Youth Attitudes Towards the Effects of Social Media Addiction: A Study on College Students in the United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

Social media platforms have become an integral part of the daily lives of youth worldwide. While these platforms offer numerous benefits, concerns have arisen about the potential negative consequences of excessive social media use on adolescents' health and physical activity, including addiction.

This study aimed to understand youth attitudes toward the effects of social media usage and its risk factors. By investigating the perceptions and behaviors of young individuals, this research seeks to contribute to our knowledge of the impact of social media addiction on the well-being, quality of life, and mental health of individuals actively using social media networks.

This study will investigate the effect of social media addiction on sleep problems in college students and the chain mediating effects in the relationship of fear of missing out and nocturnal social media use. We conducted a survey of 327 college students using the Social Media Addiction Scale, the Fear of Missing Out Scale, the Nocturnal Social Media Use Scale, and the Pittsburgh Sleep Index Scale. Results showed that social media addiction significantly and positively predicted poor sleep quality and that the fear of missing out and nocturnal social media use had a chain mediating effect in this relationship. Reducing social media addiction and nocturnal social media use and developing education-guided measures aimed at reducing the fear of missing out will be beneficial for improving the sleep quality of college students.

Introduction

According to recent statistics, there are 4.9 billion social media users globally, meaning 60.49% of the global population uses social media (Shewale.R, 2023). The average time individuals spend using social media daily is 2 hours 32 minutes. One of the contributory reasons for the popularity of social media usage might be the advances in information and communication technologies and the overall increased penetration rates of smartphone devices globally. The smartphone penetration rate in the region is the highest in the GCC sub-region, with countries such as the United Arab Emirates

(UAE) exceeding 96 percent in 2023 (Saleh.S, 2023). Other reasons that account for the increase in the use of social media among individuals are how these social networks allow for ease of communication and enable individuals to link up and form virtual relationships that are not confined by any geographical barriers (Cheng C, Lau YC, Luk JW). Social media also allows for information sharing (Yoon S et al. (2021) have previously highlighted how social media has been tapped upon to actively engage patients and the public. While the use of social media has multiple benefits, in recent years, there have been increasing concerns relating to the excessive use of social media. Prior studies have examined the impact of addiction to social networks like Facebook and its consequential impact on one's psychosocial functioning. For example, Busalim et al. (2019) reported how self-esteem was hurt by Facebook addiction for students who were not addicted and how Facebook addiction led to worsening academic performance. In recent years, with the increasing popularity of other social media networks, such as Instagram, they have also been investigated. Souza et al. examined the relationship between depression and Instagram addiction among 131 students in India aged between 12 – 23 years old. They reported an association between the severity of one's Instagram addiction and depressive scores (D'Souza.L, 2018). More recently, studies have explored the prevalence of social media addiction and how the use of different platforms contributes to varying levels of addiction (Marengo D, Angelo Fabris M, Longobardi C, Settanni M,2022).It was found that individuals who used more visual forms of social media, such as Instagram and TikTok, had higher levels of social media addiction than conventional platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook (Ibid,2022).

The SM addiction is also called SM disorder, excessive SM use, problematic SM use, and compulsive SM use. Uncontrolled use of SM is thought to have negative interactions with depression, anxiety disorders, loneliness, well-being, self-esteem, and self-control (Kuss et al., 2014). Overuse of SM might affect the social functioning of individuals, and it might be associated with a decrease in psychological well-being (Andreassen et al., 2016). Since adolescents show increasing social interactions, raised awareness of social norms, and a desire for social approval, they undergo more significant social influence than other age groups. SM addiction is more common in adolescents and young adults than in adults (Kuss et al., 2014).

Sleep is a physiological and psychological cyclical state essential for maintaining physical and mental health (Hestetun et al., 2018). Studies have found that the sleep problems of college students are becoming more serious, and the detection rate of sleep disorders is at a high level (Xu et al., 2022). Poor sleep can pose serious threats to college students' physical and mental health and academic life (Dewald et al., 2010; Owen et al., 2014). The popular sentiment remains that kids today are addicted to technology. The sentiment, arguably a central concern among many parents, is often amplified by media headlines pointing to a widespread societal malaise. Take, for instance, The Atlantic's (Twenge 2017) headline: "Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?" drawing from psychologist Jean Twenge's book underscoring the mental health impacts of social media and other forms of online connectivity (Twenge 2017; see also Livingstone 2017).

The addictive use of social media frequently involves spending more time connecting to social media for entertainment than for studies. However, students often underestimate the appeal of social media while overestimating their self-control, are easily distracted by the entertainment and social features offered by social media, and fail to concentrate on learning. According to the Strength Model of Self-Control (SMSC), an individual's cognitive and psychological resources are limited, and the resources spent on some tasks are bound to discourage resources spent on others. The vitality, dedication, and

concentration in academic engagement are important psychological resources individuals need to complete learning tasks. However, excessive social media involvement requires a large amount of concentration and vitality that consumes an individual's resources, thus leading to insufficient resources devoted to academic activities. Consequently, students addicted to social media may become overwhelmed with learning tasks requiring absolute focus and cognitive ability.

Fear of missing out refers to diffuse anxiety caused by individuals worrying about missing novel experiences or positive events experienced by others (Casale et al., 2018). With the advancement of networking and intelligence, anxiety about missing out will become increasingly common. People dependent on social media are accustomed to paying attention to messaging updates at any time, prone to fearing missing out, and willing to sacrifice sleep time, so they passively use social media at night (Scott et al., 2019). Studies have shown that people who frequently use social media experience higher levels of fear of missing out (Y. L. Zhang et al., 2021). Fear of missing out has a positive impact on social media addiction: the stronger this fear, the higher the likelihood of developing a social media addiction (Y. Liu, 2020). People may replace sleep with social media use due to expectations and fear of missing out (Cain & Gradisar, 2010; Scott et al., 2019).

Some researchers find addiction to internet connectivity to be a "major factor" underpinning cyberbullying, sexting, and educational difficulties linked to youth not paying adequate attention in the classroom (Fisk 2016, p. 141). The ubiquitous access to smartphones and SNS has been found to detrimentally affect cognitive functioning and personal relationships, ultimately negatively impacting well-being (Sbarra, Briskin and Slatcher 2019).Since Goldberg's early conceptualization, researchers have pushed for more nuanced (i.e., more clearly operationalized) studies of online behaviors and behavioral addictions. Moreover, researchers argue that the term "Internet addiction" has little utility for diagnosis and is likely comorbid with other categorizations (Starcevic 2013; Van Rooij et al. 2017).

Other scholars document more decidedly adverse outcomes. For instance, in an extensive online survey of almost 3,500 eight to 12-year-old girls in North America, Pea et al. (2012) found statistically significant results indicating positive social well-being associated with face-to-face communication and negative well-being associated with online multitasking and the use of online technologies for communication, as well as going online to watch videos.

"Online addiction," as a sensitizing concept, provides analysts with "a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances," while always situating the concept within the complex power relations that underpin definitions and interpretations of addiction (Blumer 1954, p. 7). The notion of sensitizing concepts is methodologically and theoretically relevant as our intention here is not to verify previous researchers' findings about the extent and severity of online addiction, nor the validity of the concept, but to explore how teens' lived experiences inform their understandings of addiction as a form of cyber-risk. Indeed, most of our knowledge of problematic internet use, addiction, and its effects can come from survey-based research, leaving a gap in knowledge regarding how teens themselves interpret and respond to the charge of their online addictions and anxieties (though see Adorjan and Ricciardelli 2019; Bailey and Steeves 2015; boyd 2014; Livingstone and Sefton-Green 2016).

Scholars have emphasized the role of materialistic beliefs in adolescents' personal and social development (Sharif &

Khanekharab, 2017). Materialism is "individual differences in people's long-term endorsement of values, goals, and associated beliefs that center on the importance of acquiring money and possessions that convey status" (Dittmar et al., 2014, p. 880). Existing studies have considered materialism as a predictor for online social interactions (Chu et al., 2016), social media intensity (Chu et al., 2016), and Facebook use (Ozimek et al., 2017). However, the relationship between materialism and SNS addiction remains unclear. Moreover, little is known regarding the mechanisms underlying the link between materialism and Social Networking Site (SNS) addiction, which could shed light on adolescent SNS addiction prevention and intervention. Therefore, this study examined the relationship between materialism and SNS addiction and further extended the findings by exploring the underlying mediating and moderating mechanisms in this relationship.

Another study aims to determine the serial mediation effects of sleep quality and fatigue on the relationship between SMA and academic engagement among college students by conducting cross-sectional surveys. The results showed that SMA among college students negatively affected their academic engagement. SMA may even lead to a pathological psychological dependence on social media with behavioral addiction symptoms. SMA has been reported to negatively affect students' learning, such as distraction, severe procrastination, and decreased academic productivity, particularly psychosomatic disorders, including reduced sleep quality and fatigue.

Although the researchers stress that their study, as with similar findings by others, cannot demonstrate causality (Pea et al. 2012), they note that negative impacts seem to depend much on factors beyond the quantification of the frequency of use. In a study of 467 Scottish adolescents, those who use social media frequently and who are more emotionally invested were found to experience lower self-esteem, degraded sleep quality, and higher levels of anxiety and depression (Woods and Scott 2016). Authors of another nationally representative sample of over 500 emerging adults in the U.S., ages 18–22, found "higher social media use...associated with greater dispositional anxiety symptoms and an increased likelihood of having a probable anxiety disorder"; findings that in part may relate to "the internaliz[ation of] pressure to maintain social network updates" (Vannucci, Flannery, and Ohannessian 2017, p. 165). Vannucci and colleagues also raise the possibility that those with existing "elevated anxiety symptomology and more severe impairment" may "tend to engage in more social media use" (2017, p. 166).

An online cross-sectional study was conducted in three cities in Vietnam (Hanoi, Tuyen Quang, and Can Tho) from September through to October 2021. A structured questionnaire assessed characteristics of social media use and other associated factors. 1891 participants were recruited, with 98.4% having access to social media. Factors like "PHQ-9 score", "Problematic Internet use", and "Time average used social media per day" were negatively associated with the EQ5D5L Index. By contrast, "Gender" and "Using smartphone" were positive factors of the EQ5D5L Index. "FOMO score" and "self-harm and suicide" were positive factors of the PHQ-9 score, while "Using a smartphone" was negative. In terms of self-harm and suicide, "FOMO score" and "Problematic Internet use" were positive factors; by contrast, "Using smartphone" was a negative factor. This is the first study to examine social media addiction among Vietnamese adolescents, its relationship with the FOMO score, stresses associated with rejection and neglect, and the overall quality of life. Our results highlighted a relationship between the FOMO score and impaired overall quality of life, increased depressive symptoms, and an association between stresses relating to negative rejection and the FOMO score.

Methodology

Participants and Procedure

The methodology of this study involved a survey approach, targeting college students from five universities in the UAE. A total of 520 questionnaires were distributed, resulting in 327 valid responses. The participants represented a diverse mix of gender, academic year, and field of study. Various scales were employed to measure social media addiction, FoMO, nocturnal social media use, and sleep quality. The study conformed to ethical standards, ensuring informed consent from all participants. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 25.0, with Pearson correlation analysis and the SPSS PROCESS macro for model estimation. Statistical significance was set at p <.05, ensuring robustness in the findings.

Measures

We used the existing versions of all measures for data collection in this study.

Social Media Addiction Scale

The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS),

We adopted the measure of social networking site addiction compiled by Bergen and Žeželj (2014) and the Weibo addiction scale for assessing college students that was compiled by Z. S. Liu (2013), and revised these to fit the purpose of this study. The revised scale we used includes six items: "I

constantly refresh Weibo, expecting new messages or notifications," "I sometimes sleep a lot less than normal because I'm spending more time on social media," "Sometimes I have the impression that I have two lives: one private and the other virtual," "I'd rather spend an afternoon or evening on social media than spend that time on any other activity," "I feel uncomfortable, anxious, and uneasy when I can't use social media," and "I often temporarily interrupt ongoing study work or escapism tasks by using social media to alleviate negative emotions." Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, where the higher score, the greater the degree of social media addiction and disruption to the individual's life. Cronbach's alpha in this study was .98.

Fear of Missing Out Scale

Fear of missing out scale (FoMOs; Przybylski et al., 2013) Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all true to 5 = Absolutely true). The total scores on the scale range between 10 and 50, where higher scores indicate a higher level of fear of missing out.

We measured the fear of missing out with the scale developed by Q. Qi et al. (2019), which includes two factors: fear of missing information and fear of missing situations. There are eight items (e.g., "I am afraid that other people have more

wonderful online experiences and gains than I do" and "Having fun and sharing online what happens in my life is important to me"). Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, where a higher overall score represents a higher level of individual anxiety about missing out (Q. Li et al., 2019). Cronbach's alpha in this study was .97.

Nocturnal Social Media Use Scale

Investigating problematic sleep due to social media and social media sleep hygiene, Woods and Scott (2016) developed the Nocturnal Social Media Use Scale. It includes seven items (e.g., "I feel restless and empty when I can't use social media on my phone at night" and "I often have no clear purpose in using social media on my phone at night, but it is difficult to stop"). Items are rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = very inconsistent to 6 = very consistent. The higher the score, the more often the individual actively uses social media before going to bed or passively uses social media after being awakened by a notification sound. Cronbach's alpha in this study was .98.

Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index Scale

The Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) is a self-rated questionnaire that assesses sleep quality and disturbances over a 1-month time interval. We measured sleep problems with the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index Scale (Buysse et al., 1989), translated into Chinese by X. C. Liu et al. (1996), which assesses seven components of sleep quality: subjective sleep quality, sleep onset time, sleep duration, sleep efficiency, sleep disturbance, hypnotic medication, and daytime dysfunction. There are 18 self-assessed items in this scale (e.g., "In the last month, have you been troubled by the following conditions affecting your sleep, and, if so, to what extent?" and "In the last month, how many hours per night did you sleep?"). Response options vary for each question, and each component's cumulative score represents the total sleep quality score. The higher the score, the worse the sleep quality (X. C. Liu et al., 1996; Wang et al., 1999). Cronbach's alpha in this study was .75.

Research Questions

1. What is the intensity of use of social media by Arab youth respondents in research sampling"?
2. How does the frequency and duration of social media use differ among Arab youth across various demographics such as age, gender, and educational background?
3. What is the perceived correlation between time spent on social media and addiction among Arab youths?
4. Do the Arab youth have consistent attitudes towards social media addiction as a multidimensional variable that contains (preoccupation, withdrawal symptoms, tolerance, mode modification, relapse, and conflict)?

Research Hypotheses

- H1: There are statistically significant correlations between the excessive use of social media by Arab youth respondents and the negative effects on their mental health, social relationships, daily duties, and tense feelings.

- H2: There are positive correlations between the social intensity of usage of social media by Arab youth respondents and their attitudes towards media addiction, entertainment, and its role to boost their self-esteem.
- H3: There are statistically significant correlations among the dimensions of social media addiction effects (preoccupation, withdrawal symptoms, tolerance, mode modification, relapse, and conflict).

Data Analysis

We used SPSS 25.0 to calculate descriptive statistics for each variable and test the reliability of the scales. Correlations between variables were determined by Pearson correlation analysis, and then Model 6 of the SPSS PROCESS macro was used to estimate the model of this study, with $p < .05$ considered statistically significant.

Research Results

Firstly-Research Questions

1. **What is the intensity of the use of social media by Arab youth respondents in research sampling"?**
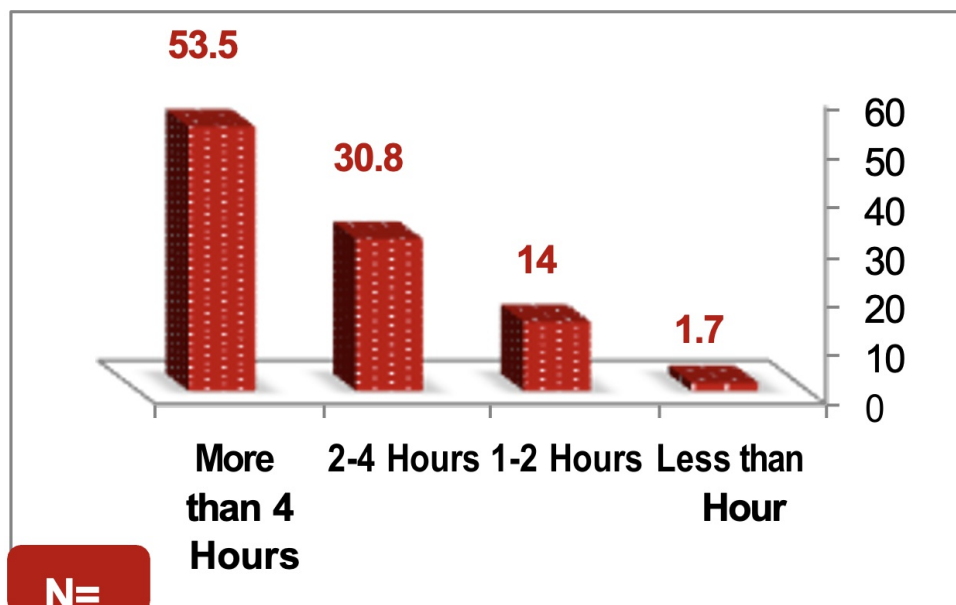

Figure 1. The Arab youth usage intensity of social media.

"The study results indicate high social media usage among Arab youth. According to Figure 1, a significant 53.5% of respondents report using social media for more than four hours daily, categorizing them as 'addicted users' based on global standards. This extensive engagement points to a deep integration of social media in their daily lives. Additionally, 30.8% use social media for 2-4 hours daily, highlighting its pervasive role. These patterns suggest that social media is not only a tool for information and entertainment but also plays a critical role in fulfilling

various social and educational needs of Arab youth. Such heavy usage patterns impact their cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral aspects. However, it's important to consider the cultural and socio-economic factors that might influence these usage patterns and their interpretations."

2. **How does the frequency and duration of social media use differ among Arab youth across various demographics such as age, gender, and educational background?**

Frequency of use Demographic characteristics		Mean	SD	SE	T. Test	Sig.
Gender	Male	3.44	0.75	0.32	7.28**	0.007
	Female	3.19	0.84	0.47		
				F. Test		
Age	G-a1	3.41	0.69	0.49	0.55	0.65
	G-A2	3.46	0.75	0.41		
	G-A3	3.28	0.92	0.85		
	G-A4	3.38	0.88	1.09		
Education	H. school	2.8	0.83	2	1.86	0.137
	Diploma	3.8	0.45	2		
	University	3.4	0.78	0.28		
	Post-graduate	4	0.01	0.02		
Soci_status	Single	3.41	0.75	0.31	0.45	0.72
	Married	3.47	0.82	0.83		
	Divorced	3.33	1.15	0.01		
	Widow	4	1.7	0.01		
Soceco_status	High	3.2	0.84	2	1.16	0.32
	Medium	3.43	0,74	0.31		
	Low	3.44	0.87	0.91		
Family_situation					0.68	0.56
Lives with parents		3.45	0,74	0.31		
Parents are divorced		3.4	0.63	1.12		
Live alone		3.24	0.94	0.97		
Deceased parents		3.6	0.69	1.33		

Table 1. The differences among Arab youth in the frequency of social media use across various demographics

"The data presented in Table 1 reveals notable trends in the frequency and duration of social media use among Arab youth across various demographic factors. A significant finding is the gender difference in social media usage, with males using social media more frequently than females (p=0.01), indicating a high level of confidence in this trend. However, when examining other demographic factors such as age, educational background, social status, socio-economic status, and family situation, the results suggest a uniform pattern of social media usage among Arab youth. This homogeneity indicates that factors like age, education, and socio-economic background have less influence on the frequency of social media use compared to gender in this demographic group. These findings highlight the need for further exploration into the cultural and societal factors influencing these usage patterns."

Frequency of use Demographic characteristics	Mean	SD	SE	T. Test	Sig.
Gender					
Male	1.85	0.86	0.32	0.58	0.447
Female	1.77	0.91	0.47		
				F. Test	
Age					
G-a1	1.91	0.81	0.49	0.88	0.45
G-A2	1.77	0.86	0.41		
G-A3	1.76	1.09	0.85		
G-A4	2.06	1.06	1.09		
Education					
H. school	2.6	1.14	2	2.25	0.082
Diploma	1,2	0.45	2		
University	1.84	0.88	0.29		
Post-graduate	1.5	0.71	0.11		
Soci_status					
Single	1.85	0.86	0.31	0.738	0.53
Married	1.76	1,06	0.85		
Divorced	2	1.1	1.3		
Widow	1	0.01	1.1		
Soceco_status					
High	1.6	1.3	2	0.517	0.67
Medium	1.85	0,88	0.31		
Low	1.8	0.76	0.9		
Family_situation					
Lives with parents	1.84	0,87	0.31	0.214	0.88
Parents are divorced	1.73	0.79	1.12		
Live alone	1,7	0.87	0.99		
Deceased parents	1.8	1.03	1.33		

Table 2. The differences among Arab youth in the duration of social media use across various demographics

The above table shows no statistical differences among Arab youth in the duration of social media use across demographics (Gender, Age, Education, Social status, social/economic status, and Family situation). The results refer to the homogeneity of the youth sampling. The differences are computed with a standard level of confidence of 95%, and a probability value of 0.05.

> "This study's data on social media duration among Arab youth, as presented in the table, reveals no significant differences across demographic categories, including gender, age, education, social status, socio-economic status, and family situation. The homogeneity in the duration of social media use across these demographics, computed with a standard level of confidence (95%) and a probability value of 0.05, suggests a uniform pattern of engagement with social media among Arab youth. This finding indicates a pervasive and consistent use of social

media across different segments of the youth population, underscoring the importance of understanding its impacts within a culturally and demographically diverse context."

3. **What is the perceived correlation between the time spent on social media and addiction among Arab Youths?**

Social media addiction's main items	Times spent on social media use	
Perceiving social media addiction.	0.39	0.676
Negative impact of social media use on social relationships.	0.299*	0.016
Youth involvement with social media.	0.034	0.67
Perceiving narcotizes impact of social media use.	0.37	0.78

Table 3. The Correlation between the time spent on social media and addiction among Arab youths

(*) p<0.05

The table analyzing the correlation between the time spent on social media and addiction among Arab Youths reveals key insights. It shows a significant correlation between the time spent on social media and its negative impact on social relationships, significant at a 0.05 probability value and a 0.95 confidence level. However, no statistical significance is found between the time spent on social media and youths' perceptions of addiction, their involvement with social media, or the narcotizing (opiating) effect of social media use. This indicates that while increased social media use correlates with deteriorating social relationships, it does not necessarily align with a self-perceived sense of addiction or its other hypothesized effects.

4. **Do the Arab youth have consistent attitudes towards social media addiction as a multidimensional variable that contains (Preoccupation, Withdrawal Symptoms, Tolerance, Mode Modification, Relapse, and Conflict)?**

Preoccupation Items	Alpha	Sig.	Mean	SD
I often find myself thinking about social media, even when I'm not using it.	0.79*	0.031	3	0.01
I frequently plan my activities around my social media usage.	0.72*	0.05	2.4	0.801
It's hard for me to focus on other things because I'm thinking about social media.	0.66*	0.052	1.36	1.17
Aggregate Level of Preoccupation	0.7*		6.76	1.03
Withdrawal Symptoms Items	Alpha	Sig.	Mean	SD
I feel restless or anxious when I try to cut down on my social media use.	0.82*	0.02	3.75	0.66
I become irritable if I can't access social media for a while.	0.79*	0.031	3	0.01
I experience negative emotions when I'm not able to check my social media accounts.	0.79*	0.03	3.04	1.02
Aggregate Level of Withdrawal Symptoms.	0.8*		9.79	0.84
Tolerance Items	Alpha	Sig.	Mean	SD
I find that I need to spend more time on social media to get the same level of satisfaction.	0.84*	0.02	3.46	0.89
Over time, I have increased the amount of time I spend on social media.	0.85*	0.02	3.55	0.84
Aggregate Level of Tolerance	0.843*		7.01	0.81
Mood Modification Items	Alpha	Sig.	Mean	SD
I use social media to make myself feel better when I'm sad or stressed.	0.68*	0.053	1.85	1.65
Engaging in social media activities helps me improve my mood.	0.79*	0.031	3	0.01
I feel happier after spending time on social media.	0.86*	0.02	3.6	0.81
Aggregate Level of Mood Modification.	0.8*		8.4	0.64
Relapse Items	Alpha	Sig.	Mean	SD
I've tried to cut down on my social media use, but I've gone back to using it as much as before.	0.79*	0.031	3	001
Even when I've tried to take a break from social media, I end up using it again.	0.7*	0.053	2.29	0.71
Aggregate Level of Relapse.	0.74*		5.29	0.36
Conflict Items	Alpha	Sig.	Mean	SD
My use of social media has caused conflicts with my friends or family members.	0.87*	0.015	3.72	0.69
I've neglected important responsibilities because of my social media use.	0.67*	0.051	1.39	1.2
I've had arguments with people about the amount of time I spend on social media.	0.87*	0.015	3.74	1.91
Aggregate Level of Conflict	0.83*		8.85	0.79

Table 4. Youth attitudes towards Social Media Addiction as a Multidimensional variable

(N)=347. P<0.05

The above table shows that Arab youth have consistent attitudes towards social media addiction. All values of the aggregate dimensions of addiction are statistically consistent and significant at a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error (p=0.05), and then it ought to be noted that the alpha Cronbach coefficient statistical value is = 0.7+. The present value confirms that the social, psychological, and physical dimensions of social media addiction (Preoccupation, Withdrawal Symptoms, Tolerance, Mode Modification, Relapse, and Conflict) have values between 0.7 and 0.843. Furthermore, it confirms that the Arab youth sampling has consistent attitudes towards social media addiction.

The present table shows both the individual and aggregate levels of preoccupation with social media. Youth in the sampling have negative attitudes towards the preoccupation of social media. It's a statistically valid attitude because the maximum value of the aggregate mean=15, while the mean value of their attitudes=6.76 with a standard deviation value=1.03. Youth refused that they are preoccupied with social media.

The same table shows both the individual and aggregate levels of withdrawal symptoms of social media. Youth in the sampling have positive attitudes towards the withdrawal symptoms of social media. It's a statistically valid attitude because the maximum value of the aggregate mean=15, while the mean value of their attitudes=9.79 with a standard deviation value= 0.84. Youth agreed about the withdrawal symptoms of social media.

The same table (no.4) shows both the individual and aggregate levels of tolerance with social media. Youth in the sampling have positive attitudes towards the tolerance of social media. It's a statistically valid attitude because the maximum value of the aggregate mean=10. The mean value of their attitudes=7.01 with a standard deviation value=0.81. Youth agreed about their tolerance with social media.

The above table (no.4) shows both the individual and aggregate levels of Mood Modification improved by social media. Youth in the sampling have weak positive attitudes towards the role of social media in improving their Mood Modification. It's a statistically valid attitude because the maximum value of the aggregate mean=15. The mean value of their attitudes=8.4 with a standard deviation value=0.64. Youth agreed about the role of social media in the modification of their mood over time.

The above table (no.4) shows both the individual and aggregate levels of the relapse effect of social media. Youth in the sample have weak positive attitudes towards the relapse of their use of social media over time. It's a statistically valid attitude because the maximum value of the aggregate mean=10. The mean value of their attitudes=5.29 with a standard deviation value= 0.36. Youth agreed that they are not capable of cutting down their social media usage.

The same table (no.4) shows both the individual and aggregate levels of conflict because of the excessive use of social media. Youth in the sample have weak positive attitudes towards conflict as a variable that affects negatively their relationships and social duties because of their social media usage. It's a statistically valid attitude because the maximum value of the aggregate mean=15. The mean value of their attitudes=8.85 with a standard deviation value= 0.79. Youth agreed about the negative effect of social media usage on their social relationships and social duties.

Secondly-Research Hypotheses

- **H1: There are statistically significant correlations between the excessive use of social media by Arab youth respondents and the negative effects on their mental health, social relationships, daily duties, and tense feeling.**

Table 5. The correlations among respondents' excessive use of social media and the negative effects on their lives.

Negative Effects	Excessive use of social media	
	Pearsonian 'r'	Significance
Mental health	0.43**	0.01
Social relationships	0.46**	0.01
Daily duties	0.4*	0.043
Tense feeling	0.49**	0.01

(**) P<0.01(*) P<0.05

"The study examined the correlation between excessive social media use and its negative impacts on Arab youth. Statistical analysis, presented in Table no.5, revealed significant correlations between high social media usage and adverse effects on mental health, social relationships, and increased feelings of tension. Specifically, the Pearson correlation coefficients were 0.43, 0.46, and 0.49 for mental health, social relationships, and tense feelings, respectively, all significant at the 99% confidence level (p<0.01). Additionally, a significant correlation was observed between excessive social media use and neglect of daily duties and tasks, significant at the 95% confidence level (p<0.05). These findings substantiate the first research hypothesis, underscoring the detrimental effects of excessive social media use on various aspects of the daily life of Arab youth."

- **H2: There are positive correlations between the social intensity of usage of social media by Arab youth respondents and their attitudes towards media addiction, entertainment, and its role to boost their self-esteem.**

Table 6. The correlations between the respondent's use of social media and their gratifications from the social media.

Gratifications	Excessive use of social media	
	Pearsonian 'r'	Significance
Media Addiction	0.45**	0.01
Engagement in media entertaining	0.42**	0.01
Boosting self-esteem	0.39*	0.043

(**) P<0.01(*) P<0.05

The study's second hypothesis explored the relationship between the intensity of social media use among Arab youth and their attitudes towards media addiction, entertainment, and self-esteem enhancement. Table no.6 indicates positive, statistically significant correlations. Specifically, higher social media use correlated with an increased acknowledgment of addiction (Pearson 'r' = 0.45, p<0.01) and engagement in media entertainment (Pearson 'r' = 0.42, p<0.01). Additionally, a significant correlation was found between frequent social media use and the perception of boosted self-esteem (Pearson 'r' = 0.39, p<0.05). These results support the hypothesis, illustrating the gratifications Arab youth derive from social media usage.

- **H3: There are statistically significant correlations among dimensions of social media addiction effects (preoccupation, withdrawal symptoms, tolerance, mode modification, relapse, and conflict)**

Table 7. The correlations among social media addiction effects (six dimensions)

	Preoccupation	Withdrawal symptoms	Tolerance	Mode modification	Relapse	Conflict
Preoccupation		0.11	0.13	0.121	0.37*	**0.13**
Withdrawal symptoms	0.11		0.39**	0.27*	0.13	**0.27***
Tolerance	0.13	0.39**		0.23*	0.12	**0.37***
Mode modification	0.121	0.27*	0.23*		0.122	**0.29***
Relapse	0.37*	0.13	0.12	0.23*		**0.131**
Conflict	0.13	0.27*	0.37*	0.29*	0.131	

(**) P<0.01 (*) P<0.05

The study's third hypothesis examined the interrelations among various dimensions of social media addiction effects among Arab youth. Table No. 7 reveals significant correlations within these dimensions. Notably, there was a strong correlation at the 99% confidence level (p<0.01) between withdrawal symptoms and tolerance. Additionally, significant correlations were observed among withdrawal symptoms, tolerance, mode modification, and conflict at the 95% confidence level (p<0.05). While some dimensions like preoccupation and relapse showed lower levels of correlation, a significant relationship was still evident between them. These findings support the hypothesis, confirming intricate interconnections among different aspects of social media addiction effects.

Conclusion

"This study concludes that Arab youth exhibit consistent attitudes towards the multifaceted nature of social media addiction, encompassing dimensions like preoccupation, withdrawal symptoms, tolerance, mode modification, relapse, and conflict. These findings align with the media functional approach and media system dependency theory, highlighting the cumulative negative effects and dependency issues related to social media use. While acknowledging the adverse

impacts of social media on mental health and social relationships, Arab youth also indicate a resistance to the idea that social media interferes with academic or work focus. The study underscores the need for media literacy and education programs to foster a more beneficial and balanced use of social media among Arab youth." This study builds upon the literature review's exploration of social media addiction's impact on mental health, social relationships, and academic engagement. It confirms the complex, multifaceted nature of social media addiction among Arab youth, encompassing preoccupation, withdrawal symptoms, tolerance, and other dimensions. The findings align with the media functional approach and media system dependency theory, highlighting the significant cognitive, affective, and behavioral effects on heavily dependent users. However, Arab youth also show a nuanced perspective, acknowledging the negative impacts on mental health and social interactions while disputing its interference with academic focus. This underscores the need for targeted media literacy and education programs to address these challenges.

Recommendations for future research

Based on the study's findings and literature review, the following recommendations are proposed for future research:

1. Future research should explore the various dimensions of social media addiction, particularly focusing on its physical, psychological, and social aspects.
2. Researchers are encouraged to employ diverse methodological approaches, especially experimental and quasi-experimental designs, to accurately assess the negative effects of social media usage.
3. Replicating this research with different demographic groups, especially Arab teenagers, would provide valuable insights into the broader impacts of social media addiction.
4. Utilizing qualitative methods, including focus group discussions and self-reporting tools, will enrich the understanding of attitudes toward social media among Arab youth and teenagers.

Appendix

This material is available from the Supplementary data section and can be downloaded here.

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