

7-3 Final Project: Research Study

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Introduction

In the article, “*A social identity perspective of social media’s impact on satisfaction with life,*” the focus of this study is to understand the negative impact of what social media actually does to those who face internet addiction (dependency), fear of not knowing or always wanting to know what’s happening in their friends & families lives (a.k.a fear of missing out), and the narcissistic behavioral characteristics that can introduce depression, anxiety and stressful mental health illnesses to those that get “sucked into the dark side of the internet” ([Dutot, 2020](#)). This study is to also consider of how damaging social media dependency is on the social groups that are procreated from social media as a collective. The purpose of this study, or what the study is trying to achieve, is to find negative and positive effects on those who use social media. It is also to recognize the advantages and disadvantages that carry long term problems onto those who become dependent on social media (addiction, narcissism, nomophobia: “the fear of being out of mobile phone contact”, and self-esteem destruction).

This study focuses on the younger and older generations of society and will recognize the statistics of the effects of social media dependency on women, males, teenagers, elders, and young adolescents. In better terms, the percentages and respondents that will be counted into the statistics of the study will be those with certain age ranges along with any ties to more than gender but also each groups individual economic status and family history of mental illnesses and if individuals of those groups will have higher risk of social media dependency, fear of missing out, and so on ([Dutot, 2020](#)). Each part of this study will go in depth of the roles each

disadvantaged effect has on an individual who is social media dependent along with the implications and long-term effects one will face due to the influence of constant social media exposure.

Analysis

For the 2nd part of our Final Project guidelines, the analytical part of the research study “[A Social Identity Perspective of Social Media’s Impact on Satisfaction With Life,”](#) it is the goal of this research project to find the different research methods that were used during the research along with the results of those research methods. For the research methods, the following is listed below of each methods used within the study: Content Analysis, Surveys, Focus Groups, Experiments, and Participant Observation.

Now, what exactly do each of these research methods mean? Well, content analysis is used to look at the recorded communication that was shown during the research. Surveys, given to those focus groups in the study that have a series of questions (1-5, 5-10, 10-20., etc.) that will be counted into a percentage that will be comparing the focus groups to each other. Participant observation simply means the one conducting the experiment of the observational research method, such that as the analyzation of social media impact, interjects themselves into the focus group they’re studying as either the observer or a participant. Experiments states just that, it depends on the experiment being conducted and what hypotheses are involved leading to the hopeful conclusional results.

In Section 4: Methodology of [A Social Identity Perspective of Social Media's Impact on Satisfaction With Life,"](#) during what is being called a “empirical study”. One method of research used was that of an online survey that wanted to gain statistical analysis on a tool for research. The hypotheses they had along with these research methods were as that there is a positive link between addiction and collective self-esteem, there is a positive link between addiction and individual self-esteem. Fear of missing out will **NEGATIVELY** influence collective self-esteem and fear of missing out will **NEGATIVELY** influence satisfaction with life (SwL). Fear of missing out will **NEGATIVELY** influence individual self-esteem, collective self-esteem will **POSITIVELY** influence satisfaction with life (SwL), collective self-esteem will **POSITIVELY** influence state self-esteem, and finally, individual self-esteem will **POSITIVELY** influence satisfaction with life (SwL)

With this research through the survey, it was used to collect information and analysis faster than a normal in person survey would've been able to capture. It was not only faster, but it could be updated and restructured (for lack of a better word) in case it was not effective enough for the observants ([Dillman, 2007](#)). Below, in the made bullet point chart, it is explained the findings with the survey and the focus groups involved in said survey, along with the different research methods as previously mentioned above. During the pretest, however, only 10 random individuals were assessed from a social media group. It took 5 weeks after looking over the different social media platforms each 10 individuals used (Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook). Through the other surveys they used LinkedIn for professionals (focus group 1) and used Instagram for younger generation (focus group 2) ([Dutot, 2020](#)). The focus groups that taken part in this survey had demographics with 265 Individuals being that of males (Gender) and females

(Gender), younger generation (Age), older generation (Age), those of the French audience (Origin or Region, Dialect).

The outcomes of this survey were that of:

It is not the younger generation that had the most negative impact. Social media platforms in this study were used more by those 29-35 years old. No link between social media addiction and individual self esteem was found. Addiction, however, is more developed in the younger generation and gender and age differences are clear when addressing social media. The most significant role of this survey was that collective self esteem was the most significant role of the entire survey. Narcissism was found to be the most influential part of social media use. Getting a new phone or device was shown that it increased self-esteem individually and improved their satisfaction with life (SwL).

The results, end all, proved that psychological components prove there is individual online behavior, and it can be more negative than positive. It also depends on the focus group involved, such as, gender, age, younger & older generation, regional or dialect involved.

In multiple ways, and further along in the research findings, the hypotheses involved were concluded accurately but also concluded to be, in fact-incorrectly hypothesized.

Discussion

While reading over this research study, brought to my attention were implications that were written throughout. By implications, it not only means negatively, but also positively. But I'd like to bring to light the interesting parts of this research study that had an impact on my outlook of this study.

Starting with Section 2.1, talking about how users use social media as a ledge to develop their self-esteem, identity and their personality seemed to have created the impression that those on social media end up using platform(s) as a type of life support to get through the real world. What I mean by this is that many people who use social media have become so dependent on their social media lifestyle that they don't know how to act or build their own realistic lives. And in this section, it just shows that social media dependency becomes a type of addiction that mimics and displays behavioral addiction symptoms the same way. These are symptoms such as, confliction, tolerance (high/low), and intense mood modifications on the social media user.

Addiction, throughout this study, has been seen to be more prevalent in females rather than males. In females, it was shown in the study that high narcissism and low self-esteem is higher within them than males ([Dutot, 2020](#)). Why this is, it is still undetermined. What struck me as odd throughout this study was it is a Turkish study and that it was mainly applied to undergraduate students. And not only that, but the phenomenon of females also having higher narcissism and low self-esteem seems to be universal rather than in a collective, small area. Speaking on the regional aspect of this study, the online survey that was conducted to collect evidence and research on this study, was mainly targeted towards French dialect rather than other specific languages. Within this type of region/dialects in mind, the survey that ended up being conducted only lasted 5 weeks and was only collected from **certain** social media platforms.

More that was found throughout the study that struck me as an interest was that men were found to be more dissatisfied with life than females. In my experience, I've seen females be more dissatisfied with life while being so sucked into the addictive lifestyle of social media that they quite literally let social media takeover their lives. And with females, I've seen it destroy their self-esteem, personal life and relationships/friendships. For males, however, I do not know if it is the "manly" concept that prevents males to be vocal about their dissatisfaction about life, or if it is because they truly do not know how to verbalize or show their emotional destruction that came from social media dependency.

Results from this research study showed that individuals, which are majorly dependent on social media and the socialized aspect of that dependency, seek more recognition from their social group on their chosen social media platforms than they do from others ([Dutot, 2020](#)). Growing up, myself, most that have become dependent on social media did have strained relationships with their parents and friends who were outside of their social groups, and it did cause problems amongst the individuals and their parents. Being grounded, having their curfews becoming stricter, adding more chores, etc. all because of the negative impact the social media dependency had placed on their relationships with their parents and caused the individuals to be more disrespectful towards them.

Section 2.2 left a couple questions while I read over. For the inference of social media being an addiction that mimics or displays the same symptoms of behavioral addiction and how it causes mood modification as one of the symptoms ([Dutot, 2020](#)), could there be more of an affect on

those with mood modification already? In context, for myself as someone with a mood modifying condition such as bipolar disorder, could a dependency on social media cause a heightened negative effect on my mood more than normal? Would this mean my symptoms could be worse than those without mood modified conditions? With the study being conducted from Turkish studies, and targeting those with French dialect, are there going to be or have there been advancements in the studies demographics on moving to different regions and to different dialects? If so, which ones and what other regional studies were there (German, Lithuanian, Latin, etc.)?

In section 2.3, individuals with FoMo (fear of missing out) end up with feelings of dissatisfaction or anxiety when being connected to social media dependency for too long. My question being that of, is there a certain timespan to be classified as “too long”? What if someone with FoMo (fear of missing out) already has a generalized depressive disorder or anxiety disorder? Could this cause an impact on results of how many individuals experience FoMo (fear of missing out)? Would the dependency on social media, with those who already have generalized depressive disorder or anxiety disorder, be placed in more emotional distress due to the dependency? Section 5.4, gender and age have been identified as being the focus of studying SwL (satisfaction with life), addiction and FoMo (fear of missing out). Now, I am aware this research study was conducted a while ago, but with time continuing to change and dynamics changing all the time, besides female & male genders, could the study, if conducted in 2022 or 2023 possibly branch out to the dynamic of transgenders and non-binary individuals as well? Would their results be counted into the study if it was revisited?

Speaking on the SwL (satisfaction with life) aspect, section 7 speaks about how variables could make SwL more “reasonable” in relation to the psychology of the study and other studies. In this case, what other variables or what variables altogether engage in achieving the goal of making SwL (satisfaction with life) more “reasonable”? Lastly, back on section 6.1, the topic of males being more dissatisfied with life, why is that? Could it be based on the idea that men are supposed to be more masculine and not let things affect their masculinity? Is this an influence from social media and its impact on individuals? How much more are males dissatisfied with life than females? What factors are there that make the impacts on males much more negative than that of the female population in social groups?

In conclusion, there are multiple questions left unanswered by this study and the results within the study are still not all collected. In my opinion, this study needs to be revisited and to have more factors introduced to the study of social media impacts on individuals and their social groups. Such as adding social media platforms TikTok and Snapchat, along with expanding social groups and ages. Focusing on the adolescents in age groups 10-12, 13-16 and so on. Younger groups, more platforms, and expanding the surveys to more than just through one link and end up spreading/sharing the survey to in-person or even through emails and on social media platforms but by making them into quizzes instead. Individuals are seen to gravitate to anything that says “personality quiz” instead of surveys. Also, collecting results from gender specific and sexual orientation specific and spreading out to the LGBTQA+ community could do wonders for the results and seeing how many individuals truly deal with FoMo (fear of missing out), SwL (satisfaction with life), addiction and narcissism.

To be clearer, expanding the focus groups, content analysis (different platforms like TikTok and Snapchat), experiments, and surveys could bring in more results and conclusions to the still pending questions and hypotheses that were left unanswered at the end of the research study.

References:

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- 2) Dutot, V. (2020). A social identity perspective of social media's impact on satisfaction with life. *SNHU Shapiro Library*, 37(6), 759–772. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21333>