



NORTHERN

Is There a Psychological Connection Between use of Social Media and Addictive Responses: An Exploratory Examination of NNMC Student Attitudes and Behaviors

Arianna Fierro

Northern New Mexico College

Department of BAIS: Psychology

Abstract

Technology has been evolving in such a way as to connect people through media perhaps more than interacting face to face. Theoretically, as internet consumption increases there may be a link between social media usage to create addictive behaviors and responses. Data was collected online and from Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) students, and shows some support for the amount of usage creating potentially addictive use. Research questions that were examined involved questions regarding how much usage, which types of social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat), and whether “likes” were sought.

Introduction

As social media progresses can people develop an addiction due to excessive time on social media. Reports indicated that some online users were becoming addicted to the Internet in much the same way those others became addicted to drugs, alcohol, or gambling (Young, 1998).

Theory

Theoretically, Can excessive time on social media lead to an addiction? In a study conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles, the brain reactions of young adults was measured depending on how many ‘likes’ they received in a picture. The study found that the region of the brain that was most active is a part of the striatum called the nucleus accumbens, which is part of the brain’s reward circuitry (Wolpert, 2016).

Hypothesis

- Ho1: the more time spent on social media, the more likely they are to be addicted.
- Ho2: the more time spent on social media, the less likely they are to be addicted.
- Ho3: The less time spent on social media, the more likely they are to be addicted.
- Ho4: The less time spent on social media, the less likely they are to be addicted.
- Ho5: No significant relationship between time spent on social and addiction (null hypothesis).
- I hypothesize a link between time and social media addiction. I expect the more time that is spent on social media the more likely they are to have an addiction to social media.

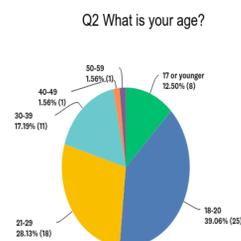
For more information contact:

Data Collection and Methods

Data was collected using a self-administered survey, participants were selected using a convenient sample. The main core of the study was inspired by Young’s Internet Addiction Test (YIAT). Due to the fact of class availability and size. It was administered to NNMC students and posted on Facebook. Participants were informed of their rights to confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to partake and refuse. Out of 64, online were 26, and I surveyed 38 respondents in 3 different classrooms from NNMC.

Data Analysis and Findings

Table 1: Sample



Out of 64 total respondents (N=64), 8 or 12.50% were 17 or younger, 36.06% (25) were 18-20, 28.13% (18) were 21-29, 17.19% (11) were 30-39, 1.56% (1) were 40-49, 1.56% (1) were 50-59. Because I posted it online, and I posted it public, I am not aware of how many are missing. 68.75% (44) were female and 31.25% were male.

Table 2: Dependent Variable (Time)

	NEVER (1)	LESS THAN AN HOUR (2)	1 TO 3 HOURS (3)	4 TO 7 HOURS (4)	8 TO 9 HOURS (5)	10 OR MORE HOURS (6)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE						
Your cell phone	0.00%	0	3.17%	2	41.27%	26	26	3.70						
YouTube	26.56%	17	17.19%	11	28.13%	18	15.63%	10	4.69%	3	7.81%	5	64	2.78
Facebook	17.19%	11	28.13%	18	39.06%	25	15.63%	10	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	64	2.53
Snapchat	29.69%	19	31.25%	20	31.25%	20	4.69%	3	1.56%	1	1.56%	1	64	2.22

In the table above a univariate analysis was conducted to analyze the time spent on social media as a dependent variable. A six-point Likert scale was used to measure the time respondents spent on social media. The most popular usage was the respondents cell phone, YouTube, Facebook, and Snapchat. Only 63 out of the 64 respondents answered how much time they spent on their cell phone. The rest of the questions were answered by all respondents (N=64). The weighted average is 3.70 which means most people answered on the 3rd Likert scale and past.

Table 3: Independent Variable (Four out of Six Addiction Components)

	NOT AT ALL (1)	A LITTLE BIT (2)	SOMEWHAT (3)	VERY MUCH (4)	A GREAT DEAL (5)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE					
Do you use social media when bored or lonely?	14.06%	9	20.31%	13	14.06%	9	37.50%	24	14.06%	9	64	3.17
Do you find yourself spending more time on social media?	20.31%	13	15.63%	10	40.63%	26	14.06%	9	9.38%	6	64	2.77
Do you rely on social media as a source of excitement?	20.63%	13	26.98%	17	33.33%	21	12.70%	8	6.35%	4	63	2.57
Have you attempted to quit using social media?	40.63%	26	10.94%	7	35.94%	23	7.81%	5	4.69%	3	64	2.25
Does social media conflict with loved ones?	54.69%	35	23.44%	15	12.50%	8	7.81%	5	1.56%	1	64	1.78
Do you feel a need to use social media and feel anxious when you can't?	59.38%	38	20.31%	13	14.06%	9	6.25%	4	0.00%	0	64	1.67

The independent variable is a measured by a five-point Likert scale, it was inspired by Young’s Internet Addiction Test (YIAT). There are five options on the Likert scale and six questions. Their purpose is to measure the four out the six core components of addiction (mood modification, withdrawal, increased tolerance, conflict). Only 63 out of the 64 participants responded to the question “Do you rely on social media as a source of excitement?” All respondents (N=64) participated on the remaining questions.

Table 4: Bivariate Analysis

	YES (1)-	NO (2)-	TOTAL-			
Never (A)	100.00%	1	0.00%	0	1.59%	1
A Little Bit (B)	71.43%	5	28.57%	2	11.11%	7
Somewhat (C)	100.00%	14	0.00%	0	22.22%	14
Very Much (D)	95.24%	20	4.76%	1	33.33%	21
A Great Deal (E)	100.00%	20	0.00%	0	31.75%	20
Total Respondents	60	3	63			

In the table above a bivariate analysis was conducted to compare the questions “Do you use social media daily?” to “Do you have access to the internet on a daily basis?” Only 63 of the 64 respondents answered, “Do you use social media daily?” One respondent is missing. Only 1.56% (1) of the people with internet access did not use social media. 11.11% (7) use social media “a little bit” but 3.18% (2) of 11.11% do not have daily internet access. 22.22%(14) “somewhat” use the social media daily, they all have daily internet access. 33.33% (21) use social media daily “very much” but 1.59% (1) does not have daily internet access. 31.75% (20) use social media “a great deal,” they all have daily internet access. The data showed the three respondents that didn’t have daily internet access still used social media daily.

Discussion

According to the data, the dispersions show three out of the six questions had a mean greater than 2.25 while the other three show a mean that is less than 2.25. The dependent variable (time) shows that most of the responses were less than half. The data received was not what was as expected. The data collected doesn’t support the theory or hypotheses. On the Likert scale the most popular answer was “somewhat.” For time spent on social media “1 to 3 hours” was the most popular.

Conclusions

Since, no significant relationship was discovered, I accept the null hypotheses, it corresponds accurately with the data collected. I believe more time was needed to collect the desired amount of data. Also, if a stimulus would’ve been included in the study it could’ve shown greater results. If possible I would have asked the participants to give up their social media for a period of time to determine their immediate feelings. To the best of my knowledge no identifiable data was mentioned. The confidentiality of the respondents has been ensured. The purpose of this is to cause no harm.

References

1. Young K. S. (1998). Internet addiction: the emergence of a new clinical disorder. *Cyberpsychol Behav*; **1**: 237–44.
2. Wolpert, S. (2016, May 31). The teenage brain on social media. *The Teenage Brain on Social Media* | UCLA. Retrieved September 6, 2017,
3. Babbie, E. (2017). *The Basics of Social Research* (7th ed.). Boston: Cengage Learning.

Acknowledgements

- Special Acknowledgement to:
- Dr. Stephanie Amedeo-Marquez
 - Professor Patricia Sutliff
 - Professor Charles Knight
 - Professor Matthew Martinez