

# Self-Regulation Strategies and Social Media Use Intensity Among College Students

Richard Amthor, Amanda Glynn, Mackenzie Scully, and Dr. Vanessa Dennen

## Introduction

### Role of Social Media in College Life

- Social media is embedded in college students' daily routines, shaping communication, learning, and time management.
- While useful, it can become harmful when overused.

### Risks of Intensive Use

- Heavy social media use is linked to anxiety, stress, and feelings of overuse among young adults.
- This highlights the need for strategies that help students manage their engagement.

### Purpose of Self-Regulation

- Self-regulation strategies help users control when and how they engage with social media.
- These strategies reduce negative emotional outcomes and support positive ones such as connection, entertainment, and information access.

### Gaps in Current Research

- Low-intensity users tend to rely more on activity-limiting strategies, while high-intensity users often use content-curation strategies.
- Little research examines how these patterns differ specifically among college students.
- It remains unclear how usage intensity shapes the type of regulation strategy students choose.

### Study Objectives

- Identify how college students regulate their social media use across activity-limiting and content-curation strategies.
- Compare low-intensity and high-intensity users to determine differences in their regulation behaviors.
- Clarify how usage intensity relates to self-regulation in a population heavily immersed in social media.

## Methods

### Participants

- College students enrolled at Florida State University participated in the study.
- Recruitment occurred through the campus research pool and through flyers posted around campus with QR-code access to the survey.

### Procedure

- Students accessed the survey voluntarily and anonymously.
- All items were presented in a fixed order, with Likert-scale ratings and optional open-ended responses.

### Data Analysis

- Research Question 1: Frequency counts were used to summarize how often students reported using each type of self-regulation strategy.
- Research Question 2: Chi-square tests of independence were conducted to examine whether self-regulation strategy type differed between low-intensity and high-intensity social media users.
- Analyses assessed associations between usage intensity and strategy choice, allowing comparison of patterns across user groups.

## Analysis

Figure 1

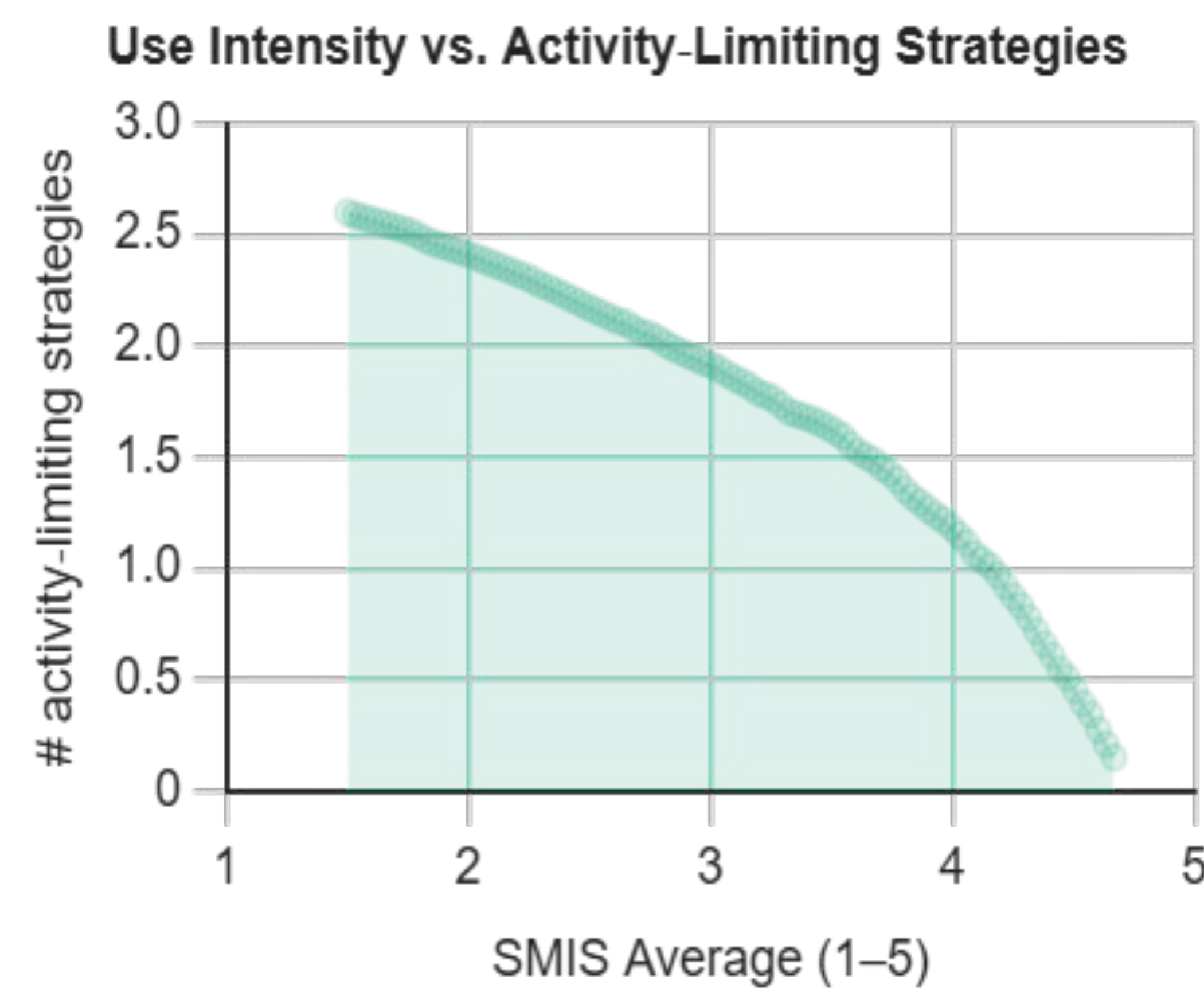
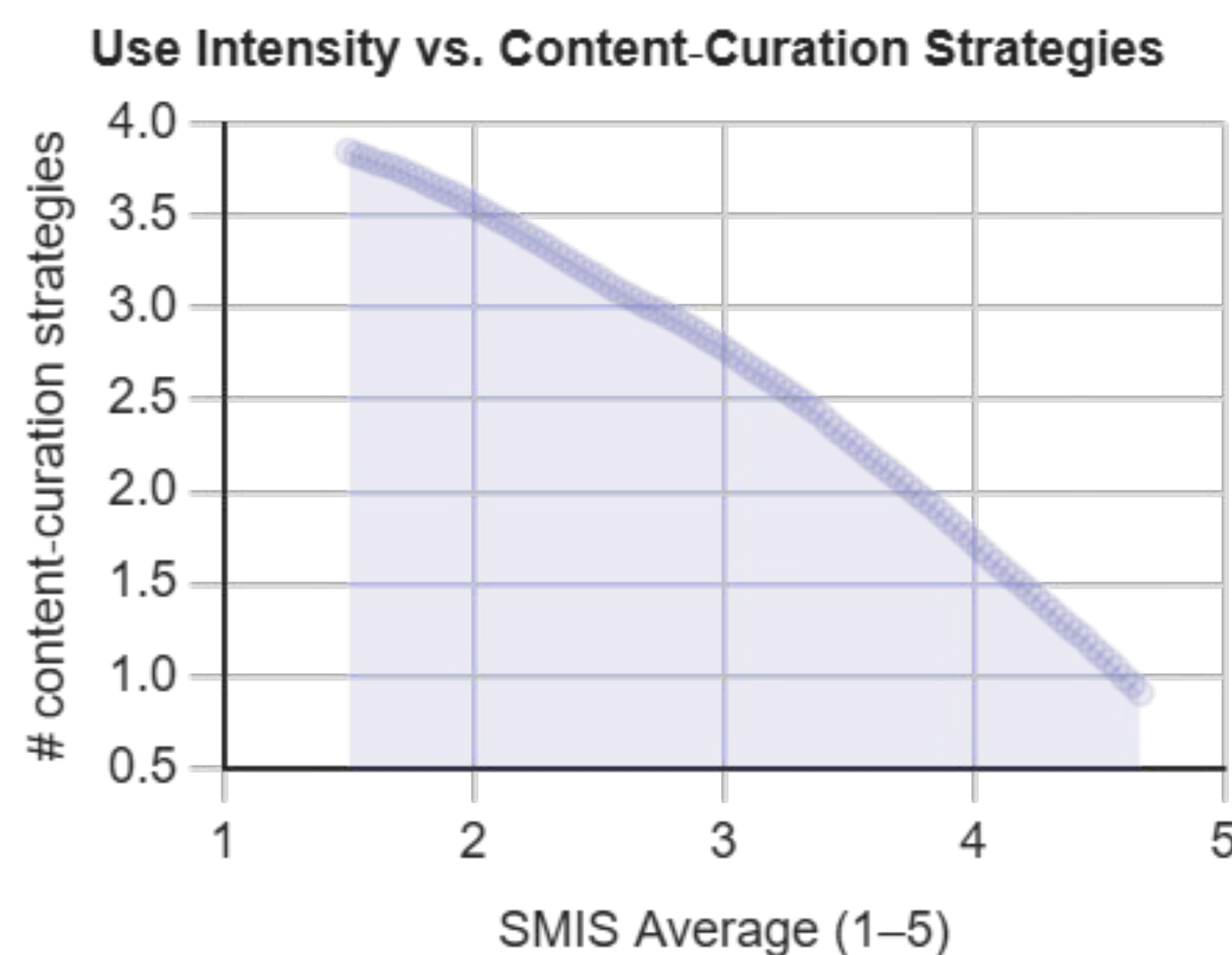


Figure 2



- Figure 1 indicates a negative relationship between self-regulation strategies and social media intensity
- Aligns with our expectations that intentional limitation leads to less social media usage
- Figure 2 indicates a negative relationship between social media strategies and content curation strategies
- Differs from our initial expectations that curating one's feed may increase their engagement

## Results

- Data collection is still ongoing, so results are preliminary.
- Figure 1 shows that as the social media intensity score increased, the number of activity-limiting strategies decreased.
- Figure 2 shows that as the social media intensity score increased, the number of content curation strategies decreased.

## Discussion

### Relevance of the Findings

- Understanding how students regulate their social media use can help identify which strategies reduce stress, anxiety, and overuse.
- Insights from this study may support campus wellness programs and digital-literacy efforts aimed at promoting healthier online habits.
- As social media continues to shape academic and social life, identifying effective regulation strategies is increasingly important.

### Limitations

- A strength of this study is its focus on college students, a population heavily immersed in social media.
- Another strength is the use of both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for a more complete picture of regulation behaviors.
- Another weakness of this study is that self-report measures may also introduce bias.
- Another limitation of the study is the small sample size. Only 16 participants were included since the data collection is still ongoing.

### Future Implications

- Findings may highlight the importance of teaching and reinforcing regulation strategies for students who struggle with high-intensity use.
- Results could inform interventions that help students recognize unhealthy patterns and adopt more effective strategies.
- Future research could expand to other age groups or examine platform-specific regulation behaviors.

## Acknowledgments and References

We would like to thank Dr. Dennen, the lead researcher on this project, for providing the direction, expertise, and support that made this study possible. Her guidance shaped our research questions, survey design, and overall approach to understanding self-regulation in social media use. We are grateful for the opportunity to work under her leadership throughout this project.

