CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The previous Chapter IV dealt with the analysis of results and graphical illustrations of the present research. The current chapter V presents an overall summary and the general conclusions of the study. Some suggestions for future researches are also given.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH STUDY

This research investigation is an empirical attempt made to study the influence of Social media particularly the Facebook on the personality, self-esteem, and mental health of University students. The option of Facebook was on the criterion that it is the most popular social networking platform used by the mainstream populace worldwide and as auxiliary factor, dramatically, a greater volume of Facebook users is identified especially among the college and University students.

The present study endeavored to assess the relationship between Facebook usage, personality traits, self-esteem, and mental health among University students. The influence of various demographic variables upon Facebook usage was also explored in this research. Furthermore it was ventured to find out the demographic and psychological predictors of Facebook usage. Incidentally, based on the review of related literature certain hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study.
Considering the objectives of the present empirical inquiry four appropriate psychological tools were selected for data collection after a thorough comprehensive review of related literature. The sample-size for the study comprised of 500 students from Annamalai University (largest residential University in Asia) at Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu, India). Stratified random sampling technique was adopted. The age range of the participants was from 18 to 36 years.

A survey questionnaire in the form of a booklet consisting of 4 standardized tools, explicitly, 1) Facebook Intensity Scale (Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe, 2007), 2) Big Five Inventory (Benet-Martinez & John, 1998), 3) Mental Health Scale (Kamalesh Sharma, 2002), 4) Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and the Personal Information Schedule designed by the investigator of the present research were used for data collection.

All the tools were pretested through a pilot study on a random sample of 50 students to reestablish the reliability and validity before being used for the final investigation. The participants were contacted individually by the researcher and data was obtained through questionnaire survey following informed consent. Of the 500 booklets distributed only 480 booklets were received in completed form suitable for scoring and data analysis. The data collection was approximately spread over duration of six months. The data obtained was analyzed statistically using appropriate descriptive and inferential techniques. The descriptive statistics consists of the frequency polygon and graphic representations. The mean, standard deviation, t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), correlation and regression were the inferential statistics done. The outcomes were interpreted and discussed in the light of prior research findings.
5.2 Limitations of the Study

This study on the influence of Facebook on the personality, self-esteem, and mental health of University students in Indian context is relatively a less explored area. Here certain limitations of this research were identified and presented.

1. The respondents of this study were not the true representative sample of Indian culture because obtaining a representative sample of Indian culture was limited by time availability, accessibility and economic factors. The samples of this study belonged to a particular sub-culture (Tamil Nadu) chosen by the researcher based on familiarity and accessibility; this restricts the generalization of the findings to entire nation.

2. The tools used in this study for data collection were not too appropriate; they were simple rating scales which gave no scope for obtaining in-depth information about the variables studied. Even if the respondents wanted to provide some additional information there was no provision available for it in the questionnaires used. In-depth interviews were not conducted because they were time consuming and engaging of trained enumerators capable of conducting interviews was costly. Since Facebook is the most popular platform used by the largest users all over the world, no other platform has been given preference in the study.

3. The tools used in this study were not translated into the local regional language (Tamil) because equivalent terminologies in current use age were very difficult to find and also due to the unavailability of skilled-translators.
So the questionnaires were given to the respondents in English format, this restricted to utility only to the English knowing section of the population. Hence, the generalization of the results to the majority non-English knowing section of the population cannot be justified.

4. The sample in this research study was mainly restricted to educated section of the population, the variations in demographic and socio-psychological variables present were not considered in sample selection.

5. The questionnaires adopted by the researcher were the only tools used for data collection. Results obtained could be substantiated by other instruments and observation techniques also.

5.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Reviews clearly indicate a dearth of empirical literature on the psychological implications of social media especially in Indian context which demands for more research investigations.

2. The availability of standardized tools to assess the influence of social media on the psychological health were scanty, hence there a necessity for more psychometric researches to develop new measures.

3. This research is confined to the educated section of the population. Since presently social media has transcended many barriers and is equally popular and prevalent both among educated and uneducated. It would be interesting to compare educated and uneducated samples in assessing the psychological implications of social media.
4. This survey indicates that some demographic variables included in the study influence Facebook usage therefore the role of other demographic variables excluded in this study can be observed in other future researches.

5. Since empirical observations more often indicate that culture plays a crucial role in determining behavior. More sub-cultural and cross-cultural researches can be done to find the universality of this research outcome.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are arrived on the basis of the results of the study:

1. University students who are high in the personality traits of Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Openness are more active in Facebook.

2. University students who are of low mental health and low self-esteem are more active in Facebook.

3. University students’ socio-demographic variables such as age, educational qualifications, Faculty of study, family income, duration of Facebook usage and purpose of Facebook usage influence the usage of Facebook.