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# The Emotional Intelligence and Social Media Addiction in Communication Undergraduate Students in Turkey: The Impact of Emotional Intelligence, Demographic Variables and Social Media Use Habits on Social Media Addiction

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## ABSTRACT

This study's aim is to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and social media addiction (SMA) in Communication undergraduate students in Turkey. In addition to EI, the impact of demographic variables and social media use habits on SMA were investigated. For the study, quantitative method was chosen, and an online questionnaire was conducted on 317 Communication undergraduate students in Turkey with 301 participants being the final sample from different cities in Turkey. As a result of the study, analyses indicated that EI and SMA were related at medium and low levels. The EI partly predicted SMA. It was determined with Path analysis that intrapersonal skills, dealing with stress and adaptability could be statistically significant predictors of SMA sub-dimensions virtual tolerance and virtual communication at a negative level, and time spent on social media, number of posts on social media could have a significant impact on students' SMA at a positive level. This research differs from other research conducted in Turkey in terms of SMA being examined with the focus of EI.

## KEY WORDS

Communication Undergraduate Students. Emotional Intelligence. Social Media Addiction. Virtual Communication. Virtual Tolerance.

# 1 Introduction

People with higher EI are socially compatible and self-aware individuals, and they are more satisfied with their lives<sup>1</sup> and individuals with self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, social awareness (recognizing emotions in Others) and relationship management are more successful in social and business life.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand EI means perception and expression of emotions, assimilating emotion in thought, awareness, understanding and analysing emotion, plus finally reflective regulation of emotion.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, high EI is seen in persons who are successful in controlling impulses or managing stress.<sup>4</sup>

Although there are studies revealing the relationship between social media addiction and emotional intelligence level, the number of studies on this topic is limited in Turkey<sup>5</sup>, and there are no studies for the same type of sample group. Communication undergraduate students are a crucial sample group because of their training in interpersonal communication, media literacy and use of social media. In this study, it is assumed that intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability (adapting to new situations), stress management (stress tolerance and impulse control), and general mood (happiness and optimism) at Bar-On's EI parameter are related to SMA. The main goal of this study is to demonstrate the effect of EI on SMA and the predictor relationships between these two variables. It was investigated how in addition to EI, demographic variables and social media use habits affect SMA.

## 2 The Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

### 2.1 Social Media Addiction as Behavioural Disorder

Communication practices in social media and social networks are gaining more and more functionality especially among young people. The percentage of social media use in Turkey is around 70.3%<sup>6</sup> (data updated in 2023 September). We are Social has disclosed the data that shows this duration is increasing with each passing year. Young people and adolescents in particular are using social networks more and more in order to communicate with others<sup>7</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> BAR-ON, R.: The Bar-On Model of Emotional-Social Intelligence (ESI). In *Psicothema*, 2006, Vol. 18, p. 13. See also: PETRIDES, K. V., FURNHAM, A.: Trait Emotional Intelligence: Psychometric Investigation with Reference to Established Trait Taxonomies. In *European Journal of Personality*, 2001, Vol. 15, No. 6, p. 451.

<sup>2</sup> See: GOLEMAN, D.: *Duygusal Zeka*. Istanbul : Varlik Publications, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> See: MAYER, J. D., SALOVEY, P.: What Is Emotional Intelligence? In SALOVEY, P., SLUYTER, D. J. (eds.): *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence: Implications for Educators*. New York : Basic Books, 1997, p. 3-31.

<sup>4</sup> PARKER, J. D. A., SUMMERFELDT, L. J., HOGAN, M. J. et al.: Emotional Intelligence and Academic Success: Examining the Transition from High School to University. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2004, Vol. 36, No. 1, p. 165; See also: HILL, E. M., MAGGI, S.: Emotional Intelligence and Smoking: Protective and Risk Factors Among Canadian Young Adults. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2011, Vol. 51, No. 1, p. 45.

<sup>5</sup> See: KIRCABURUN, K., GRIFFITHS, D. M., BILLIEUX, J.: Trait Emotional Intelligence and Problematic Online Behaviours Among Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Mindfulness, Rumination, and Depression. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2019, Vol. 139, p. 208-213. See also: SÜRAL, I., GRIFFITHS, D. M., KIRCABURUN, K. et al.: Trait Emotional Intelligence and Problematic Social Media Use Among Adults: The Mediating Role of Social Media Use Motives. In *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 2019, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 336-345.

<sup>6</sup> *We Are Social*. [online]. [2023-09-30]. Available at: <<https://wearesocial.com/digital-2021>>.

<sup>7</sup> KELES, B., MCCRAE, N., GREALISH, A.: A Systematic Review: The Influence of Social Media on Depression, Anxiety and Psychological Distress in Adolescents. In *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 2020, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 90; See also: ORBEN, A., DIENLIN, T., PRZYBYLSKI, K. A.: Social Media's Enduring Effect on Adolescent Life Satisfaction. In *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2019, Vol. 116, No. 21, p. 2.

and they form a higher risk group in SMA<sup>8</sup>, which is considered as a behavioural disorder.<sup>9</sup> Adolescence is considered a period of difficulties and inconsistencies in emotional, mental and interpersonal relationships.

Findings of the research based on SMA were positively associated with negative personality traits such as narcissism<sup>10</sup> and negatively associated with agreeableness, conscientiousness, and self-liking.<sup>11</sup> SMA increases in relation to loneliness<sup>12</sup>, psychological problem, low self-esteem<sup>13</sup>, avoiding negative emotions and reality<sup>14</sup>, desire to establish virtual relationships.<sup>15</sup> In addition, there is a positive significant relationship between SMA and factors such as the frequency of updating profile information, number of friends<sup>16</sup> form of interaction on social media<sup>17</sup> and time spent on social media.<sup>18</sup>

- <sup>8</sup> WARTBERG, L., THOMASIU, R., PASCHKE, K.: The Relevance of Emotion Regulation, Procrastination, and Perceived Stress for Problematic Social Media Use in a Representative Sample of Children and Adolescents. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2021, Vol. 121, No. 12. No pagination.
- <sup>9</sup> DINC, M., TOPCU, F.: The Relation Between Resilience and Problematic Internet Use among Youth. In *Düşünen Adam: The Journal of Psychiatry and Neurological Sciences*, 2021, Vol. 36, No. 34, p. 342. See also: JIANG, Q., HUANG, X., TAO, R.: Examining Factors Influencing Internet Addiction and Adolescent Risk Behaviors among Excessive Internet Users. In *Health Communication*, 2018, Vol. 33, No. 12, p. 1442.
- <sup>10</sup> ANDREASSEN, C. S., PALLESEN, S., GRIFFITHS, M. D.: The Relationship Between Addictive Use of Social Media, Narcissism, and Self-Esteem: Findings from a Large National Survey. In *Addictive Behaviors*, 2017, Vol. 64, p. 291. See also: KARADAĞ, A., AKÇINAR, B.: The Relationship Between Social Media Addiction and Psychological Symptoms in University Students. In *Journal of Dependence*, 2019, Vol. 20, No. 3, p. 163-164. [online]. [2023-10-10]. Available at: <<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/bagimli/issue/45814/599296>>; BRAILOVSKAIA, J., ROHMANN, E., RAEDER, F. et al.: The Relationship Between Narcissism, Intensity of Facebook Use, Facebook Flow and Facebook Addiction. In *Addictive Behaviors Reports*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 276, p. 1-7.
- <sup>11</sup> See: KIRCABURUN, K., GRIFFITHS, M. D.: Instagram Addiction and the Big Five of Personality: The Mediating Role of Self-Liking. In *Journal of Behavioral Addictions*, 2018, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 158-170.
- <sup>12</sup> CEYHAN, A. A., CEYHAN, E.: Loneliness, Depression, and Computer Self-Efficacy as Predictors of Problematic Internet Use. In *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 2008, Vol. 11, No. 6, p. 701.
- <sup>13</sup> EŞKISU, M. et al.: Trait Mindfulness as a Protective Factor in Connections Between Psychological Issues and Facebook Addiction among Turkish University Students. In *Studia Psychologica*, 2020, Vol. 62, No. 3, p. 225. [online]. [2023-09-09]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.31577/sp.2020.03.801>>. See also: MAMUN, M. A., HOSSAIN, M. S., MOONAJILIN, M. S. et al.: Does Loneliness, Self-Esteem and Psychological Distress Correlate with Problematic Internet Use? A Bangladeshi Survey Study. In *Asia-Pacific Psychiatry*, 2020, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 6.
- <sup>14</sup> TUTGUN ÜNAL, A.: A Comparative Study of Social Media Addiction among Turkish and Korean University Students. In *Journal of Economy Culture and Society*, 2020, Vol. 62, p. 318-319. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.26650/JECS2020-0064>>. See also: KIRCABURUN, K., GRIFFITHS, M. D.: Problematic Instagram Use: The Role of Perceived Feeling of Presence and Escapism. In *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 2019, Vol. 17, No. 4, p. 918.
- <sup>15</sup> YOUNG, N. L., KUSS, D. J., GRIFFITHS, M. D. et al.: Passive Facebook Use, Facebook Addiction, and Associations with Escapism: An Experimental Vignette Study. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 71, p. 29-30.
- <sup>16</sup> ÇÖMLEKÇİ, M. F., BAŞOL, O.: Analysis of Relationship Between Youths' Social Media Usage Motives and Social Media Addiction. In *Manisa Celal Bayar University Journal of Social Sciences*, 2019, Vol. 17, No. 4, p. 183-184. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.18026/cbayarsos.525652>>. See also: HAWI, N., SAMAHA, M.: Identifying Commonalities and Differences in Personality Characteristics of Internet and Social Media Addiction Profiles: Traits, Self-Esteem, and Self-Construal. In *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 2, p. 116.
- <sup>17</sup> BOOKER, C. L., KELLY, Y. J., SACKER, A.: Gender Differences in the Associations Between Age Trends of Social Media Interaction and Well-Being Among 10-15 Year Olds in the UK. In *BMC Public Health*, 2018, Vol. 18, No. 361, p. 11.
- <sup>18</sup> HUANG, C.: Time Spent on Social Network Sites and Psychological Well-Being: A Meta-Analysis. In *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, 2017, Vol. 20, No. 6, p. 353.

The desire to spend more time on social media can become more and more irresistible.<sup>19</sup> Inability to control the impulses creates problematic behaviour; thus, the tolerance threshold rises.<sup>20</sup> As individuals feel alone in real social life and frequency of contact with social network members, the time they spend on social media increases, which increases their level of addiction.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand the level of social media addiction increases once social satisfaction is fulfilled through meeting social and psychological needs with the friendships virtual communication provides<sup>22</sup>, and relationship maintenance motives were found to be associated with interaction in the fake world, more frequent social media use is desired. Thus, happiness of being on social media turns into unhappiness.

We explored the hypotheses based on literature on SMA that:

H1: The (a) age, (b) gender and (c) time spent on social media and (d) number of posts on social media are significant predictors of SMA virtual tolerance (VT) level of Communication undergraduate students in Turkey.

H2: The (a) age, (b) gender and (c) time spent on social media and (d) number of posts on social media are significant predictors of SMA virtual communication (VC) level of Communication undergraduate students in Turkey.

### 3 Emotional Intelligence

EI research has expanded significantly over the past decade. Data from children, adolescents, and adult samples demonstrates that EI scores are associated with a variety of variables. The people's EI can be associated with their personal trait<sup>23</sup> or demographic variables. The previous studies have reported higher adaptability, but lower stress management or females<sup>24</sup>, and higher trait EI for males.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, it was determined that professional and academic success<sup>26</sup> are

<sup>19</sup> GRIFFITHS, M.: A 'Components' Model of Addiction Within a Biopsychosocial Framework. In *Journal of Substance Use*, 2005, Vol. 10, No. 4, p. 194.

<sup>20</sup> See: ANDREASSEN, C. S.: Online Social Network Site Addiction: A Comprehensive Review. In *Current Addiction Reports*, 2015, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 175-184.

<sup>21</sup> ZHANG, K., KIM, K., SONG, Q. et al.: Social Media Communication and Loneliness Among Older Adults: The Mediating Roles of Social Support and Social Contact. In *The Gerontologist*, 2021, Vol. 61, No. 6, p. 890. See also: BALCI, Ş., BALOĞLU, E.: The Relationship Between Social Media Addiction and Depression: "A Survey Among University Youth". In *İletişim*, 2018, No. 29, p. 221. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.16878/gsuilet.500860>>.

<sup>22</sup> KIM, C., SHEN, C.: Connecting Activities on Social Network Sites and Life Satisfaction: A Comparison of Older and Younger Users. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2020, Vol. 105, p. 5. See also: ORBEN, A., DIENLIN, T., PRZYBYLSKI, A. K.: Social Media's Enduring Effect on Adolescent Life Satisfaction. In *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2019, Vol. 116, No. 21, p. 10226.; PUNYANUNT-CARTER, N. M., DE LA CRUZ, J. J., WRENCH, J. S.: Investigating the Relationships Among College Students' Satisfaction, Addiction, Needs, Communication Apprehension, Motives, and Uses & Gratifications with Snapchat. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 75, p. 874.

<sup>23</sup> KESZEI, D. C.: *Social Media and Emotional Intelligence: A Qualitative Analysis of the Relationship Between Social Media Utilization and Over the Post-Millennial's Emotional Intelligence*. [Unpublished Doctoral Thesis]. California : Pepperdine University, 2021, p. 91. See also: DENZ, M. E., ÖZER, E., İŞİK, E.: Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form: Validity and Reliability Studies. In *Education and Science*, 2013, Vol. 38, No. 169, p. 407-419. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://toad.halileksi.net/olcek/duygusal-zeka-ozelligi-olcegi-kisa-formu-dzoo-kf>>.

<sup>24</sup> HILL, E. M., MAGGI, S.: Emotional Intelligence and Smoking: Protective and Risk Factors Among Canadian Young Adults. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2011, Vol. 51, No. 1, p. 49.

<sup>25</sup> KIRCABURUN, K., GRIFFITHS, M. D., BILLIEUX, J.: Trait Emotional Intelligence and Problematic Online Behaviors Among Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Mindfulness, Rumination, and Depression. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2019, Vol. 139, p. 209.; FURNHAM, A., BUCHANAN, T.: Personality, Gender, and Self-Perceived Intelligence. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2005, Vol. 39, No. 3, p. 548.

<sup>26</sup> PARKER, J. D. A., SUMMERFELDT, L. J., HOGAN, M. J. et al.: Emotional Intelligence and Academic Success: Examining the Transition from High School to University. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2004, Vol. 36, No. 1, p. 170.

connected to EI. The several studies have suggested that there is a positive relationship between EI with dealing with problems<sup>27</sup> and well-being, life satisfaction<sup>28</sup>, and a negative relationship between EI and depression and anxiety.<sup>29</sup> Optimism, stress management are positively related to the level of EI of individuals.<sup>30</sup>

Many users of social media are motivated by social interaction and self-presentation.<sup>31</sup> The frequent smartphone users tend to seek social support and lack a certain degree of emotional and social skills.<sup>32</sup> Individuals who do not use Facebook have higher interpersonal relationship management than individuals who use Facebook and Instagram<sup>33</sup>, and self-awareness, lower self-esteem and EI are the predictors of social media use.<sup>34</sup> The individuals with lower EI increase their use of social media as a way of coping with their real-life problems and stress<sup>35</sup>, and this relationship is explained by increased perceived stress, and subsequently, more depressive symptoms. According to a finding of a study conducted in Turkey, it has been shown that creating a more popular impression of individuals as a motivation for using social media and spending time on social media has a mediating effect on EI and SMA.<sup>36</sup> In another study, it has shown that there is a relationship between EI with problematic social media use and problematic online gaming.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>27</sup> MIKOLAJCZAK, M., LUMINET, O.: Trait Emotional Intelligence and the Cognitive Appraisal of Stressful Events: An Exploratory Study. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2008, Vol. 44, No. 7, p. 1450-1453.

<sup>28</sup> DENIZ, M. E., ERUS, S. M., BÜYÜKCEBECİ, A.: Relationship Between Mindfulness and Psychological Well-Being: The Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence. In *Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Journal*, 2017, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 17. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/tpdrd/issue/42743/515880>>. See also: KONG, F., ZHAO, J.: Affective Mediators of the Relationship Between Trait Emotional Intelligence and Life Satisfaction in Young Adults. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2013, Vol. 54, No. 2, p. 199.; PLATSIDOU, M.: Trait Emotional Intelligence Predicts Happiness, But How? An Empirical Study in Adolescents and Young Adults. In *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2013, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 206. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://www.internationaljournalofwellbeing.org/index.php/ijow/article/view/223>>.

<sup>29</sup> RESURRECCIÓN, D. M., SALGUERO, J. M., RUIZ-ARANDA, D.: Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Maladjustment in Adolescence: A Systematic Review. In *Journal of Adolescence*, 2014, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 470.

<sup>30</sup> GOHM, C. L., CORSER, G. C., DALSKY, D. J.: Emotional Intelligence under Stress: Useful, Unnecessary, or Irrelevant? In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2005, Vol. 39, No. 6, p. 1023.

<sup>31</sup> GAO, W., LIU, Z., LI, J.: How Does Social Presence Influence SNS Addiction? A Belongingness Theory Perspective. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 77, p. 350. See also: WEI, X., XU, G., WANG, H. et al.: Sensing Users' Emotional Intelligence in Social Networks. In *IEEE Transactions on Computational Social Systems*, 2020, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 108.

<sup>32</sup> WANG, S., ZHANG, D.: The Impact of Perceived Social Support on Students' Pathological Internet Use: The Mediating Effect of Perceived Personal Discrimination and Moderating Effect of Emotional Intelligence. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2020, Vol. 106, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> PANDITHARADHYULA, R., KUMAR, P. K.: Impact of Biographical Variables and Social Networking Platforms on Emotional Intelligence Among Adolescents. In *International Journal of Science and Research*, 2018, Vol. 7, No. 5, p. 1323-1324. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://www.ijsr.net/archive/v7i5/ART20182834.pdf>>.

<sup>34</sup> CHANDEL, P. K., GUPTA, N.: The Impact of Time Spent on Social Media On Emotional Intelligence of Adolescents. In *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 2018, Vol. 5, No. 9, p. 582. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://www.jetir.org/view?paper=JETIR1809729>>.

<sup>35</sup> ASLAN, Ş., GÜZEL, Ş.: The Relationships Between the Emotional Intelligence, Coping with Problem-Focused Stress, Recovery and Emotional Exhaustion. In *Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 2018, Vol. 16, No. 31, p. 76. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/698548>>. See also: BARBAR, S., HADDAD, CH., SACRE, H. et al.: Factors Associated with Problematic Social Media Use Among a Sample of Lebanese Adults: The Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence. In *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 2020, Vol. 57, No. 3, p. 1313-1322.

<sup>36</sup> See: SÜRAL, I., GRIFFITHS, D. M., KIRCABURUN, K. et al.: Trait Emotional Intelligence and Problematic Social Media Use Among Adults: The Mediating Role of Social Media Use Motives. In *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 2019, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 336-345.

<sup>37</sup> See: KIRCABURUN, K., GRIFFITHS, D. M., BILLIEUX, J.: Trait Emotional Intelligence and Problematic Online Behaviours Among Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Mindfulness, Rumination, and Depression. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2019, Vol. 139, p. 208-213.

We explored the hypotheses based on the literature on EI that:

H3: The (a) intrapersonal skills, (b) interpersonal skills, (c) adaptability, (d) dealing with stress, and (e) general mood are a significant predictors of the SMA virtual tolerance (VT) level of Communication undergraduate students in Turkey.

H4: The (a) intrapersonal skills, (b) interpersonal skills, (c) adaptability, (d) dealing with stress, and (e) general mood are a significant predictor of the SMA virtual communication (VC) level of Communication undergraduate students in Turkey.

## **4 Methodology**

### **4.1 The Aim of the Study**

The literature review has shown that social media addiction which is a behavioural disorder, is seen as a result or a cause of factors like social media use habits, personal traits, avoiding stress, depression, anxiety, stress, mood modification and interaction. The level of emotional intelligence which constitutes intrapersonal traits, social behaviour skills, adapting to society and environment, and dealing with stress shapes the individual's attitudes and behaviours. Within this context, the main problem of this study is the predictor impact of emotional intelligence on social media addiction and the relationships between these two variables. Furthermore, with the study it is researched if gender and age etc., demographic variables, social media use habits and emotional intelligence affects social media addiction.

### **4.2 Participants**

The participants in this study comprise communication undergraduate students who use social media in Turkey. The sample of the study was determined with the purposeful convenience sampling method according to their educational status and the traits of being between the ages of 18 and 35 and being social media users. Communication undergraduate students were a sample that needed to be examined and expected to be controlled users because of their training in interpersonal communication, media literacy, use of social media etc. Moreover, with the snowball method, larger groups were reached. The participants are Communication undergraduate students, and people from 56 out of 81 cities in Turkey participated in the study. Participants who answered the questionnaire were 68.1% (n= 205) female, and 31.9% male (n=96). The average age of the respondents is 22.40, and the average monthly income is 951.39 ₺.

### **4.3 Procedure**

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic an online questionnaire was designed, and social media users answered the questionnaire. The necessary questionnaire data for the research were collected between April 29 and May 27, 2021. The questions were uploaded to [www.surveeey.com](http://www.surveeey.com) website and shared on social networks. First of all, the participants were asked to tick the informative consent box to show that they participate in the survey voluntarily. The anonymity was ensured by not including any personal information. The questionnaire was filled out by 317 people, but those who did not comply with the age limit and those who marked "I strongly disagree" for the statement "I answered the above statements sincerely" were not included in the analysis. Thus, 301 participants comprised the final sample.

## 4.4 Data Collection

In the questionnaire prepared for the study, there were items to determine the demographic features of the participants such as gender, age and income, to measure their social media use habits, to measure their EI level and their SMA level. The questionnaire consisted of 90 items in total.<sup>38</sup>

*Emotional Quotient Inventory (Bar-10 EQ-i)*: In 1988, Reuvaen Bar-On<sup>39</sup> brought a different perspective. A short version of the inventory that was created by Çarıkçı et al.<sup>40</sup> was used in the study. The scale included 59 items measuring 5 dimensions that explain EI. It consisted of 20 items for intrapersonal skills (IntraPS), 12 items for interpersonal skills (IPS), 11 items for adaptability (AD), 7 items for dealing with stress (DWS), and 9 items for measuring general mood (GM). The scale used in the study is a 5 Likert scale. For each item, the individuals were asked to choose an option from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The authors found the reliability of scale between 0.86 and 0.58 (Cronbach's Alpha).

*Social Media Addiction Scale- Adult Form (SMAS-AF)*: SMAS-AF was created by Şahin & Yağcı.<sup>41</sup> The scale also includes 2 sub-dimensions (virtual tolerance-VB and virtual communication- VC). 5-point Likert 20 items which are I don't agree (1) and I strongly agree (5) were used. After the analysis for construct validity, the model was found to be efficient ( $X^2/df=3.05$ ;  $sd=190$ ,  $p=000$ ;  $RMSA=.059$ ;  $SRMR=.60$ ;  $NFI=.59$ ;  $CFI=.96$ ;  $GFI=.90$ ;  $AGFI=.88$ ). The reliability coefficients were found as .91 for virtual tolerance subscale, and 0.90 for virtual communication subscale by Şahin and Yağcı.

## 4.5 Data Analysis

Since the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of EI and SMA questionnaire scores were between +1 and -1 while EI and SMA figures range normally<sup>42</sup>, parametric methods were used in the analysis. The analysis of the data was conducted with SPSS 26.0, AMOS 21.0 applications. For categorical variables, descriptive analysis results were given. Reliability coefficients of the scales were calculated with Cronbach's Alpha. To determine if the variables showed any difference according to demographic features or social media use habits, independent samples, T-Test and one-way ANOVA were performed. Pearson Correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between variables, and multiple regression analysis was implemented to determine the effective factors on dependent variables. As a result of testing the model, SEM-Path analysis results for goodness of fit are examined.

<sup>38</sup> Authors' note: The design of this study was approved by Social and Human Sciences Ethic Review Board which was the institution of researchers.

<sup>39</sup> BAR-ON, R.: The Bar-On Model of Emotional-Social Intelligence (ESI). In *Psicothema*, 2006, Vol. 18, p. 21.

<sup>40</sup> See: ÇARIKÇI, İ., KANTEN, S., KANTEN, P.: A Research on Determining the Relationships Among Personality, Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Citizenship Behaviours. In *Journal of Süleyman Demirel University Institute of Social Sciences*, 2010, Vol. 1, No. 11, p. 51-54. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/sbe/issue/23191/247722>>.

<sup>41</sup> See: ŞAHİN, C., YAĞCI, M.: Social Media Addiction Scale – Adult Form: The Reliability and Validity Study. In *Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2017, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 523-538. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322037237>>.

<sup>42</sup> See: HOPKINS, K. D., WEEKS, D. L.: Tests for Normality and Measures of Skewness and Kurtosis: Their Place in Research Reporting. In *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 1990, Vol. 50, No. 4, p. 717-729.

## 5 Results

In the findings part of the study, participants' emotional and SMA levels, and social media use habits, the relationship between dependent and independent variables and other variables affecting the dependent variable are presented.

Among the people who answered the questionnaire, 99.3% of them connect to social media mostly on their mobile phones, and 72.1% use social media for entertainment. 96% of the participants have been using social media for more than 7 years, Instagram is the most used at 94.4%. 53.2% of them spend 1 to 3 hours on social media while 44.2% of them have never shared a post (see Table 1).

		n	%
Gender	Female	205	68.1
	Male	96	31.9
The device used to log in social media	Mobile phone	299	99.3
	Tablet	22	7.3
	Computer	97	32.2
The aim of using social media	Entertainment	217	72.1
	Message	196	65.1
	Being informed and education	203	67.4
	Receive information	212	70.4
	Avoid problems	55	18.3
	Socializing / Interaction	184	61.1
	Update personal page	48	15.9
Used social media websites	Other	33	11.0
	Facebook	97	32.2
	Twitter	197	65.4
	Instagram	284	94.4
	YouTube	256	85.0
	Pinterest	75	24.9
Time used social media in years	Other	37	12.3
	None	3	1.0
	1-3 years	3	1.0
	4-6 years	6	2.0
Average time spent on social media daily	More than 7	289	96.0
	0 - 59 minutes	33	11.0
	1-3 hours	160	53.2
	4-6 hours	89	29.6
Number of posts on social media	More than 7 hours	19	6.3
	None	133	44.2
	1	108	35.9
	2-3	23	7.6
	3 and more	37	12.3

**TABLE 1:** Social media use habits of communication undergraduate students in Turkey

Source: own processing, 2023

## 5.1 Validity and Reliability of the Scales

The adaptation of Bar-10 EQ-i and SMAS-AF scale to Turkish was done previously, so Cronbach's Alpha test and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were applied in order to determine the internal consistency and construct validity of scales of the study. The analysis results of Bar-10 EQ-i and SMAS-AF subscales are given in Table 2.

Index	Acceptable Fit	SMA	IntraPS	IPS	AD	DWS	GM
X <sup>2</sup>	x	357.027	217.263	100.309	79.320	22.281	59.756
sd	x	124	113	50	30	7	16
X <sup>2</sup> /sd	≤ 5	2.879	1.923	2.006	2.644	3.183	3.735
RMR	≤ 0.08	0.089	0.059	0.036	0.079	0.082	0.065
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.908	0.923	0.947	0.951	0.976	0.955
AGFI	≥ 0.85	0.855	0.896	0.917	0.910	0.928	0.898
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.902	0.939	0.963	0.954	0.972	0.954
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.079	0.055	0.058	0.074	0.085	0.085
Number of Items		VT:9-VC:9	17	12	10	6	8
Cronbach's Alpha		VT:0.869 VC:0.866	0.845	0.870	0.720	0.756	0.814

VT: Virtual tolerance dimension, VS: virtual communication dimension

**TABLE 2:** SMA and EI scale CFA fit indexes

Source: own processing, 2023

For intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills and adaptability scales, second level CFA was used, and for dealing with stress and general mood scales first level CFA was used. The indexes are provided with item extraction and modifications. Some items (6 item) were excluded since their factor load was low ( $\beta < .300$ ). Scale validity was achieved. According to calculated reliability co-efficient, the item reliabilities of intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability, dealing with stress and general mood were found to be high (Cronbach's Alpha: between .72 and .87).

In the SMAS-AF scale, first level CFA is used. With item extraction and modifications, indexes were provided. Some items (SMA\_ VT7 and SMA\_ VT11 ) were excluded since their factor load was low ( $\beta < .300$ ), and scale validity was achieved (Table 2). It was found that the reliability of scales and subscales are high (Cronbach Alfa for virtual tolerance dimension: .86; for virtual communication dimension: .86).

## 5.2 Comparing in Term of Socio-Demographic Variables of SMA and EI

The minimum and maximum points from the scales, medium and standard deviations, levels and percentages of scales are given (see Table 3 for justification).

	Min.	Max.	Med.	Sd.	Frequency %	Skewness	Kurtosis
Virtual Tolerance (VT)	9	45	25.13	8.09	33.2	0,12	-0,49
Virtual Communication (VC)	9	45	22.65	7.59	20.9	0,38	-0,03
Intrapersonal Skills (IntraPS)	38	85	67.60	9.19	60	-0,57	0,44
Interpersonal Skills (IPS)	29	60	51.03	6.57	54.5	-0,92	1,16
Adaptability (AD)	12	50	35.93	6.01	48.8	-0,61	0,69
Dealing with Stress (DWS)	7	30	19.53	4.77	36.2	-0,12	-0,30
General Mood (GM)	8	40	29.99	5.99	39.9	-0,62	0,27

**TABLE 3:** SMA and EI level of communication undergraduate students in Turkey

Source: own processing, 2023

Independent groups t-Test and one-way ANOVA tests are applied on the data gathered from the study, and whether SMA and EI differ according to demographic data and social media use habits was determined.

According to the data, in terms of SMA level, gender is not a determining variable. There is no significant difference between women and men ( $p > .05$ ). There is a statistically significant difference between different age groups in terms of virtual tolerance score ( $F(3; 300)_{4 < 1 < 3} = 5.363, p < .05$ ). The virtual tolerance level is higher between ages 24-26. There is a statistically significant difference between women and men in terms of interpersonal skills and general mood scores. Women have higher scores on interpersonal skills ( $M = 51.78, SD = 6.13, p < .05$ ), and general mood ( $M = 30.69, SD = 5.8, p < .05$ ).

When the time spent on social media increases, virtual communication ( $F(2; 300)_{1 < 2 < 3} = 15.814, p < .05$ ), and virtual tolerance increase ( $F(2; 300)_{1 < 2 < 3} = 19.835, p < .05$ ). There is a statistically significant difference between levels of the time spent on social media in terms of general mood ( $F(2; 300)_{3 < 2 < 1} = 5.135, p < .05$ ). Participants who spend between 0-59 minutes have the highest general mood.

People who post more than three times have the highest virtual communication level ( $F(3; 300)_{3 < 1 < 2 < 0} = 3.292, p > .05$ ). However, the virtual tolerance level does not change according to the number of shares. There is a statistically significant difference between the number of shared posts on different social networks in terms of dealing with stress ( $F(3; 300)_{4 < 2 < 1} = 3.292, p < .05$ ). People who post once or twice a day have higher dealing with stress levels while people who post more than three times have the lowest.

### 5.3 The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Social Media Addiction

In the study, firstly the relationship between EI and SMA sub-dimensions was examined (see Table 4). According to a Pearson correlation analysis, there is a moderately negative statistically significant correlation between virtual tolerance and personal skills ( $r = -.337$ ), and adaptability ( $r = -.341$ ) negative, albeit a low level of negative, statistically significant correlation between interpersonal skills ( $r = -.139$ ), dealing with stress ( $r = -.276$ ), general mood ( $r = -.233$ ) ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was found that virtual communication has a low level of negative statistically significant relationship with personal skills ( $r = -.271$ ), interpersonal skills ( $r = -.148$ ), compatibility ( $r = -.187$ ), dealing with stress ( $r = -.255$ ), general mood ( $r = -.178$ ) ( $p < 0.05$ ).

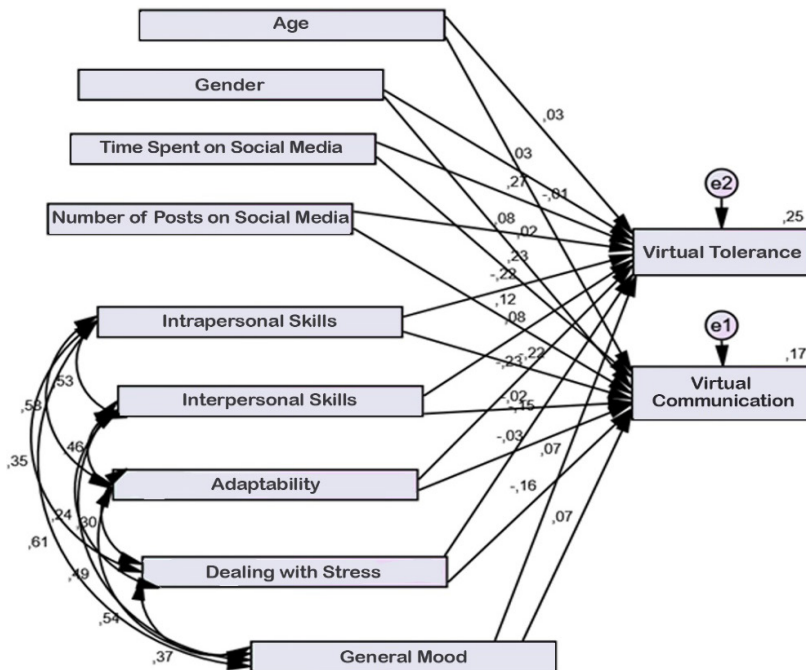
		Virtual Tolerance	Virtual Communication
IntraPS	r	-.337**	-.271**
	p	0.000	0.000
IPS	r	-.139*	-.148*
	p	0.016	0.010
AD	r	-.341**	-.187**
	p	0.000	0.001
SWS	r	-.276**	-.255**
	p	0.000	0.000
GM	r	-.233**	-.178**
	p	0.000	0.002

\*\*p<. 01, \*p<. 05 meaningful relationship, p>. 05 no meaningful relationship. coefficient of correlation power level; 0<r<0.299 weak, 0.300<r<0.599 medium, 0.600<r<0.799 strong, 0.800<r<0.999 very strong; Pearson Correlation

**TABLE 4:** The relationship between EI and SMA scores

Source: own processing, 2023

In the study, gender, age, time spent on social media, and number of posts are included in the model, and an SEM analysis was conducted. SEM fit indexes of the model created to determine the effects on SMA dimensions are presented. SEM fit indexes were obtained as  $\chi^2$ : 54.945, sd: 25,  $\chi^2$ /sd: 2.198, RMR : 0.064, GFR : 0.968, AGFI : 0.916, CFI : 0.962, RMSEA : 0.063. All of the calculated indices were within acceptable fit.<sup>43</sup> Accordingly, the model and the data are coherent and valid (Figure 1).



**FIGURE 1:** Final model of the significant path coefficients between age, gender, time spent on social media, number of posts on social media, EI subscale and SMA.

Source: own processing, 2023

<sup>43</sup> GÜRBÜZ, S., ŞAHİN, F.: *Sosyal Bilimlerde Araştırma Yöntemleri*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Ankara : Seçkin Publications, 2016, p. 336-337.

The direction and level of variables that have an effect on virtual tolerance and virtual communication of communication faculty students were tested with a hierarchical regression analysis (as can be seen in Table 5). The effects of age, gender, number of shares on social media from social media use habits, interpersonal skills from EI sub-dimensions and general mood were not significant on virtual tolerance ( $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, the hypotheses H1a, H1b, H1d, H3b and H3e were not supported. However, time spent on social media was positively statistically significantly effective on virtual tolerance ( $\beta = .273$ ,  $p = .000$ ) while intrapersonal skills ( $\beta = -.223$ ,  $p = .002$ ), adaptability ( $\beta = -.229$ ,  $p = .000$ ), dealing with stress ( $\beta = -.150$ ,  $p = .006$ ) have a negative statistically significant effect on virtual tolerance ( $p < 0.05$ ). Among the hypotheses created, H1c, H3a, H3c and H3d were supported.

Age, gender, EI sub-dimensions, interpersonal skills, adaptability and general mood have no significant effect on virtual communication ( $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, the hypotheses H2a, H2b, H4b, H4c and H4e were not supported. However, among the social media usage habits on virtual communication, the time spent on social media ( $\beta = .233$ ,  $p = .000$ ), and the number of posts on social media ( $\beta = .118$ ,  $p = .029$ ) positive personal skills ( $\beta = -.218$ ,  $p = .004$ ), dealing with stress ( $\beta = -.165$ ,  $p = .004$ ) have a negative, statistically significant effect ( $p < 0.05$ ). Among the research hypotheses, H2c and H2d, H4a and H4d were confirmed. The independent variables explain 24% of the virtual tolerance variance and 17% of the virtual communication variance.

Dependent	Independent	$\beta$	sh.	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>
Virtual Tolerance	Age	0.029	0.049	0.586	0.558	0.249
	Gender	0.028	0.049	0.566	0.571	
	Time spent on social media	0.273	0.051	5.322	0.000*	
	Number of posts on social media	0.079	0.051	1.551	0.121	
	Intrapersonal skills	-0.223	0.071	-3.122	0.002*	
	Interpersonal skills	0.080	0.061	1.292	0.196	
	Adaptability	-0.229	0.064	-3.513	0.000*	
	Dealing with stress	-0.150	0.054	-2.739	0.006*	
	General mood	0.075	0.068	1.089	0.276	
Virtual Communication	Age	-0.009	0.052	-0.17	0.865	0.171
	Gender	-0.02	0.052	-0.383	0.702	
	Time spent on social media	0.233	0.054	4.326	0.000*	
	Number of posts on social media	0.118	0.054	2.184	0.029*	
	Intrapersonal Skills	-0.218	0.075	-2.901	0.004*	
	Interpersonal Skills	-0.018	0.065	-0.272	0.786	
	Adaptability	-0.027	0.068	-0.389	0.697	
	Dealing With Stress	-0.165	0.057	-2.865	0.004*	
	General Mood	0.069	0.072	0.959	0.338	

\* $p < 0.05$  meaningful difference,  $p > 0.05$  no meaningful difference; SEM

**TABLE 5:** Hierarchical regression SEM analysis of the factors effective on SMA

Source: own processing, 2023

## 6 Discussion

This study aims to reveal the relationship between EI and SMA and the predictive effect of EI on SMA. Moreover, this study evaluates whether EI and SMA differ according to demographic variables and social media use habits. Young people and adolescents constitute a risky group in terms of social media use. Communication undergraduate students are expected to be conscious social media users and individuals controlling impulses because of their training. For this reason, the sample of this study consists of young people majoring in Communication in Turkey between the ages of 18 and 35.

In this study, the SMA virtual tolerance sub-dimension is moderate, and SMA virtual communication sub-dimension is low. The intrapersonal sub-dimension of the EI scale is high, and interpersonal skills sub-dimension is at the highest level. The adaptability sub-dimension is high. The sub-dimension of dealing with stress is moderate. The general mood is high. The based-on gender variable, females have higher interpersonal skills and higher general mood<sup>44</sup> for communication students. General mood is calculated by optimism and happiness level, and it is found that positive emotions and optimism bring success in social, academic and business life, and decrease future-based stress.<sup>45</sup> Females with high levels of interpersonal skills, skills of making friends easily, establishing good relationships, developing empathy and social responsibility<sup>46</sup>, achieve success in business, and social life. In addition, they control their impulses and are better at dealing with stress.<sup>47</sup> When SMA level was examined, there are no significant differences between men and women.<sup>48</sup>

According to ANOVA in our study, when the time spent on social media increases<sup>49</sup>, virtual communication and virtual tolerance increase, and general mood decreases. The participants who post more than three times a day have the lowest EI dealing with stress, and the highest virtual communication. Social media can provide several interpersonal needs as social support.<sup>50</sup> Within this context, it can be stated that social media is considered as a tool to deal with stress, escape

<sup>44</sup> KESZEI, D. C.: *Social Media and Emotional Intelligence: A Qualitative Analysis of the Relationship between Social Media Utilization and Over the Post-Millennial's Emotional Intelligence*. [Unpublished Doctoral Thesis]. California : Pepperdine University, 2021, p. 91. See also: HILL, E. M., MAGGI, S.: Emotional Intelligence and Smoking: Protective and Risk Factors Among Canadian Young Adults. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2011, Vol. 51, No. 1, p. 47.

<sup>45</sup> PARKER, J. D. A., SUMMERFELDT, L. J., HOGAN, M. J. et al.: Emotional Intelligence and Academic Success: Examining the Transition from High School to University. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2004, Vol. 36, No. 1, p. 170.

<sup>46</sup> See: GÜRBÜZ, S., YÜKSEL, M.: Emotional Intelligence in Workplace: Its Relation with Job Performance, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, and Some Demographic Factors. In *Journal of Doğuş University*, 2008, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 174-190. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/doujournal/issue/66659/1042942>>; See also: PANDITHARADHYULA, R., KUMAR, P. K.: Impact of Biographical Variables and Social Networking Platforms on Emotional Intelligence Among Adolescents. In *International Journal of Science and Research*, 2018, Vol. 7, No. 5, p. 1320-1326. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://www.ijsr.net/archive/v7i5/ART20182834.pdf>>.

<sup>47</sup> KONG, F., ZHAO, J.: Affective Mediators of the Relationship Between Trait Emotional Intelligence and Life Satisfaction in Young Adults. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2013, Vol. 54, No. 2, p. 199. See also: KIRCABURUN, K. et al.: Trait Emotional Intelligence and Problematic Online Behaviors Among Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Mindfulness, Rumination, And Depression. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2019, Vol. 139, p. 208-213.

<sup>48</sup> See: BALCI, Ş., BALOĞLU, E.: The Relationship Between Social Media Addiction and Depression: "A Survey Among University Youth". In *İletişim*, 2018, No. 29, p. 209-233. [online]. [2023-10-09]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.16878/gsuilet.500860>>. See also: JIANG, Q. CH., HUANG, X., TAO. R.: Examining Factors Influencing Internet Addiction and Adolescent Risk Behaviors Among Excessive Internet Users. In *Health Communication*, 2018, Vol. 33, No. 12, p. 1443-1444.

<sup>49</sup> HUANG, C.: Time Spent on Social Network Sites and Psychological Well-Being: A Meta-Analysis. In *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, 2017, Vol. 20, No. 6, p. 353.

<sup>50</sup> KIM, C., SHEN, C.: Connecting Activities on Social Network Sites and Life Satisfaction: A Comparison of Older and Younger Users. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2020, Vol. 105, p. 5.

and a coping style for individuals.<sup>51</sup> In addition the individuals can turn to “hanging out on social media” to change their moods, and after a while, social media use can reach an uncontrollable level.<sup>52</sup> According to the results of the path analyses, time spent on social media is a significant positive predictor of virtual tolerance sub-dimension, and number of posts on social media and time spent on social media are significant positive predictors of virtual communication sub-dimension.

According to the results of the path analyses intrapersonal skills, adaptability, dealing with stress have negative statistical significance effects on virtual tolerance. In addition, intrapersonal skills and dealing with stress have statistical significance on virtual communication. According to similar studies, many users can be motivated by social interaction and self-presenting.<sup>53</sup> They can easily communicate and interact with their peers in the virtual world, and the desire to spend more time on social media can become irresistible, stronger each time than before. This narcissism is a kind of self-presentation in the virtual world. The findings focus on the impact of the personality disorder narcissism on SMA.<sup>54</sup> The need to feed the ego (narcissism) supports the idea of addictive social media use.<sup>55</sup> Individuals with low intrapersonal skills (self-esteem, self-confidence, self-actualization) may want to take advantage of the magic of the virtual world for their ego, and social media use may turn into SMA for the ego's sake. In other words, individuals who respect themselves and accept themselves as they are, have high self-confidence, self-esteem and who are aware of one's emotions, spend less time on social media and use social media less for social relationships and communication.<sup>56</sup>

In our study, dealing with stress was associated with social media tolerance and virtual communication. In similar studies, people with low EI turned out to have high stress, depression and anxiety<sup>57</sup> and EI has a positive relationship with problem-solving strategies, while low-stress management can increase social media use to avoid problems. Individuals can use social media as an escape in order to avoid their state of mind, feel better through fake satisfaction and improve their mood. Young peoples' life satisfaction while spending time on social media (coping strategy) might cause more frequent and sustained social media use desire, and well as tolerance of social media use and virtual communication level as a feature of addiction.

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<sup>52</sup> WARTBERG, L., THOMASIU, R., PASCHKE, K.: The Relevance of Emotion Regulation, Procrastination, and Perceived Stress for Problematic Social Media Use in a Representative Sample of Children and Adolescents. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2021, Vol. 121, No. 12. No pagination.

<sup>53</sup> GAO, W., LIU, Z., LI, J.: How Does Social Presence Influence SNS Addiction? A Belongingness Theory Perspective. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 77, p. 350; See also: SÜRAL, I., GRIFFITHS, D. M., KIRCABURUN, K. et al.: Trait Emotional Intelligence and Problematic Social Media Use Among Adults: The Mediating Role of Social Media Use Motives. In *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 2019, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 336-345.

<sup>54</sup> ANDREASSEN, C. S., PALLESEN, S., GRIFFITHS, M. D.: The Relationship Between Addictive Use of Social Media, Narcissism, and Self-Esteem: Findings from a Large National Survey. In *Addictive Behaviors*, 2017, Vol. 64, p. 291.

<sup>55</sup> BRAILOVSKAIA, J., ROHMANN, E., RAEDER, F. et al.: The Relationship Between Narcissism, Intensity of Facebook Use, Facebook Flow and Facebook Addiction. In *Addictive Behaviors Reports*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 276, p. 2.

<sup>56</sup> HAWI, N., SAMAHA, M.: Identifying Commonalities and Differences in Personality Characteristics of Internet and Social Media Addiction Profiles: Traits, Self-Esteem, and Self-Conceptual. In *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 2, p. 116. See also: EŞKİSÜ, M., ÇAM, Z., GELİBOLU, S. et al.: Trait Mindfulness as a Protective Factor in Connections between Psychological Issues and Facebook Addiction Among Turkish University Students. In *Studia Psychologica*, 2020, Vol. 62, No. 3, p. 225. [online]. [2023-09-09]. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.31577/sp.2020.03.801>>.

<sup>57</sup> See: GOHM, C. L., CORSER, G. C., DALSKY, D. J.: Emotional Intelligence under Stress: Useful, Unnecessary, or Irrelevant? In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2005, Vol. 39, No. 6, p. 1017-1028. See also: RESURRECCIÓN, D. M., SALGUERO, J. M., RUIZ-ARANDA, D.: Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Maladjustment in Adolescence: A Systematic Review. In *Journal of Adolescence*, 2014, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 461-472.

## 7 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Although our study revealed important results about the relationship between EI and SMA, it has a number of limitations. Firstly, the sample, chosen by a purposive convenience sampling method (from 18 to 35 age), was mostly recruited online and through social networks from undergraduate students majoring in communication in Turkey. Thus, results cannot be generalized and cannot represent the attitudes of the general public (low representative). The study is a descriptive one, and our study did not aim to establish causal or theoretical relationships. The effect and relationship between dependent and independent variables were investigated. Future studies require more in-depth analysis using qualitative or mixed methods.

The sample can also consist of only small groups of women or adolescents. In our study, a scale measuring SMA in virtual tolerance and virtual communication sub-dimensions was used. However, SMA is still based on many emotional and cognitive motivations. This scale met the number and content of items suitable for the purpose of sampling and research. For future studies, the focus should be on mediator variables between EI and problematic social media use. Finally, education campaigns including scanning procedures are suggested for high-risk group people who experience many emotional conflicts for example women, young people and teenagers. In this way, their impulse control and levels of dealing with stress can be increased, and their addiction tendency can be decreased.

## 8 Conclusion

In the study, it was found that SMA, virtual tolerance and virtual communication and sub-dimensions of EI were negatively related at medium and low levels. Furthermore, according to the results of the path analyses, intrapersonal skills, adaptability, coping with stress are negatively, and time spent on social media is positively, statistically significant predictors of virtual tolerance. Intrapersonal skills and coping with stress negatively and time spent on social media and number of posts on social media positively statistically significant predicted virtual communication. This study not only expands the relationship between EI and SMA, but also measures the level of difference between SMA and EI according to demographic traits and social media use habits. This study will make an important contribution to the literature in terms of the topic of addiction. In addition, this manuscript is important in terms of revealing the relationship between intrapersonal skills, adaptability, dealing with stress and SMA of communication undergraduate students in Turkey.

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