THE INFLUENCE OF ALEXITHYMIA ON THE TENDENCY OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION IN EARLY ADULTS IN KARAWANG

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ABSTRACT

The internet offers numerous features that simplify activities like communication, information retrieval, and transactions, making social media increasingly accessible. In Indonesia, individuals in their productive years, particularly early adulthood, dominate internet usage. This phase is characterized by repetitive behaviors, which can escalate the intensity of social media use and potentially lead to addiction. One factor influencing this tendency is alexithymia. This study aims to explore the impact of alexithymia on social media addiction tendencies among early adults in Karawang. Employing a quantitative causality design, the research utilized non-probability sampling, specifically snowball sampling, to gather data from 385 respondents aged 20-30 years residing in Karawang. The Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS) was used to measure alexithymia, while the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) assessed social media addiction tendencies. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold of > 0.08, while normality was evaluated through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test at a 5% significance level. Linearity was assessed using an ANOVA test, yielding a significance of 0.468 > 0.05. The results of the simple linear regression test showed a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, confirming the hypothesis that alexithymia significantly influences social media addiction tendencies in early adulthood in Karawang. The determination test results indicated that alexithymia accounts for 54.2% of the variance in social media addiction tendencies (R-Square = 0.542), with the remaining 45.8% attributed to other variables not examined in this study.

INTRODUCTION

The development of technology today is very rapid, where everything can be solved in a more practical and fast way. This can be felt from various aspects of life such as transportation, education and communication. From the aspect of transportation, for example, there are more and more types of transportation that can be used, both by land, sea and air, in addition to how to buy tickets which can not only be done on the spot but can also be done online. This is also felt from the educational aspect, one of which is the existence of an e-learning learning system. Likewise, the communication aspect is supported by the use of the internet and smartphones so that it makes it easier for users to be able to carry out remote activities such as shopping, watching movies, playing games, working, and communicating only from home. The many supporting features in carrying out these activities make it easier for its users. According to the results of a survey by the Association of Internet Service Providers Indonesia (APJII) in 2023, the number of internet users in Indonesia is 215 million out of a total population of 275 million people in Indonesia, an increase of 1.17% compared to the previous year.

Lewis mentioned that social media is a term that refers to digital technology that can allow every individual to interact, create, and share messages (Pangestuti et al., 2021). The many types of features that can be used make individuals increasingly explore and use social media. Overall, in a survey conducted by APJII (2023), at least 78.5% of internet users in Indonesia use at least one or more social media features. Furthermore, this survey regarding the number of social media users by age group, found that as many as 12.15% were 13-18 years old, 32.09% were 19-34 years old, 33.67% were 35-54 years old, and 7.19% were 55 years old and over. This indicates that the productive age which ranges from 18-40 years old dominates internet use in Indonesia. Data from We Are Social states that Indonesia is ranked tenth in the world for the average time spent playing social media which reaches 6 hours and 41 minutes every day, where the average duration of social media use in the world is 2 hours and 28 minutes. The highest reason for using the internet is to access social media such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Telegram, Line, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, and others. In addition, the use of the internet is also carried out to access information, access public services, online transactions, and access entertainment content. With the various features available on social media, this makes users more interested in using social media at all times.

Erikson states that individuals who have an age range of 20-30 years are in the early adulthood stage (Krisnadi & Adhandayani, 2022). Where in psychosocial theory, Erikson explained that this period is marked by the existence of a warm, close, and communicative relationship stage. Practically, the use of the internet creates the convenience of individuals to make social connections online, this is found by the increase in individual behavior in spending free time accessing social media. With the rapid development of the internet, online social interaction is getting higher among people of early adulthood. Supported by various features that make users easier and more comfortable, in fact it triggers new social problems (Doni & Faqih, 2017)(Filibiana & Wibowo, n.d.). Individuals with this early adult age category are more likely to develop repetitive behaviors in using the internet,

which can result in an increase in the intensity of their use and be able to trigger the emergence of addictive tendencies, one of which is the tendency to be addicted to social media. Badudu explained that a person can be said to be addicted if the individual is unable to control his desire to do something, causing negative impacts on the individual both physically and psychologically. According to Young, social media addiction is characterized by the use of the internet for all activities carried out online, such as the use of social media which is carried out compulsively and causes obstacles in various things such as health, both physical and psychological, social environment, work, and others (Reynaldo & Sokang, 2016; Udayanti et al., 2023). This is also in line with Billieux's opinion that internet addiction does not only refer to the internet itself, but is related to the special use of certain internet features, in other words users are not addicted to the internet, but dependence on one or several specific online activities, one of which is using social media (Dewi & Trikusumaadi, 2016; Fernandes et al., 2019).

Suboptimal social skills can potentially lead to the onset of social anxiety in early adulthood. One of the signs that arise from social anxiety is having low self-confidence, especially in interacting with others and choosing to withdraw from the social environment (Juwita et al., 2015; Sri Mulyani, 2020). This also causes individuals to have a tendency to use social media. For some individuals, social media can also be a forum for interaction and also coping in reducing feelings of loneliness, and the dependence on social media also causes social anxiety (Azka et al., 2018).

The consequences of this social media addiction can affect the behavior of individuals' daily lives, such as research conducted by Refnandes et al. (2019) where individuals who develop social media addiction have an effect on self-control (Deonisius et al., 2019; Refnandes et al., 2022). Other consequences of social media addiction can also lead to depression and even suicide, such as information cited by Yulianti (2022) where a student became a victim of bullying, who then experienced depression until he died.

Griffiths et al. said that social media addiction is a compulsive behavior towards the use of social media that affects the lives of users so that they feel uncomfortable and find it difficult to control their use (Griffiths et al., 2014; Khairunnisa & Rusli, 2023). Meanwhile, according to Eijiden et al., the tendency to be addicted to social media is a condition in which a person behaves too much using social media and tends to continue using it (Van Den Eijnden et al., 2016). The indicators of social media addiction tendency according to Griffiths consist of salience, conflict, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, and relapse (Novita et al., 2021).

According to Montage and Reuter, there are several factors that affect the tendency to become addicted to social media, such as social factors, psychological factors, and biological factors (Jamaludin et al., 2022). There are also other factors that cause social media addiction such as research presented by Lestari et al. related to the relationship between alexithymia and social media addiction, where the results of the study show that there is a relationship between alexithymia and social media addiction (Lestari et al., 2020). Then the research conducted by Morin et al. showed the results of the influence between social anxiety and alexithymia

tendency on internet addiction, where alexithymia has a greater influence than social anxiety (Morin & Rahardjo, 2021). Research conducted by Wardani et al. also showed that there was a prevalence of alexithymia in students who experienced social media addiction (Wardani et al., 2022).

According to Ihsani, alexithymia is the inability of individuals to recognize or describe their emotions (Ihsani et al., 2022). The main signs of alexithymia are emotional unawareness, lack of social interest, and poor interpersonal relationships, individuals suffering from alexithymia have difficulty recognizing and understanding the emotions of others (Pradnyadewi & Widiasavitri, 2023). According to Thompson, alexithymia is the inability to distinguish and explain the emotions of oneself and others, there are three dimensions of alexithymia, namely difficulty in understanding feelings (difficulty identity feelings), external thinking patterns (think external), and difficulty in realizing feelings (difficulty defining feelings) (Purwaningsih & Pratiwi, 2023). The characteristics of alexithymia according to Sifenos consist of, difficulty in recognizing and distinguishing between feelings and sensations of the body, then difficulty in describing feelings to others, limitations in the imagination process and finally having an externally oriented cognitive style (Az-Zahra & Khairi, 2024).

The researcher has conducted a pre-research questionnaire distribution in November 2023 with a total of 55 respondents who are active social media users. With the number of female respondents as many as 38, while male respondents as many as 17 respondents. The most frequently used types of features are Instagram with a percentage of 85.2% and Tiktok as much as 74.1%. The duration of accessing social media also varies, with the highest percentage being 29.6% using social media for more than 6 hours per day, while the lowest percentage is 18.5% with a duration of 1-2 hours per day.

From the importance indicator (salience) with a percentage of 59.3%, respondents feel that they always try and want to use social media at all times. Then the mood modification indicator was 74.1% of respondents felt more satisfied after using social media. In the tolerance indicator , where as many as 59.3% feel more comfortable interacting through social media, then the withdrawal indicator, there is a percentage of 51.9% of respondents who are afraid of missing out on information when not online. As for the conflict indicator with a percentage of 63% of respondents feeling confused and lonely when not online social media, and finally from the relapse indicator with a percentage of 59.3% of respondents have tried to reduce the use of social media but have not succeeded.

In the existing literature, many studies explain about various factors that affect the tendency of social media addiction such as social, psychological and biological factors. However, there are still very few studies that focus on other factors such as alexithymia. Therefore, this study aims to determine the influence of alexithymia on the tendency of social media addiction in early adults in Karawang. The hypothesis of this study is the influence of alexithymia on the tendency of social media addiction in early adults in Karawang.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research method uses a quantitative method, where the quantitative research method according to Sugiyono (2019) is used to research on a specific population or sample, while data collection uses research instruments, analysis and is quantitative or statistical, with the aim of testing the hypothesis that has been determined.

In this study, the researcher used a causality quantitative method research design, which is a study that aims to find out the cause and effect of two or more variables. It was decided to find out whether or not alexithymia has an effect on social media addiction in early adulthood in Karawang. In sampling, non-probability sampling techniques were used, with the snowball sampling method.

The variables used are independent variables or independent variables (X) and dependent variables or bound variables (Y). The independent variable (X) used was alexithymia, while the bound variable (Y) used was the tendency to become addicted to social media.

The population in this study is an early adult who uses social media in Karawang, the number of which is unknown. The age used in this study was 20-30 years old.

To determine the number of samples in this study can use the Lemeshow formula, because the number of population in this study is unknown, the formula to express this strength is presented in Equation (1).

$$n = \frac{z_{1-a/2}^2 \, p(1-p)}{d^2} \qquad (1)$$

Where n is the number of samples from the study. z is a score on 95% confidence or equal to 1.96. p is the maximum estimated value of 50% or equal to 0.5. And d is the error rate or alpha. Based on the calculation above, a minimum of 384.16 samples were obtained which were rounded to 385 respondents who will be used in this study.

The collection technique uses a psychological scale that is carried out online with the help of google forms. According to Azwar (2021), the scale is a measuring instrument that quantifies the attributes it measures. The scale in this study is arranged based on aitem favorable (contains the concept of appropriate behavior or supports the attributes measured) and unfavorable (opposite to the content of the attributes measured) using the likert scale (Azwar, 2016).

The scale of social media addiction in this study is a scale of the Indonesian version of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) modified by Maheswari and Dwiutami (2013), namely excessive worry or anxiety about the use of social media that is influenced by strong urges and intensity. So the researcher adopts the scale. This scale consists of six indicators, namely salience (importance), mood modification (mood modification), tolerance (tolerance), withdrawal (withdrawal), conflict (conflict) and relapse (relapse), while the items of this scale amount to 18 items, the statement is prepared based on the likert scale model with five alternative answers, namely (1) SJ as a short answer is very rare, (2) J as short answer of rare, (3) N as short answer of neutral, (4) S as short answer of frequent, (5) SS as short answer of very often. Examples of items used to measure the

tendency to become addicted to social media are "I spend a lot of time thinking about social media or planning to use social media" and "I feel satisfied when I use social media with more intensity".

The alexithymia scale in this study is a scale from the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20) developed by Sifeneos, then translated and modified into Indonesian Language by Geni (2020), which is a condition in which individuals have difficulty defining and describing their emotions or feelings as well as those of others. So the researcher adopts the scale (Geni, 2020). This scale consists of three indicators, namely difficulties identifying feelings, difficulty describing feelings, and externally oriented cognitive style of thinking, which consists of 20 items, statements are compiled based on a Likert scale model with five alternative answers, namely (1) STS as a short answer to very disagree, (2) TS as a short answer from disagree, (3) N as a short answer from neutral, (4) S as a short answer from agree, (5) SS as a short answer from strongly agree. Examples of items used to measure alexithymia are "I am often confused by what emotions I am feeling" and "I am able to describe what I am feeling easily".

Before the scale was used in the study, validity and reliability tests had been carried out first. The item analysis test used in this study is a differentiating power analysis with the Corrected Item-Total Correlation method.

Before the hypothesis test is carried out, the prerequisite tests are first carried out, namely the normality test and the linearity test. In conducting normality testing using the Kolmogorov Smirnov technique with the aim of finding out whether the data is normally distributed or not, the data is said to be normally distributed if the value of $p>0.05$. Furthermore, after the normality test is carried out, a linearity test is carried out with the aim of finding out whether the two variables tested have a linear relationship or not. The basis of the decision making of the linearity test is that if the probability value is >0.05 then the relationship between the variable (X) and the variable (Y) is linear.

The hypothesis test in this study is by using a simple regression test, where the purpose of this test is to predict the value of the independent variable criteria based on the value of the dependent variable, if the significance value is <0.05 then the hypothesis can be accepted. In this study, an additional analysis test was also carried out using the determination coefficient test to find out how much influence the independent variable contributed to the dependent variable. As well as a categorization test, where this is carried out based on normal distribution and significance based on the attributes measured. All data analysis tests in this study use the SPSS version 27.0 application.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted in Karawang with the study population being early adults in Karawang who were 20 to 30 years old and the number is unknown. The demographic data of respondents can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Demographic Data Table

Characteristic	Kind	Sum	Percentage
Gender	Man	141	36,62%
	Woman	244	63,38%
Age	20	46	11,9%
	21	25	6,5%
	22	43	11,2%
	23	38	9,9%
	24	31	8,1%
	25	35	9,1%
	26	33	8,6%
	27	54	14,0%
	28	39	10,1%
	29	17	4,4%
	30	24	6,2%
Education	High School/Equivalent	316	82,1%
	D3/D4	13	3,4%
	S1	55	14,3%
	S2	1	0,3%
Work	Students/Students	59	15,3%
	Private Employees	252	65,5%
	Housewives	27	7,0%
	Entrepreneurial	6	1,6%
	Teachers/Civil Servants	6	1,6%
	Not Working	8	2,1%
	Other	27	7,0%

Table 2. Demographic Data Table By Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
					Gender
Valid	Man	141	36.6	36.6	36.6
	Woman	244	63.4	63.4	100.0
	Total	385	100.0	100.0	

Based on Table 2 above, out of a total of 385 respondents, there were 141 male respondents with a percentage of 36.6% and 244 female respondents with a percentage of 63.4%.

Table 3. Demographic Data Table By Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
					Age
Valid	20	46	11.9	11.9	11.9
	21	25	6.5	6.5	18.4

22	43	11.2	11.2	29.6
23	38	9.9	9.9	39.5
24	31	8.1	8.1	47.5
25	35	9.1	9.1	56.6
26	33	8.6	8.6	65.2
27	54	14.0	14.0	79.2
28	39	10.1	10.1	89.4
29	17	4.4	4.4	93.8
30	24	6.2	6.2	100.0
Total	385	100.0	100.0	

Based on Table 3, the highest age category is 27 years old with a total of 54 respondents with a percentage of 14.0% while the lowest age category is 29 years old with a total of 17 respondents with a percentage of 4.4%.

Table 4. Demographic Data Based on Education

Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	D3/D4	13	3.4	3.4	3.4
	S1	55	14.3	14.3	17.7
	S2	1	.3	.3	17.9
	High School/Equivalent	316	82.1	82.1	100.0
	Total	385	100.0	100.0	

Meanwhile, in Table 4, the highest category of education level is High School/Equivalent with a total of 316 respondents with a percentage of 82.1% and the lowest category is S2 with a total of 1 respondent with a percentage of 0.3%.

Table 5. Demographic Data By Job

Work

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Teachers/Civil Servants	6	1.6	1.6	1.6
	Housewives	27	7.0	7.0	8.6
	Private Employees	252	65.5	65.5	74.0
	Other	27	7.0	7.0	81.0
	Students/Students	59	15.3	15.3	96.4
	Not Working	8	2.1	2.1	98.4
	Entrepreneurial	6	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	385	100.0	100.0	

As stated in Table 5 for the type of work, the highest category is private employees with 252 respondents or equivalent to 65.5% and the lowest category is entrepreneurs and teachers/civil servants which amounted to 6 respondents each or equivalent to 1.6%. To find out the value categorization of the respondents' demographic data, see Table 6 below.

Table 6. Categorization Table

Characteristic	High Alexithymia	Alexithymia Low	High Social Media Addiction Tendency	High Social Media Addiction Tendency
Gender	Man	Woman	Woman	Man
Age	15 and 27	20	28	20
Education	SMA	S2	SMA	S2
Work	Not working	Entrepreneurial	Housewives	Teachers/Civil Servants

From the data above, it is explained that male respondents have a higher alexithymia result with an average score of 63.89 compared to women with an average score of 63.24. However, this result is the opposite of the total value of social media addiction tendency where women have a higher score of 55.26 while men have 55.14.

The results of the average alexithymia score from the age category showed that respondents aged 25 and 27 years had the highest score with an average score of 67, while the lowest result was obtained from the 20-year-old age category with an average score of 59. The 20-year-old age category also showed low scores from social media addiction tendencies, where the highest score was in the 28-year-old age category.

In the education category, the highest alexithymia score and social media addiction tendency were found at the high school education level with an average score of alexithymia 63.91, while the social media addiction tendency was 55.81 and the lowest score was found at the S2 education level with an alexithymia score of 51 and a social media addiction tendency of 32.

Based on the type of work, the highest score of alexithymia was found in respondents who did not work, with an average score of 66, while the lowest score was for the type of entrepreneurial work with an average score of 59.83. Respondents with the profession of housewives had the highest average score of social media addiction tendency with an average of 58, while the lowest came from respondents who worked as teachers/civil servants with an average score of 52.

The reliability test of the scale can be determined by using the Cronbach Alpha analysis technique with the help of the SPSS application program version 27.0, with a reliability coefficient of r>0.80 for the high criterion or Guilford reliability. Here are the results of the reliability of the scale after the trial:

Table 7. Alexithymia Scale Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items

.889		20

Table 8. Social Media Addiction Tendency Scale Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.925	18

Based on the table above, the reliability test results in Table 7 and Table 8 show that the reliability coefficient of the alexithymia scale is 0.889, while the reliability coefficient of the social media addiction tendency scale is 0.925. Referring to Guilford's table, the results can be said to be included in the very reliable criteria.

The normality test in this study was carried out using Kolmogorov Smirnov to test the normality of the data. The calculation is carried out by looking at the significance level value, if the significance value is >0.05, it can be said that the data is normally distributed, while if the data is <0.05, the data is declared not normally distributed. The results of the normality test on the TAS-20 and BSMAS scales are as follows:

Table 9. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

				Unstandardized Residual
N				385
Normal Parameters^{a,b}	Mean			.0000000
	Std. Deviation			9.93588094
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute			.039
	Positive			.039
	Negative			-.022
Test Statistic				.039
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)^c				.200^d
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)^e	Mr.			.179
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound		.169
		Upper Bound		.189

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
e. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 2000000.

The results in Table 9 show that the significance value is 0.200, with a meaning of 0.200>0.05. Therefore, from these results, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed.

Next is the linearity test. The linearity test in this study can be seen in the following Table 10:

Table 10. Linearity Test

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Mr.
BSMAS * TAS	Between Groups	(Combined)	51213.389	64	800.209	8.094	.000
		Linearity	44939.089	1	44939.089	454.578	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	6274.299	63	99.592	1.007	.468
	Within Groups		31634.845	320	98.859		
	Total		82848.234	384			

Based on the results of the linearity test as stated in Table 10, it shows that the significance value of Linearity is 0.000<0.05 and the value of Deviation from Linearity is 0.468>0.05. So it can be said that alexithymia with a tendency to social media addiction has a linear relationship.

For hypothesis testing in this study, a simple linear regression analysis test was used. The results of the simple linear regression test of alexithymia and social media addiction tendency in early adults in Karawang are as follows:

Table 11. Simple Linear Regression Test

Coefficientsa

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Mr.
1 (Constant)	4.100	2.452		1.672	.095
TAS	.805	.038	.736	21.308	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BSMAS

From Table 11 above, it shows a significance value of 0.000<0.05 so it is said that the hypothesis in this study is that Ha is accepted and H0 is rejected, meaning that there is an influence of alexithymia on the tendency of social media addiction in early adults in Karawang.

The determination coefficient test was used to see how much influence the alexithymia variable had on the social media addiction tendency variable, the results were as follows:

Table 12. Coefficient of Determination Test

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.736a	.542	.541	9.949

a. Predictors: (Constant), TAS

Based on the results of the determination coefficient test as stated in Table 12, it is known that the R Square value shows a figure of 0.542. or 54.2% while the remaining 45.8% is influenced by other variables.

This study aims to determine the influence of alexithymia on the tendency of social media addiction in early adults in Karawang. Based on the results of the hypothesis that has been carried out using a simple linear regression analysis technique. The hypothesis test of the variable alexithymia (X) with social media addiction tendency (Y) can prove that there is an influence of alexithymia on the tendency of social media addiction in early adults in Karawang.

When viewed from the results of demographic data, it shows that the highest rate of alexithymia is in the male sex. The age range of 25 and 27 years, while for the high school education level category, it showed the highest alexithymia results compared to other education levels, and based on the job category, it showed that respondents who did not work obtained the highest alexithymia results.

Meanwhile, the results of social media addiction trends based on demographic data show that women have the highest scores compared to men. The age with the highest score is at the age of 28 years. Judging from the level of education, high school still gets the highest score compared to other levels of education. Meanwhile, in terms of job type, it shows that housewives have the highest social media addiction tendency score compared to other types of jobs.

The results of this study are in accordance with the statement of Lestari et al. (2022) that there is a relationship between alexithymia and social media addiction. Then the research conducted by Morin et al. (2021) also showed the results of the influence between social anxiety and alexithymia's tendency to internet addiction, where alexithymia has a greater influence compared to social anxiety. Then also research conducted by Wardani et al. (2022) showed that there was a prevalence of alexithymia in students who experienced social media addiction.

Additional analysis tests carried out in this study used a determination coefficient test. Based on the results of the determination coefficient test , a result of 0.542 was obtained, which shows that the magnitude of the influence of the alexithymia variable is 54.2%. Then 45.8% was predicted by other factors that were not studied in this study.

CONCLUSION

Based on research that has been conducted on early adults in Karawang, the results of the research obtained are the influence of alexithymia on the tendency of social media addiction in early adults in Karawang. This can be known by referring to the significance results , Ha is accepted and H0 is rejected.

The magnitude of the influence of alexithmia on the tendency of social media addiction in early adults in Karawang was 54.2%, the remaining 45.8% was influenced by other variables that were not studied in this study.

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