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Navigating Social Media: The Influence Of Perceived Parental Media Mediation On Emerging Adults' Gratifications And Usage Patterns

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Abstract

Social media is a pertinent element in a child's life as it boosts communication abilities, cultivates creativity, and grants access to educational resources, while also allowing them to engage with others and share insights. Nonetheless, overindulgence can lead to detrimental consequences like increased anxiety, mood disorders, and impaired social skills due to reduced direct interactions. Parental media mediation is pivotal in determining children social media usage and the satisfaction they experience. The present study is purported to investigate the association between perceived parental media mediation styles and social media usage and gratification among emerging adults, along with the exploration of social networking usage as a potential mediator the bridges the association between the Perceived Parental Media Mediation (PPMM) and Social Media Usage and Gratifications (SMUG). Emerging Adults were requested to take part in the study via online survey. Findings showed that restrictive mediation styles are negative associated with SMUG except autonomy-supportive restriction mediation while the active mediation styles are positively linked with SMUG. Social Networking Usage mediates the association between two dimensions of PPMM (restrictive and active) and two facets of SMUG (deepening existing associations and expanding current interpersonal network) while there is non-significant mediation of SNUQ between the two parental media mediation's (active and restrictive) and third facet of SMUG (information sharing and exchange).The results emphasize the essential role of parental vigilance in shaping children's social media usage and should be incorporated in interventions designed to enhance parental role in maintaining children's virtual interactions.

Keywords: Social Networking Usage, Social Media Usage and Gratification, Parental Media Mediation, Emerging Adults, Restrictive Mediation, Active Mediation, Autonomy-Supportive Restriction

1. Introduction

Perceived parental media mediation demonstrated a substantially effective function in steering a child's involvement with digital or social media, driving their conduct and psychological harmony. One of the two kinds of PPMM, active mediation incorporates parents coaching children on adequate media utilization, fostering discussions between parents and children regarding media. This approach has been witnessed to foster analytical reasoning and young people's digital capacities, alleviating vulnerabilities that are tied to sexual harassment and exposure to inappropriate sexual content [1],[2],[3],[4]. Involvement in healthy and transparent discussions liberates parents to bolster children with social media hurdles, fostering a secure and safe virtual space [5],[6],[7]. In addition to this, active engagement assists young people to articulate their perspectives and sentiments concerning their virtual interactions, which can add to strengthened emotional resilience [8],[9].

In contrast, restrictive mediation style involves defining clear limitations and setting boundaries for child's involvement in social media and digital conduct. While this strategy is aimed at safeguarding young people from pervasive threats, but unfortunately this could also serve as a cause of aggression intentions and a profound craving for more self-reliance in teens [8],[10]. Research demonstrated that too much constraints and boundaries can hinder the effectiveness of support provided by parent as teens frequently rebel against imposed constraints on their virtual activities [11], [12]. Consequently, while restrictive guidance can

assist in the efforts to lessen the threats but it might not be enough alone to foster ethical and mindful social media consumption [6],[13]. Moreover, results demonstrated that overly strict limitations can intrigue curiosity and intensify desires for inappropriate content among teens [14],[15].

One more important strategy is non-intrusive surveillance, where parents supervise their child's virtual conduct and internet consumption without any direct interference. This approach empowers parents to stay in touch to their children's virtual life without encroaching on their privacy [5],[9]. Findings demonstrated that such kind of oversight can aid in emphasizing parental norms over digital conduct fostering secure and safe online conduct in emerging teens [2],[7]. By establishing a balanced association between surveillance and maintaining integrity or prioritizing one's privacy, parents can promote trust and provide meaningful and responsible media interactions [8],[10]. Additionally, discreet oversight enables parents to track their children's virtual conducts without imposing a surveillance- oriented environment [6],[16].

The integration of these various mediation styles can bring about numerous conducts. For instance, amalgamating active mediation with passive supervision often promotes accountable virtual conduct in teens [2],[4]. This synergy liberates parents to articulate expectations and monitor adherence while respecting privacy [5],[7]. Furthermore, when proactive guidance is coupled with constraints, it can deepen emerging adults' comprehension of the motives behind parental surveillance, lowering defiance and nurturing cooperation [13],[8]. Studies showed that an all-encompassing approach foster enhanced emotional development for youth in virtual spaces [15],[16].

The effectiveness of such approaches concerning parental surveillance is affected by cultural factors. In multiple cultures, such as Indonesia or Pakistan, parental approaches encounter a substantial difference because of societal norms and values concerning digital utility [6],[11]. Culture-based elements pertinent to confidentiality and self-monitoring, effect youngsters'' interpretation of their parental role in shaping their virtual world activities [15],[12]. Addressing these varied cultural nuances is fundamental for establishing efficient surveillance methods that suits best to both children and parents [13],[17]. Furthermore, cross-cultural studies demonstrated that stance concerning parental engagement varies across different cultures and affects youth's virtual capacities [5],[3].

In conclusion, parental engagement has a prime function in outlining young people involvement and the gratifications they obtain from utilization of social media and its various platforms. By employing a balanced amalgamation of active guidance, restrictions and limitations and non-intrusive surveillance, parents can track their children through productive digital connections [2],[16]. As virtual spaces strive to flourish, under-going examinations are of prime importance to improve these strategies in an efficient manner and rightfully responding to nascent challenges in social media-based conducts of young adults [17],[10]. At its core, forming a productive and secure environment that nurture, clear, transparent and open discussions concerning social media is pivotal for equipping young people with the ability to responsibly navigate their virtual environments [13],[8].

1.1 Social Media Usage and Gratification

In today's era young people to meet their social, emotional and psychological needs are increasingly depending on social media sites. People use social media platforms to meet their desires like social interaction, having fun and self-presentation and this can be easily understood by Uses and Gratifications Theory [18],[19],[20]. According to recent literature social media sites like TikTok, snapchat and Instagram are so much appealing to youngsters as they offer instant satisfaction through engagement, approval and feedback [21],[22]. These social media sites act as virtual spaces to young people for self-presentation and identity formation and allowing them to navigate their social landscape while seeking affirmation from their peers [23],[24],[25]. Furthermore, the quest of social validation and social connections is a leading cause of youth involvement in these sites [26],[27],[28].

Amusement is the main attraction that leads to social media use by young people. Young people mainly engage with social media content for enjoyment [18],[29]. Thus, enjoyment can take of comedic videos, stories and memes that align with their interest [30],[31]. Additionally, literature indicates that pleasure due to social media can increase frequent use of social sites, creating a cycle where these users constantly look for new content to maintain their amusement levels [32],[16]. This need for amusement often coincides with escape from reality that social media platforms give, allowing youth to temporarily disconnect from their daily worries [13],[17].

Another important aspect of youth's usage of social media is social interaction. Youth use these social media sites to maintain pre-existing bonds and form new friendships [18],[10],[9]. During adolescence peer relationships are important and social media helps facilitate for constant communication [11]. Sharing experiences and thoughts cultivates a sense of community and feelings of belongingness [5],[6]. However, such dependence on social media interactions can cause negative results such as

feeling of being alone and cyberbullying [26],[28],[31].

Self-representation is vital motivation for youth engagement on social platforms. Sites like Instagram and TikTok allow youth show their talent by posting images and videos [23],[24]. Self-expression on social media is important for identity formation for youth, allowing individuals to experiment with various facets of themselves [21]. Self-presentation through social media can help enhance self-esteem in youth and empower them with sense of agency [18],[33]. Additionally, it can also have negative impact as the pressure to present a perfect online image of oneself can lead to comparing oneself to other [5],[13].

Moreover, importance of social media for information seeking is undeniable. Individuals use social media platforms to get news about current events that are affect their lives [30],[32]. This exposure to information about cultural phenomena and issues of society that may not be typically covered in traditional educational settings can empower youth people [6],[17]. However, the sheer number of information available can also lead go confusion, Deception and difficulties in determining what is accurate and trustworthy [26],[28].

In conclusion, benefit from social media that young people get are diverse and closely linked with growth requirements. From social interaction, self-presentation, entertainment and information seeking, these sites serve as important tool that help young people navigate their complex social environment [18]. Recognizing the motivation behind social media use is important for educators, parents and policymakers seeking to create healthy digital environment, promoting positive youth development while minimizing the risk link with excessive or harmful of social media use [13],[17].

1.2 Social Networking Usage

Social media engagement shifted substantially over the course of time illustrating trends in tech evolution, target audiences and societal changes. By 2024, roughly 5.22 billion individuals engage with social media, or 63.8% of the population worldwide [34],[35]. This surge reflects rise of 256 million users in a single year, highlighting a continuous trend toward broader connectivity [36],[34]. The growing use of mobile devices has further fueled this trend, with almost all users connect to social media through smartphones [35],[38]. Therefore, users now spend an average of 2 hours and 24 minutes per day with notable differences between platforms [36],[37].

Demographic characteristics are vital in determining social media behaviors. Millennials and Gen Z are some of the most engaged users, with 68.8% of millennials and 35% of Gen Z dedicating more than two hours each day to social media [38],[35]. Gen Z is particularly inclined towards visual and video content on TikTok and Instagram, where they take part in activities that shape their identity, such as posting selfies and sharing experiences [36],[34]. Unlike younger users, older generations are more inclined toward Facebook and LinkedIn for professional networking and connections [38],[37]. This generational difference calls for personalized marketing strategies that appeal to distinct age groups.

Content preferences on social media platforms differ significantly. For example, TikTok users mainly seek entertaining content like comedic clips or challenges [34],[38]. Conversely, Facebook is often used for chatting with friends and family or sharing news updates [39],[37]. Instagram users focused on publishing their own content and interacting with visually compelling posts This variation in content consumption points to the importance of understanding user motivations when formulating social media strategies.

Time spent on various platforms indicates user preferences and engagement. Tiktok users dedicate an average of 53.8 minutes per day to the app, making it one of the most interactive platforms [37],[38]. In comparison, YouTube users spend approximately 48.7 minutes, while Twitter/X users engage for around 34.1 minutes daily [36],[37]. These insights indicate that while all platforms have their unique allure, TikTok's algorithmically curated content sustains longer engagement by enticing users to scroll further.

Cultural factors and regional distinctions also play a role in social media consumption. For example, Kenyan users spend an average of 4 hours and 7 minutes on social media, which is notably above the global average [36]. In contrast, Japanese users spend only about 47 minutes, highlighting how cultural attitudes toward technology and socializing can play a key role in determining usage patterns [34],[37]. Comprehending these cultural differences is vital for organizations looking to engage with audiences across multiple regions.

All in all, social media behavior is molded by nuanced blend of population demographics, content consumption habits, platform interaction rates, and cultural contexts. With a global user base exceeding 5 billion, spending an average of over 2 hours per day to these platforms [34],[36], marketers should refine their strategies to address the shifting preferences of diverse social media audiences. By acknowledging the unique traits of each generation and the interaction trends on different platforms-especially among millennials and Gen Z brands can develop more powerful campaigns that connect with their target groups while adapting to the ever-changing social media environment.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Objectives and Hypotheses

The current research seeks to investigate the relationships between perceived parental media mediation styles (active mediation, restrictive mediation), social networking use and gratifications, and social media use.

According to existing literature, the research formulates the following hypotheses:

H1: Children with restrictive parental media mediation styles have lower social media gratifications than children with active parental mediation styles.

H2: Active parental media mediation enables emerging adults to gain social media gratifications, including:

Deepening current relationships

Enlarging interpersonal networks

Information sharing and exchange

H3: Social networking use mediates the association between perceived restrictive parental media mediation styles (autonomy-supportive restriction, controlling restrictive mediation, and inconsistent restrictive mediation) and all three aspects of social media use and gratifications.

H4: Social networking use mediates the relationship between active parental media mediation styles (autonomy-supportive active mediation and controlling active mediation) and all three dimensions of social media use and gratifications.

2.2 Approach

Data was collected by Perceived Parental Media Mediation Styles (PPMMS), Social Networking Usage Questionnaire (SNUQ) and Social Media Usage and Gratifications Scale (SMUGS). Data was gathered from emerging adults as it was observed that emerging adults in Pakistan encounter parental surveillance when they started to use social media or get android phones. Literature has also proved high surveillance for emerging adults.

2.3 Subjects of Study

Young adults are requested to take part in the study on social media usage and gratifications, perceived parental media mediation styles and social networking usage. Participants are recruited through both online and in-person questionnaires. Participants were high school and college students. Eligibility criteria for the subject is those having their personal android phones, have an account on various social media platforms and regularly use them. Total three hundred and twenty-two subjects were recruited from different regions of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Data from subjects is collected by convenient sampling strategy. The questionnaires took almost 10 minutes to complete. Informed consent was taken from the subjects, ensuring them to step back from the study if they feel unease at any point during the study without any justification. The privacy of the study was kept intact and the data is used for solely research purposes.

2.4 Instruments of Study

2.4.1 Social Media Usage and Gratification

[40] developed Social Media Usage and Gratifications scale. It was aimed to capture driving factors of social media utilization. It comprises of fourteen items throughout diverse satisfaction domains. The SMUG consists of 5-point agreement scale on which elevated ratings signify a greater amount of fulfilment gained through social media activities. The scale achieved robust reliability of .80 and a strong validity, verifying its accuracy in evaluating user's motivations [40].

2.4.2 Perceived Parental Media Mediation Scales

[41] crafted Perceived Parental Media Mediation Styles Questionnaire, that measures how adolescents perceive parental media mediation styles, such as restrictive and active forms. By utilizing a 5-point agreement scale, higher scores indicate more frequent mediation. A solid reliability of .81 was demonstrated by this questionnaire and high validity, aligning with typical parenting conducts and styles [41].

2.4.3 Social Networking Usage Questionnaire

The Social Networking Usage Questionnaire (SNUQ) was introduced by Savita and Bashir in 2018. It was designed to capture social networking utility across four dimensions: academic, amusement, knowledge and academics. Responses are captured on 5-point agreement scale ranging from never to always with elevated scorings indicating increased usage. The scale has robust internal consistency of .83, confirming its reliability and validity for assessing the intended constructs [42].

3. Results

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of Subset (N=322)

Variable		Frequency	%
Age	15-20	182	56.5
	21-25	140	43.5
Gender	Male	56	17.3

	Female	266	82.6
Family System	Joint	126	39.1
	Nuclear	196	60.8
Family Income	50,000-80,000	98	30.4
	81,000- 110,000	98	30.4
	Above 110,000	126	39.1
Socioeconomic Status	Low	93	28.8
	Middle	136	42.2
	High	93	28.8

The demographic profile of the participants demonstrated that the most of them are in the 15-20 age range (56.5%) followed by those having age range between 21-25 years (43.5%). The subset is primarily composed of females (82.6%), while males make up just 17.3%. A higher proportion of participants reside in nuclear family setups (60.8%) as opposed to joint family structures (39.1%). With regard to family income, 39.1 % of respondents disclosed earnings over 1 lac, while the identical percentage (30.4%) fall within the income brackets of fifty to eighty thousand and eight thousand to 1 lac. The samples socioeconomic composition included low (28.8%), middle (42.2%), and high (28.8%) statuses, showcasing a proportional representation of various economic tires within the subset.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha and Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N=322)

Variable	k	α	M	SD	Range		Skew	Kurt
					Actual	Potential		
Restrictive mediation	4	.76	10.00	3.34	4-19	4-20	.42	.40
Active Mediation	4	.67	11.00	2.48	7-16	4-20	.25	-.40
Autonomy-supportive restrictive mediation	4	.71	12.34	3.45	6-19	4-20	.10	.13
Controlling restrictive mediation	4	.85	9.61	3.44	4-16	4-20	-.18	.13
Inconsistent restrictive mediation	4	.76	11.17	3.51	4-16	4-20	-.71	.14
Autonomy-supportive active mediation	4	.83	11.86	3.29	5-17	4-20	-.21	.14
Controlling active mediation	4	.76	11.34	3.33	4-16	4-20	-.37	.14
Social Media Usage and Gratification Scale								
Deepening existing relationships	4	.78	13.05	2.97	6-19	4-20	-.09	-.05
Expanding current interpersonal network	5	.87	15.61	3.56	7-22	5-25	-.40	-.24
Information sharing and exchange	5	.89	17.78	3.93	8-23	5-25	-.85	-.07
Social Networking Usage Questionnaire	24	.87	83.68	15.57	56-116	24-120	.38	-.52

Note. K=no. of items; α = Cronbach's alpha; M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; Skew = Skewness; Kurt = Kurtosis

The table outlines the reliability and descriptive statistics for the variable assessed among 322 participants. Cronbach's alpha coefficient span from .67 to .89, signifying reliability levels from acceptable to excellent across all scales. Skewness and Kurtosis value reveals that the majority of variables follow an approximate normal distribution, with minor irregularities observed in specific measures like information sharing and exchange (Skew= -.85).

Table 3. Correlations among Study Variables (N=322)

Variable	RM	AM	ASRM	CRM	IRM	ASAM	CAM	ISE	ECI	DES	SMU
RM	-										
AM	.498**	-									
ASRM	.242**	.548**	-								
CRM	.413**	.326**	.357**	-							
IRM	.276**	.275**	.247**	.744**	-						
ASAM	.194**	.367**	.733**	.442**	.543**	-					
CAM	.395**	.630**	.641**	.036	.592**	.766**	-				
ISE	-.316**	.227**	.365**	-.183**	-.050	.425**	.364**	-			
ECI	-.146**	.251**	.341**	-.183**	-.026	.375**	.569**	.621**	-		
DES	-.259**	.430**	.304**	-.168**	-.489**	.486**	.464**	.682**	.437**	-	
SMU	-5.34**	-.413**	-.001	.012	-.009	.158**	-.021	.027	.134*	-.167**	-

Note: RM=Restrictive Mediation, AM=Active Mediation, ASRM=Autonomy-Supportive Restriction Mediation, CRM=Controlling Restrictive Mediation, IRM=Inconsistent Restrictive Mediation, ASAM=Autonomy-Supportive Active Mediation, CRM=Controlling Active Mediation

The correlation statistics among variables of study (N = 322) demonstrates substantial association between media mediation strategies and social media usage and gratifications. Active mediation and to some extent autonomy-supportive restrictive mediation shows positive association with the social media usage and gratifications (i.e. deepening existing relationships, expanding current interpersonal network and information sharing and exchange) as opposed to other restrictive practices that shows negative associations.

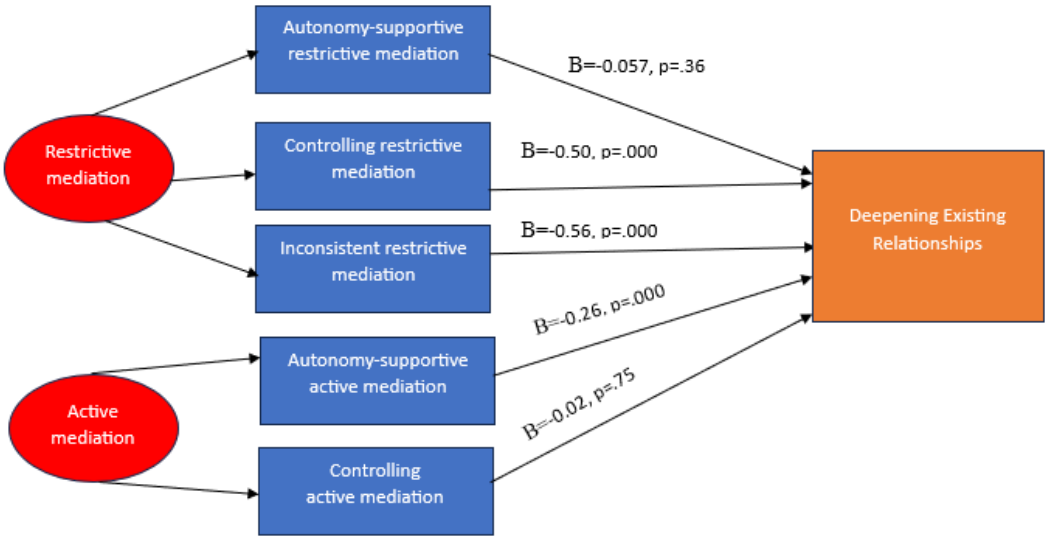
Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression of all subscales of Perceived Parental Media Mediation Scale Deepening Existing Relationship Scale

Variable	B	SE	t	p	95%CI
Constant	4.102	0.643	6.377	.00	2.83-5.36
RM	0.11***	0.043	2.566	.00	.02-.19
AM	0.35***	0.075	4.678	.00	.20-.49
ASRM	-0.057	0.062	-0.916	.36	-.17-.06
CRM	-0.50***	0.06	-8.461	.00	-.62-.38
IRM	0.56***	0.06	9.341	.00	.43-.67
ASAM	0.26***	0.078	3.287	.00	.10-.41
CAM	0.02	0.076	0.318	.75	-.12-.17

*Note: N=322, ***p<.001 RM=Restrictive Mediation, AM=Active Mediation, ASRM=Autonomy-Supportive Restriction Mediation, CRM=Controlling Restrictive Mediation, IRM=Inconsistent Restrictive Mediation, ASAM=Autonomy-Supportive Active Mediation, CRM=Controlling Active Mediation*

Table 4 shows impact of restrictive mediation, active mediation, autonomy-supportive restriction mediation, controlling restrictive mediation, inconsistent restrictive mediation, autonomy-supportive active mediation and controlling active mediation on deepening existing relationships, a subscale of social media usage and gratification scale. The R2 value of 0.511 tells that subscales of perceived parental media mediation scale explain 51.1% variance in the outcome variable that is deepening existing relationships, a subscale of social media usage and gratification scale with F (7, 314) = 46.919, p<0.001. The findings revealed all subscales of PMMMS except controlling active mediation and autonomy supportive restriction mediation significantly predicted the outcome variable.

Figure 1. Regression Model of Perceived Parental Media Mediation on Deepening Existing Relationships



Note. The conceptual model illustrating the two types of mediation: restrictive mediation (further divided into autonomy-supportive, controlling, and inconsistent restrictive mediation) and active mediation (autonomy-supportive active and controlling active) as the independent variable (IV), with deepening existing relationships as the dependent variable (DV). Regression coefficients are incorporated in the model.

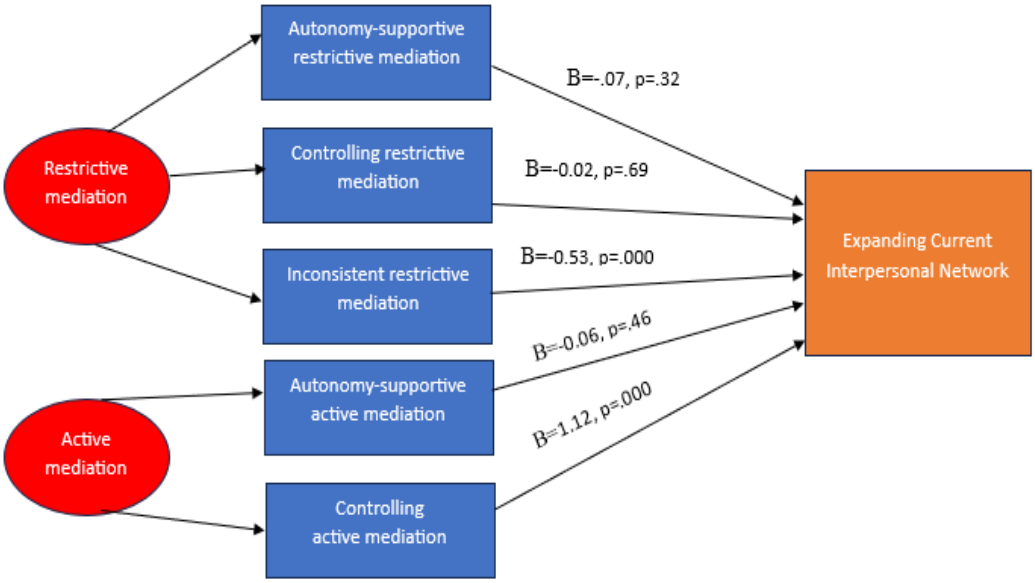
Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression of all subscales of Perceived Parental Media Mediation Scale and Expanding Current Interpersonal Network Scale

Variable	B	SE	t	p	95%CI
Constant	13.58***	0.76	17.77	.00	12.08-15.08
RM	-.00	0.05	-.10	.92	-.11-.09
AM	-.25***	0.08	-4.13	.00	-.54--.19
ASRM	-.07	0.07	-.98	.32	-.21-.07
CRM	-0.02	0.07	.39	.69	-.11=.16
IRM	-.53***	0.07	-7.72	.00	-.68--.41
ASAM	-.06	0.09	-.73	.46	-.25-.11
CAM	1.12***	0.09	13.27	.00	1.02-1.38

*Note: N=322, ***p<.001 RM=Restrictive Mediation, AM=Active Mediation, ASRM=Autonomy-Supportive Restriction Mediation, CRM=Controlling Restrictive Mediation, IRM=Inconsistent Restrictive Mediation, ASAM=Autonomy-Supportive Active Mediation, CRM=Controlling Active Mediation*

Table 5 shows impact of restrictive mediation, active mediation, autonomy-supportive restriction mediation, controlling restrictive mediation, inconsistent restrictive mediation, autonomy-supportive active mediation and controlling active mediation on expanding current interpersonal network, a subscale of social media usage and gratification scale. The R2 value of 0.519 tells that subscales of perceived parental media mediation scale explain 51.9% variance in the outcome variable that is expanding current interpersonal network, a subscale of social media usage and gratification scale with F (7, 314) = 48.465, p<0.001. The findings revealed that active mediation, controlling active mediation and inconsistent restrictive mediation subscales of PMMMS significantly predicted the outcome variable.

Figure 2. Regression Model of Perceived Parental Media Mediation on Expanding Current Interpersonal Network



Note. The conceptual model illustrating the two types of mediation: restrictive mediation (further divided into autonomy-supportive, controlling, and inconsistent restrictive mediation) and active mediation (autonomy-supportive active and controlling active) as the independent variable (IV), with expanding current interpersonal network as the dependent variable (DV). Regression coefficients are incorporated in the model.

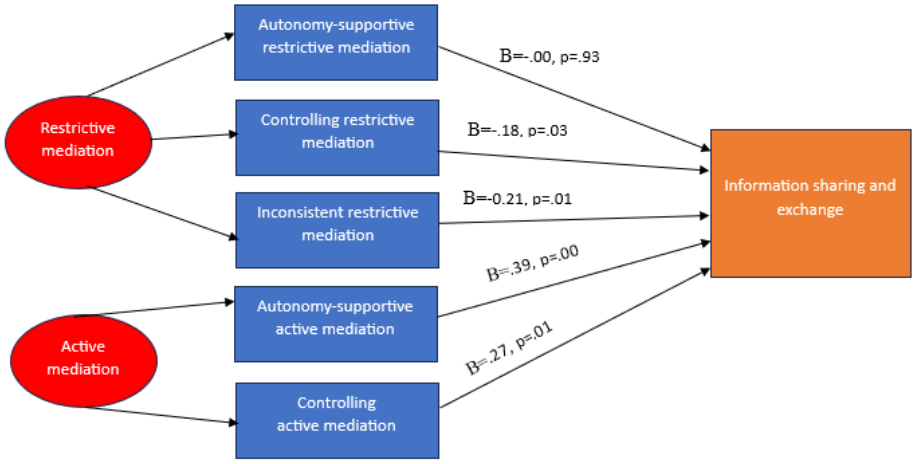
Variable	B	SE	t	*p*	95%CI
Constant	12.34***	1.04	11.78	.00	10.28-14.41
RM	.09	.07	1.61	.10	-.02-.25
AM	-.02	.12	-.29	.77	-.27-.21
ASRM	.00	.11	.08	.93	-.19-.21
CRM	-.18*	.09	-2.17	.03	-.41--.20
IRM	-.21**	.09	-2.42	.01	-.42--.04
ASAM	.39***	.12	3.74	.00	.22-.72
CAM	.27**	.12	2.53	.01	.07-.56

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression of all sub-scales of Perceived Parental Media Mediation Scale and Information Sharing and Exchange Scale

*Note: N=322, ***p<.001 RM=Restrictive Mediation, AM=Active Mediation, ASRM=Autonomy-Supportive Restriction Mediation, CRM=Controlling Restrictive Mediation, IRM=Inconsistent Restrictive Mediation, ASAM=Autonomy-Supportive Active Mediation, CRM=Controlling Active Mediation*

Table 6 shows impact of restrictive mediation, active mediation, autonomy-supportive restriction mediation, controlling restrictive mediation, inconsistent restrictive mediation, autonomy-supportive active mediation and controlling active mediation on information sharing and exchange, a subscale of social media usage and gratification scale. The R2 value of 0.261 tells that subscales of perceived parental media mediation scale explain 26.1% variance in the outcome variable that is information sharing and exchange, a subscale of social media usage and gratification scale with F (7, 314) = 15.810, p<0.001. The findings revealed that all subscales of PMMMS except restrictive mediation, controlling mediation and autonomy-supportive restriction mediation significantly predicted the outcome variable.

Figure 3. Regression Model of Perceived Parental Media Mediation on Information Sharing and Exchange



Note. The conceptual model illustrating the two types of mediation: restrictive mediation (further divided into autonomy-supportive, controlling, and inconsistent restrictive mediation) and active mediation (autonomy-supportive active and controlling active) as the independent variable (IV), with information sharing and exchange as the dependent variable (DV). Regression coefficients are incorporated in the model.

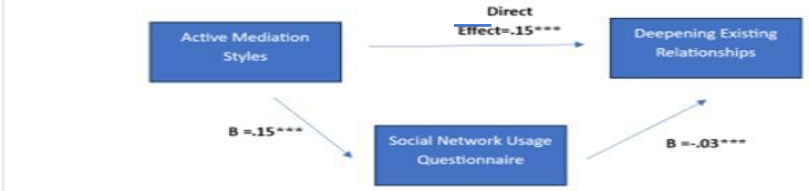
Table 7. Regression Analysis for Mediation of Social Networking Usage Questionnaire between Restrictive Mediation Styles and Deepening Existing Relationships

Variable	B	95%CI	SE	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1					.191	.188***
Constant	8.24	7.06-9.43	.61			
ASRMS	.15	.11-.18	.02	.437		
Step 02					.219	.214***
Constant	10.87	8.92-12.81	.98			
RMS	.15	.11-.18	.01	.437		
SNUQ	-.03	-.05-.01	.00	-.168		

*Note: CI=Confidence Interval, ***p<.001 ASRMS=Autonomy Supportive Restriction Mediation Styles, SNUQ=Social Networking Usage Questionnaire*

The mediation analysis investigates the link between autonomy-supportive restrictive mediation styles and the dependent variable, deepening existing relationships, with social networking usage acting as a potential mediator. In step one, RMS (autonomy-supportive) significantly predicts outcome, accounting 19.1% of the variance (R2= .191). In step two, with SNUQ included, the explained variance marginally increases to 21.9% (R2= .219). RMS (autonomy-supportive) continues to significantly predict the outcomes while SNUQ demonstrated a slight yet significant negative association (B= -0.03, β =-0.168), suggesting partial mediation by SNUQ.

Figure 4. Mediation Analysis



Note. IV= Active mediation style; DV=Deepening existing relationships; Mediator= Social media usage questionnaire. Regression coefficients are included in the model.

Table 8. Regression Analysis for Mediation of Social Networking Usage Questionnaire between Active Active Mediation Styles and Deepening Existing Relationships

Variable	B	95% CI	SE	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1					.277	.274***
Constant	7.64	6.59-8.69	.53			
AMS	.24	.19-.28	.02	.526		
Step 02					.319	.314***
Constant	10.71	8.92-12.81	.87			
AMS	.24	.21-.29	.02	.540		
SNUQ	-.03	-.05--.02	.00	-.205		

*Note: CI=Confidence Interval, ***p<.001 AMS=Active Mediation Styles, SNUQ=Social Networking Usage Questionnaire*
The regression analysis explored SNUQ's role as mediator between AMS and Deepening Existing relationships. Step one revealed that AMS significantly predicted the dependent variable, accounting 27.7% of the variance (R2=.277). Step two incorporates addition of SNUQ to model which slightly diminished the direct effect of AMS (B= .540) while increasing the explained variance to 31.9% (R2= .319). SNUQ contributed a significant negative effect (B= -.205), indicating partial mediation. The findings suggest that AMS strongly influences Deepening Existing relationships, partially via SNUQ's mediating role.

Table 9. Regression Analysis for Mediation of Social Networking Usage Questionnaire between Restrictive Mediation Styles and Expanding Current Social Network

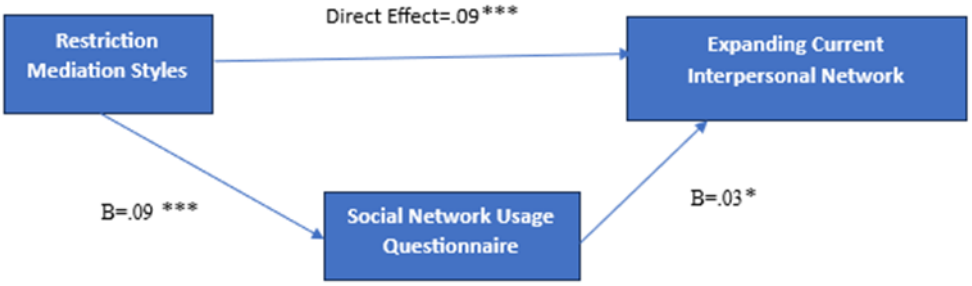
Note:

Variable	B	95% CI	SE	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1					.051	.048***
Constant	12.32	10.71-13.93	.81			
RMS	.09	.050-.14	.02	.227		
Step 02					.069	.063*
Constant	9.72	1.34				
RMS	.09	.02		.226		
SNUQ	.03	.01		.133		

*CI=Confidence Interval, ***p<.001 RMS=Restriction Mediation Styles, SNUQ=Social Networking Usage Questionnaire*

The regression analysis assessed the mediation of SNUQ between RMS and Expanding Current Social Network. In the step one, RMS was a significant predictor, explaining 5.1% of the variance (R2= .051). In the step two, SNUQ'S inclusion as a mediator maintained the significance of RMS (B =.226) whereas SNUQ'S added a substantial meaningful contribution (B= .133). The explained variance faced an increment up to 6.9% (R2= .069). These outcomes highlight partial mediation, while SNUQ modestly bridging the associations between RMS and social network expansion.

Figure 5. Mediation Analysis



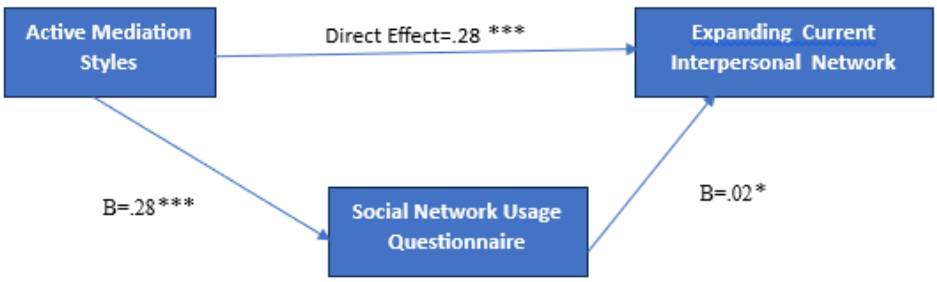
Note. IV= Restrictive mediation style; DV=Expanding Current Interpersonal Network; Mediator= Social media usage questionnaire. Regression coefficients are included in the mode

Table 10. Regression Analysis for Mediation of Social Networking Usage Questionnaire between Restrictive Mediation Styles and Expanding Current Social Network

Variable	B	95%CI	SE	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1					.255	.253***
Constant	8.85	7.52-10.19				
AMS	.28	.23-.34		.505		
Step 02					.265	.260*
Constant	7.02	4.79-9.26	1.13			
AMS	.28	.22-.33	.02	.498		
SNUQ	.02	.00-.04	.01	.098		

*Note: CI=Confidence Interval, ***p<.001 AMS=Active Mediation Styles, SNUQ=Social Networking Usage Questionnaire*

The regression analysis analyzed the mediating role of Social Networking Usage Questionnaire (SNUQ) in the association between Active Mediation Styles (AMS) and Expanding Current Social Network. In step one, AMS was a significant predictor, accounting for 25.5% of the variance (R2= .255). In step two, the inclusion of SNUQ as a mediator kept AMS as significant predictor (B = .498), with SNUQ also contributing to the model (B=.098). The explained variance rose slightly to 26.5% (R2= .265). The findings indicated partial mediation, with AMS remaining the stronger predictor despite SNUQ's contribution.



Note. IV= Active mediation style; DV=Expanding Current Interpersonal Network; Mediator= Social media usage questionnaire. Regression coefficients are included in the model.

4. Discussion

The present study is purported to examine how perceived parental media mediation strategies are linked to social media usage and gratification among emerging adults, mediated by social networking usage. A direct sampling method was implemented

to select a sample of three hundred and twenty-two pupils. The measures utilized in the study were Perceived Parental Media Mediation Questionnaire (PPMMS) and Social Media Usage and Gratification (SMUG) and Social Networking Usage Questionnaire (SNUQ). All the scales and their subsets have demonstrated robust internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .74 to .89 and a strong validity for all the scales and their dimensions.

4.1 Restrictive Mediation and Social Networking Usage

Restrictive mediation by parents inversely correlates with social media usage and gratification. Imposing strict limitations often leads to sentiments of rebellion and frustration. It may obstruct the positive virtual conduct, eventually ending up in reduced satisfaction from social media [43],[44]. Social networking usage function as mediator demonstrated that adolescent' respond to such restrictions by turning their interests towards social media, seeking validation and connections beyond parents' control [41]. Therefore, parental intentions of restrictions are intended to protect but they may inadvertently drive adolescents to engage more frequently with social media to assert their autonomy.

Restrictive parental involvement negatively impacts adolescents' capacity to drive gratification from expanding their interpersonal networks. Enforcing strict limitations on adolescents' social media activities may impair their ability to cultivate and sustain virtual connections. The mediating function of social network usage shows that adolescents may increasingly turn to social media platforms to independently grow their social circles [41]. This pattern reveals the unintended side effects of restriction style, where the urge for independency fosters greater engagement with social media. Although this strategy is intended to safeguard children from potential virtual perils, but end up in detrimental consequences such as reduced involvement in dispersal of information [43],[44]. In this realm, the dearth of substance involvement by social networking usage implies that restrictive strategies may not successfully foster adolescents' capacity to share and exchange information virtually. Rather, such limitations may stifle open dialogue and limit adolescents' opportunities to engage substantively with their peers [41].

4.2 Active Mediation and Social Networking Usage

Conversely, active parental mediation is positively correlated with social media usage and gratifications related to expanding interpersonal networks. Active mediation involves parents engaging in discussions about online interactions, which fosters a supportive environment for adolescents to explore their social connections [45],[40]. The significant mediating effect of social networking usage indicates that when parents adopt an active approach, adolescents are more likely to utilize social media to enhance their interpersonal relationships. This aligns with findings that suggest active parental involvement enhances adolescents' confidence in navigating online spaces, ultimately leading to greater satisfaction and positive outcomes from their social media interactions [42],[46].

4.3 Active Mediation and Social Networking Usage

On the other hand, active parental mediation involves parents engaging with their children in discussions about social media use, encouraging critical thinking and responsible engagement. While active mediation is generally associated with positive outcomes in terms of social media usage and gratifications [45],[40], the non-significant mediating effect of social networking usage in this study indicates that even when parents actively mediate, it does not necessarily enhance adolescents' information sharing and exchange on social media platforms. This finding suggests that while active mediation creates a supportive environment, it may not directly translate into increased opportunities for adolescents to share information effectively [42],[46].

4.4 Active Mediation and Social Networking Usage

On the flip side, active parental mediation is positively connected to social media usage and gratifications related to enlarging social networks. Active mediation involves parents participating in discussions about virtual behavior, providing a constructive space for them to build their social connections [45],[40]. The notable mediating influence of social networking usage implies that when parents embrace an active strategy, adolescents are inclined to use social media more to improve their social connections. This aligns with research showing that active parental engagement increases adolescents' self-assurance in virtual spaces, ultimately leading to greater satisfaction and favorable outcomes from their social media experiences [42],[46]. Social networking usage has substantially mediated between active mediation and social media usage and gratifications (i.e. deepening existing relationships, expanding current interpersonal network) but the insignificant mediating influence on third facet of SMUG that is information sharing and exchange. It demonstrated that even with active parental mediation, there is no guarantee that adolescents' information sharing and

exchange on social media platforms will improve. This finding implies that while active mediation nurtures a supportive setting, it may not directly promote enhanced opportunities for effective information sharing [42],[46].

5. Conclusions

The findings of this research highlight the essential role of parental mediation in influencing adolescents' social media usage and gratification, particularly in terms of deepening existing associations, expanding current interpersonal network and information sharing and exchange. While both restrictive and active meditation approaches were explored, the significant mediating influence of SNUQ between PPMMS and SMUG's first two facets while the non-significant mediating function between PPMMS and SMUG's third faced revealed the intricacies of these interactions. Active mediation, characterized by transparent communication and guidance, has been proven to enhance adolescents' digital literacy and fostering healthier virtual conducts [41]. On the flip side, restrictive meditation might unintentionally limit opportunities for meaningful involvement, promoting that a balanced strategy is key to achieving positive in adolescents' social media experiences [43],[47]. Accordingly, parents are advised to employ strategies that not only provide surveillance but also engage with children's virtual conduct to optimize the benefits of social media engagement.

5.1 Key Strengths and Shortcomings

Despite the study being carried out genuinely, there are few limitations that should be addressed. These constraints are intended to guide future research towards enhancement. The sample was confined to emerging adults only. The study was purported at small levels of the effect of perceived parental media mediation strategies on social media usage and gratifications and limited effect of mediator that is social networking usage, while there can be many other elements that can influence social media usage and gratifications. Therefore, it is recommended that a comparable study be conducted to investigate additional factors. Future research may focus on perceived parental media mediation is linked to social media usage and gratification by gathering data from a broader sample of colleges and institutions at national and regional levels. In the light of findings of current studies, professionals should work to raise awareness about which mediation styles work best for increment in social media usage and gratification. Policymakers can advocate for the dissemination of awareness regarding best approaches for surveillance that will be healthy for both parents and children. Future researchers may enhance the study's generalizability by increasing the sample size.

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

MDPI	
DOAJ	
TLA	
LD	

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