessive comparisons, and fostering positive online interactions.
c) Emphasizing the importance of online etiquette, respect for others, and understanding the potential consequences of online actions.

5.1.2 Foster a Supportive Learning Environment

Schools should create a supportive learning environment that encourages independent thought, critical inquiry, and a sense of belonging. This can be achieved through:

a) Encouraging students to work together on projects that require critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
b) Pairing students with mentors who can provide guidance and support.
c) Promoting a sense of belonging and respect for diverse perspectives.

5.1.3 Conduct Further Research

To gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between social media addiction, age, academic rank, and the bandwagon effect, additional research is needed. Future studies could explore:

a) Investigating the long-term impacts of excessive social media use on academic performance, mental health, and social relationships.
b) Identifying factors that may influence susceptibility to social media addiction and the bandwagon effect, such as personality traits, cognitive abilities, and family background.
c) Developing and evaluating effective interventions to help individuals reduce their reliance on social media and develop healthier digital habits.

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