

Social Media and Emotion

How Social Media Correlates With Emotions in FSU Students

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Introduction

- Over the last decade, social media use has been exponentially growing among college students. They're sharing their raw experiences with each other about hardship, days in their life, mental health, funny things, and the overall college experience.
- Social media has been associated with negative effects on social wellbeing, due to the "fear of missing out" and comparing themselves to others. Another commonly expressed concern is a correlation between anxiety and social media use. But it is uncertain whether social media is the root cause of these concerns.
- Social media is also linked to positive behaviors, such as increased connectivity and ability to spread the word about important announcements. According to Pew Research, 84% of adults ages 18 to 29 say they use social media sites, which suggests its strong influence and prominent usage in our modern-day culture.
- There is not much concrete evidence behind the primary and secondary effects of this, however. Especially in the field of emotional effects, there is little to no strong evidence of any lasting results caused by social media use. This is something our study wishes to focus on.



Expected Results

- We are still in the process of coding our qualitative data into quantifiable information. Once we have all of our data in place, we will be able to find correlations between different demographics, emotions, and social media habits.
- Currently, we are looking at the correlation between the amount of time spent on social media and the effects on the participants' emotions. Based on the interviews we've conducted as a team, we believe there is a strong correlation between time spent on social media use and negative emotions.
- Most of our participants reported time spent on TikTok, and a majority of these participants reported that they feel negatively about the amount of time they spend on social media.
- Students who spent less than 2 hours a day on social media were more likely to reported positive emotions associated with their social media use than those who reported 5+ hours.

Methods

- Participants were taken on a voluntary basis through advertisements of the interviews in psychology classes at FSU
- Students were offered credit in their classes for participating in the study
- Participants were randomly paired with a researcher to conduct an interview over Zoom
- All interviews were recorded so that the data was saved for reference and coding
- Each participant was asked the same baseline questions regarding social media and emotion, but conversations deviated slightly depending on what the participant mentioned
- The name, year in college, major, and extracurricular activities of each participant were recorded as variables in the study
- The responses were inputted into Otter.ai in order to transcribe in preparation for coding for similarities and correlations
- The statistical test used for the results of this study has not yet been determined



Discussion

Importance of the Project:

- Introduces research regarding social media as social media grows as an influence in the Gen Z lifestyle
- Discusses multiple aspects of emotions that have potential relations to social media
- Can help provide guidelines for future improvement in negative social media related emotions

Limitations:

- The study only interviewed students at FSU, so it is not very generalizable to the population.
- The study only interviewed around 300 students, so a larger sample size could be more reliable.
- The study utilizes only open ended questions, so it is possible that participants could misinterpret or fail to explain a question.

Suggestions for Future Research:

- Do a similar study interviewing students on social media and emotion, but focusing on 1 specific emotion per study.
- Utilize a larger sample size and interview students outside of FSU
- Do a similar study focusing on one specific social media platform and its effects on emotion.

References

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