Scroll Down Syndrome

Adesh Kumar Agrawal[1*], Rahul Verma[1] and Soumitra Das[2]

[1]Department of Psychiatry, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore, India

[2]Consultant Psychiatrist, Melbourne Health, Australia

[*]**Corresponding author:** Agrawal AK, MD (Psychiatry), Postdoctoral fellow (Geriatric Psychiatry), Senior Resident; Department of Psychiatry, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore-560029, India, Tel: +91-9414975201; E-mail: dradeshnimhans@gmail.com

Dear sir/ma'am,

We can't imagine the present world without the internet. The 'healthy internet use' can be described as the use of the internet to achieve a desired and appropriate goal without any physical or psychological discomfort. According to Internet World Stats, 2021, 59.5% of the world population use the internet [1]. Most of the internet users are from the Asian continent (50.9%) and Northern Europe has the highest penetrance of internet use (95%) (Internet World Stats 2021). In INDIA 755 million people use the internet and thus making it the second-largest country after CHINA in global internet use [1]. Today, the internet has become an important part of any person's life. Internet users can be either searcher, socializer, downloader, shopper, gamer, etc. Over the past 10 years, internet use has been dramatically increased especially with the advent of smartphones which has made the internet accessible and cheaper.

By nature, a human is a social animal. With time, a lot of change has happened in the human's social network. Social networks are defined as 'interactions between humans' in the real world, as well as in the virtual world. The latter one has become synonymous of social network in the present time. Social media is an internet-based technology that enables social networking at the virtual level. Consumers spend an insane amount of time every day on social media leading to human life to the point of multiphrenia. The most popular social media platforms are Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram. There is a narrow dividing line beyond which the use of social media becomes inept.

Scroll down phenomena: Due to the interesting content and entertaining nature of social media applications, it creates a desire in a person to share their thoughts and defines themselves leading to a sort of dependency on social media. This dependency creates an intense impulse to post or at least open the application to see what is happening, this impulse overtakes the control, and the user usually opens and keeps scrolling up and down to have a look for what's happening. This scrolling gives a sense

of pleasure or relief to people who are likely dependent on social media and these people are usually found repeatedly opening the social media applications and scrolling the page without bothering about the place or situation. If the smartphone is with them, they will be found repeatedly scrolling. Many times, the scrolling is meaningless and mindless as it becomes a habit. It becomes an infinite process. Various negative psychological phenomena are associated with excessive use of social platforms and scrolling continuously. These are like fear of missing out, anxiety, subsyndromal depression, poor sleep, sensitivity to rejection, the feeling of loneliness. A survey done on UK citizens shows that 4.5 million users use their smartphones while crossing the road that can lead to road traffic accidents. Also, continuous scrolling over the phone causes significant fluctuation in the vision. It leads to fatigability of the eye muscles and accommodation difficulty later.

Factors increasing use of social media: According to 'Technology Acceptance Models' given by Davis and his colleagues in 1989, whenever a person intends to use the internet, it is mainly preceded by its perceived usefulness and easiness of the technology. These perceived factors are influenced by in-person or environmental stimuli. The complex interaction between these factors creates particular use-behaviour in social media users 2.

Other factors could be 1) Relevance- Users of social media applications have the option to choose the content of their wish, making it more interesting leading to more time expenditure on it. 2)Availability- The needs of today have become easily available and accessible through the internet including the people who are in much contact through it. 3) Content- The contents posted on social media will be mostly short and frequently changing thus maintaining the interest of users. 4) Easy to use- All the social media applications are available with just one touch easy to use, generating more interest for the users. Apart from these factors younger age, male gender, with a physical allurement body image and a disinhibited, neurotic, and extraverted personality are factors which make a person vulnerable to utilize social media a lot [3].

Behavior associated with the use of social media: Common behaviors identified on social networking sites are (1) social investigation that means a user searches for information about others. (2) social affiliation to build up the bonding and interaction on social networking sites (SNSs). (3) the time spent over the SNSs (4) imposing or proving their images on SNSs and for having reciprocity on the social platform [4].

How to Overcome Scroll Down Syndrome

Scroll down is a component of internet addiction and has potential adverse effects as mentioned above. Psychosocial interventions play a key role to overcome scroll down syndrome that mainly focus on reducing a patient's symptoms and improving functioning and well-being. As total abstinence is not possible, controlled use is the main aim of the treatment. Motivational interviewing helps people to develop insight into their behavior and motivate them to change their problem behavior [4]. Cognitive-behavioral therapy includes activity scheduling and restructuring the daily life, detailed behavioral analysis of excessing use of social media and scrolling, identify the external triggers which indulge the person to use excessive SNSs, setting goals, uninstalling the certain application from the device and use of certain reminder application in the device. Apart from these measures family assessment and if requires family therapy also may help [5]. A well systematic research is needed to assess the scrolling behaviour and its impact on mental health while using SNSs.

REFERENCES

1. Internet World Stats; Usage and Population Statistics. 2021. [cited on 20th Nov, 2021]. Available from: https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm (last accessed on 1st Feb, 2022)

2. Davis FD. Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology. MIS Q. 19891;3(3):318-40.

3. Kuss DJ, Griffiths MD, Binder JF. Internet addiction in students: Prevalence and risk factors. Comput Human Behav. 2013;29(3):959-66.

4. Sharma MK, Palanichamy TS. Psychosocial interventions for technological addictions. Indian J Psychiatry. 2018;60(Suppl 4):S541-5.

5. Waheed H, Anjum M, Rehman M, et al. Investigation of user behavior on social networking sites. PloS one. 2017;12(2):e0169693.