Internet, Social Media, and Mobile Device Addiction Effects on a Workplace

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this literature review was to address an existing gap in the literature in understanding how addiction in the form of internet, social media, and mobile device addiction and dependency positively and negatively affect a workplace. The objective of the research was to review over 70 publications on the topics of internet addiction, social media addiction, mobile device dependency, a lack of leading consensus, benefits in the workplace, and challenges in the workplace to include industrial espionage. Future research is also addressed.

KEYWORDS

Cyber-Security, Industrial Espionage, Internet, Internet Addiction, Mobile Device, Mobile Device Addiction, Security, Social Media Addiction, Social Network

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this literature review was to address an existing gap in the literature in understanding how addiction in the form of internet, social media and mobile device addiction and dependency positively and negatively affects a workplace. The objective of the research was to review over 70 publications on the topics of internet addiction, social media addiction, mobile device dependency, a lack of leading consensus, benefits in the workplace, and challenges in the workplace to include industrial espionage. The internet and social networks have become a way of life for millions of people around the world who regularly access these networks through a variety of devices (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). Mobile devices such as cell phones enable people to have immediate online access and experience instant gratifications obtained from their social media (Shepard, Parker & Steiner, 2015). Online social networking sites (SNSs), where individuals enjoy connecting with others, have gained popularity in the last decade (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). In 2016, there were 2.34 billion social network users worldwide (Statista Facts on Social Networks, 2017). Users' social network activities appear to be eclectic and constantly changing, ranging from traditional sites such as Facebook® to more socially based online gaming platforms and dating platforms. These activities allow users to connect to one another based on shared interests, using on-the-go technologies such as tablets and

smartphones that are particularly popular devices for accessing social networks. Millennials, the generational cohort born between 1982 and 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015), are on the internet or on their cell phone for seven and a half hours daily (Twenge, 2013). As of 2010, Americans spend 23% of their internet time on social networking sites and 21% check Facebook® over five times daily. Approximately 30% of college students use Facebook® to meet new friends. Given the massive number of social media users and the frequency of use, the average social media user accesses their networking sites throughout the day, there is no wonder that researchers have begun to discover a number of potential causes for concern (Wallace, 2014).

In some workplaces, employers restrict or prohibit the use of personal mobile phones and restrict access to SNSs through company-owned networks. This occurs to protect the security of the enterprise, including intellectual property, personal identifying information of customers, business sensitive information, and classified matter. Restrictions may take place to prevent distractions and improve human performance, helping to achieve quality, safety, and productivity performance objectives. The increased reliance of the workforce on SNSs and mobile devices, juxtaposed with employers needs to protect assets and maintain human performance, creates a 21st century conflict. The literature review conducted addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the extent of conflicting interest related to the cause of the internet, social media, and mobile devices in the workplace?
RQ2: What is the generational extent of security policies and procedures considering mobile technology and SNSs?

Internet Addiction

Research on internet addiction has been an ongoing area of study because the wide dissemination of the internet to the public. In the 1990's, internet addiction was considered as a minor phenomenon existing in subsets of society or tight-knit communities, such as internet video gaming applications and online chat rooms. However, with the daily intrusion of the internet, the topic of internet addiction has become an increasingly prevalent phenomenon (Wallace, 2014). Research suggests there are a number of potentially addictive online behaviors. Young (1998) suggests five different categories of internet addiction. The first category is computer addiction that is an addiction to computer games. The second category is information overload, or web-surfing addiction. The third category is net compulsions, or online gambling, shopping, or other behaviors that are potentially addictive, even outside of the realm of the internet. The fourth category is cyber sexual addiction, or the addiction to online pornography or other activities sexually explicit in nature. The fifth type of addiction is cyber-relationship addiction, or the addiction to forming or maintaining online relationships.

Studies suggest that the majority of people affected by internet addiction might not even be aware that they are addicted (Young, 1998). The internet is so ingrained in contemporary society that it is difficult for individuals to recognize addictive behaviors in themselves or others. Reports suggest that internet usage can be difficult to control and has the potential for similar addiction patterns found in gambling addiction and gaming addiction (Ho et al., 2016; Rosenbalm & Wong, 2012; Young, 1998). The fine line between frequent non-problematic habitual use and problematic and possibly addictive use of mobile devices and SNSs is a continuous reality faced by society (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

Griffiths (2010) highlighted six core components of addiction, including salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, conflict, and relapse. Each of these core components of addiction were reported in people who are suffering from internet addiction. Studies have suggested that internet use has the same habit patterns as those found in chemical (e.g., alcohol) dependencies (Griffiths, 2010). Studies suggest that the internet can also lead to withdrawal from real-life to a virtual world, where an individual can facilitate all of their needs (Twenge, 2013). Young (1998) hypothesized that using the internet as need-fulfillment promotes at-risk circumstances where an individual has a

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