

Chapter 9

Understanding Social Media Addiction Through Personal, Social, and Situational Factors

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this chapter is to gain an in-depth understanding of the social media addiction construct. For this purpose, prior studies on social media addiction are reviewed. Based on this review the influence of several personal, social, and situational factors on social media addiction are examined. Firstly, personal factors such as demographic characteristics, personality traits, self-esteem, well-being, loneliness, anxiety, and depression are studied for their impact on social media addiction. Next, the social correlates and consequents of social media addiction are identified, namely need for affiliation, subjective norms, personal, professional, and academic life. Lastly, situational factors like amount of social media use and motives of use are inspected. Following the review of literature an empirical study is made to analyze factors that discriminate addicted social media users from non-addicted social media users on the basis of these different factors.

INTRODUCTION

Internet has dramatically changed the communication patterns of individuals. It has become a pervasive part of consumers' lives such that, researchers heightened their attention to understand the positive and negative effects of internet on human life. Certainly, several positive outcomes of internet can be counted as; providing easy access to information and leveraging early learning (Reid et al, 2016; Bauer, Gai, Kim, Muth, & Wildman, 2002), providing chances for widening social surroundings (Hampton & Well-

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man, 2003; Katz & Aspden, 1997; Rheingold, 1993) and improving psychological mood via creating opportunities for social contact and support (Reid et al, 2016; Chen, Boase, & Wellman, 2002; Kang, 2007). However, some potential negativities also emerged namely; decreasing level of social contact of individuals (Kim & Harikadis, 2009; Sanders, Field, Diego, & Kaplan, 2000; Kraut, Patterson, Landmark, Kielsner, Mukophadhyaya, & Scherlis, 1998; Stoll, 1995; Turkle, 1996), causing loneliness and eventually, clinical depression (Young & Rogers, 1998). These negativities especially intensified as individuals' frequency and duration of internet increased specifically in the cases of addiction.

Internet addiction has gained substantial interest by both mental health professionals and academic researchers. "Addiction" term, actually, is based on biological and psychological dependence of a physical item. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is the most well-known and appreciated source for addiction related terms, but behavioral addictions are not listed in mental disorders according to psychiatric literature. Recognizing this gap in the field, Goldberg (1996) established "internet addiction disorder" term for excessive human-machine interaction. Goldberg (1996) supported his argument by referring how the four components of addiction also exist in internet addiction, as well. These four components are; tolerance (increasing the engagement level to reach previous improved mood states), withdrawal (feeling discomfort when the behavior is prohibited), negative life outcomes (neglecting social, educational or work related issues), and craving (increasing the level of intensity) (Kim & Harikadis, 2009; Goldberg, 1996). In time, three more components are added to the four existing components namely; salience (being preoccupied with the behavior), mood modification (using this to alleviate psychological state) and relapse (fail to control the behavior) (Kim & Harikadis, 2009; Griffiths, 1998).

A growing wave of researchers supported the notion of using addiction term to characterize high dependence of certain behaviors especially among the youth (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011; Young, 2004; Lemon, 2002; Orford, 2001; Shaffer, 1996; Griffiths, 1998; Peele 1985). Moreover, the recent edition of "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders" recognized gambling as an addiction and listed digital game addiction as a potential behavioral addiction (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Likewise a number of various behavioral addictions have been examined such as; internet addiction, social media addiction, digital game addiction (Keepers, 1990) and smartphone addiction (Savci & Aysan, 2017). This chapter focuses on social media addiction. Although in the literature there exist different terminology to explain this phenomenon, specifically problematic social media/Facebook use (Kircaburun et al., 2019; Shensa et al., 2017), social networking addiction (Griffiths et al., 2018; Monacis et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2015) and compulsive social media usage (Dhir et al., 2018; Aladwani et al., 2017), social media addiction term is used deliberately to reach consistency within the work.

This chapter aims to understand "social media addiction" concept by examining its correlates. Moreover, it contributes to social media addiction literature in two ways. First of all, it provides a comprehensive look to social media addiction by discussing a variety of factors, which are beneficial for academicians' to be used for further research. Secondly, with an empirical study, factors discriminating social media addicts from non-addicts are identified.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION: AN EMERGING TREND

At the present time, the dramatic role of social media on communicational patterns cannot be underestimated. Even though, social media use provides many benefits such as of eroding distance between people,

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