

## Critical Review: Social Networking Addiction

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### ABSTRACT

Social networking sites have gained use in the last two decades. People are busy on SNS to connect with others who share the same interests. The need to be continuously online then results in compulsive use of SNS. The extreme cases may result in symptoms and consequences traditionally associated with substance-related addictions. The present new insights are subject to social networking and addiction. In this paper, five research papers studied concern social networking sites and addiction based on the insights derived from the latest empirical research presented. These are: (i) the social networking site is eclectic; (ii) social networking is one way; (iii) Continuous use of social networking sites can lead to addiction. (iv) Facebook and Instagram addiction is just an example of SNS addiction; (v) fear of missing out may be part of SNS addiction; (vi) Smartphone addiction can be part of SNS addiction. Methodological issues have been raised in the research studied. These are discussed in this paper.

**Keywords:** Social Networking, Addiction

*“Social Networking is the activity of making personal and business relationships with other people especially by sharing information, personal messages, etc., on the Internet.”*

The process of making, building, and nurturing virtual groups and relationship between Persons Social networking sites are completely virtual groups. Where users create personal and universal accounts. Communicate with virtual and real friends and meet other people through virtual media based on shared interests. An SNS is an "Internet-based service. It allows individuals to use it. Create a public or personal profile within a bounded system, referencing a list of other users. With whom those people share connections, and proceed by viewing the list of connections and systems. "Do.". Networking focuses on existing networks rather than structuring new networks. SNSs offer individuals the possibilities of networking and sharing media content, therefore adopting key Web 2.0 properties. Patterns of SNS use from both consumer research and empirical research suggest that overall, regular SNS use has increased significantly over the years. While SNSs are primarily used for the purposes of social interaction or information exchange, recent evidence suggests that individuals are compelled to use their online social networks in ways that, in some circumstances, may lead to excessive use of SNSs.

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In many areas of behavioral addiction, there is ambiguity as to whether extreme behaviors should be considered true addictions. (e. g. playing video games, using the Internet, sex, exercise, etc.) And the same discussion holds for social networking addiction. Griffiths defined addictive behavior as addictive behavior has six core components of addiction (i.e., sensation, mood enhancement, tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, conflict, and relapse). They argue that any behavior (e.g., social networking) that meets these six criteria can be operationally defined as an addiction.

Let's look at SNS history, the world's first social networking site was launched in 1997, on the premise that everyone is connected to everyone else by six degrees of separation, and was initially called a "small world problem". In 2004, the most successful SNS, Facebook, was founded as a closed virtual community for Harvard students. The site expanded very quickly, and Facebook currently has more than 700 million users, 60 percent of whom log onto it daily. Furthermore, the total time spent on Facebook increased by 566% from 2007 to 2008. These statistics show the alarming figures for SNS use and also point to the possible increase in SNS use itself turning into an addiction. Hypothetically, the form of SNS has been explored as a reflection of individualistic culture. Unlike the traditional virtual communities of the 1990s based on the shared interests of their members, social networking sites are egocentric. It focuses on the individual ego rather than the community. Egoism has been linked to Internet addiction. It is said that the ego construct of SNS helps the individual to engage in addictive behaviors and thus acts as a factor that attracts people to use more SNS. This hypothesis is consistent with the PACE framework for the etiology of addiction specificity. Attraction is one of the four major factors that lead a person to become addicted to certain behaviors or substances. Accordingly, due to their egoistic construction, SNS allow individuals to present themselves as such. Which may "increase their overconfidence". This may lead to positive experiences in SNS use which may promote the growth of SNS addiction. Addictive behaviors such as SNS addiction are thus viewed from a bio-psycho-social perspective. Similar to substance addictions, SNS addiction includes the experience of 'classic' addiction symptoms, i.e., mood changes, impulsivity, intolerance (i.e., increased use of SNS over time), withdrawal symptoms, and unpleasant physical and emotional symptoms when SNS use is restricted or discontinued. Experience, interpersonal and interpersonal problems due to SNS overuse, and relapse into SNS overuse addiction.

The widespread use of social networking sites on the Internet is potentially a cause for concern, especially as people spend more time online. People engage in a variety of activities on the Internet, some of which can be potentially addictive. Rather than being addicted to every medium, some users may become addicted to specific activities they engage in online. Specifically, Young argued that there are five different types of Internet addiction, i.e., computer addiction, information overload i.e., web surfing addiction, net compulsion i.e., online gambling or online shopping addiction, cyber sexual addiction i.e., online pornography or online sex addiction, and cyber relationship addiction means, addiction to online relationships. From a clinical psychologist's point of view, it is appropriate to talk about 'Facebook addiction disorder', SNS addiction disorder' and gaming disorder because addiction criteria such as neglect of personal life, psychological disturbance, escapism, mood-altering experiences, tolerance, and concealment of addictive behavior, appear to be present in some people. In addition, it was also observed in higher SNS usage.

Many researchers have suggested that excessive use of new technologies (and especially online social networking) may be particularly problematic for young people. Under the

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Biopsychosocial Framework for the Etiology of Addictions and the Syndrome Model of Addiction, it is claimed that people addicted to SNS use experience symptoms similar to those suffering from substance or other addictions. This has important implications for clinical practice because, unlike other addictions, the goal of SNS addiction treatment may not be complete abstinence from Internet use, an integral part of today's professional and leisure culture. Instead, the ultimate therapy goal is controlled use of the Internet and related tasks, especially social networking applications, and relapse prevention using strategies developed in cognitive-behavioral therapy.

In terms of how people react to using SNSs, a recent study found that using psychophysiological measures (skin conductance and facial electromyography) and social searching (i.e. extracting information from friends' profiles) was more pleasurable than social browsing (i.e. passively). This finding shows that the goal-directed activity of social exploration can activate the appetitive system, which is associated with pleasant experiences, versus the aversive system.

At the neuroanatomical level, the appetite system has been found to be activated in Internet game- heavy users and addicts, which may be linked to a genetic deficiency in the neurochemical reward system of addicts. Therefore, activation of the appetitive system in social network users engaged in social exploration is consistent with activation of that system in people suffering from behavioral addictions. To establish this link specifically for the SNS, further neurobiological research is needed. Regular SNS use has grown significantly over the past decade. This supports the availability hypothesis where there is an increase in the number of people involved in the activity. Moreover, it dictates that individuals become progressively more aware of these available supplies and become more sophisticated in terms of their useful skills. These factors relate to the practical component of addiction specificity etiology. Pragmatics is one of the four key components of the Addiction Specificity Model and it emphasizes access and habituation variables in the development of specific addictions. Therefore, the practicality of SNS use appears to be a factor associated with potential SNS addiction. In addition, the findings of the presented study show that compared to the general population, teenagers and students use SNS the most. To date, scientific literature supporting the addictive qualities of social networks is scarce. Therefore, with this literature review, we aim to provide empirical insights into the phenomenon of social network use and potential addiction by outlining patterns of SNS use, examining motivations for SNS use, and examining the negative effects of SNS. The intention is to explore potential SNS addiction and examine personality traits to explore the specificity and comorbidity of SNS addiction.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The maximum literature search was conducted using academic databases Web of Knowledge as well as Google Scholar. The following search terms, as well as their derivatives were entered: online network, social network, Facebook, Instagram, excessive use of WhatsApp addiction, compulsive, excessive use, abuse, motivation, personality, and comorbidity. Studies were included if they:

1. inclusion of empirical data
2. reference to usage patterns
3. motivation
4. users' personality traits
5. Negative effect
6. Addiction and comorbidity and specificity.

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A total of 28 Research study were reviewed from the literature, five of which specifically assessed SNS addiction.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To explain the formation of SNS addiction, in the first study Turrell and Serenko recently summarized three broad theoretical perspectives that may not be mutually exclusive.

- 1. Cognitive-Behavioral Model:** This model focuses on the fact that 'abnormal' social networking experiences are formed through maladaptive experiences and exacerbated by various environmental factors, and ultimately lead to the systematic turning of the individual toward addictive social networking.
- 2. Social skills model:** This focuses on what 'excessive social networking creates. Because individuals lack self-presentation skills and prefer virtual communication to face-to-face communication, this may lead to compulsive and/or addictive use of social networking.
- 3. Social-cognitive model:** It focuses on the fact that excessive expectations of positive outcomes of social networking are created, self-efficacy and self-regulation about the Internet ultimately lead to compulsive and addictive social networking behavior.

Based on these three models, Xu and Tan suggest that transitions from normal to problematic social networking use occur. When social networking is valued as an important mechanism to relieve stress, loneliness, or depression. What both of them say is that those who frequently engage in social networking are less likely to socialize in real life. For these individuals, social media use provides constant rewards and they seem to become increasingly involved in Internet activities, leading to many problems (e. g, neglect of real-life relationships, work/academic conflicts, etc.). The resulting problems can have an adverse effect on people's moods. This leads such people to further engage in social networking behaviors as a way to escape dysphoric mood states. As a result, when social network users repeat this cyclical pattern of escaping undesirable moods with social media use, high levels of psychological dependence on social networking automatically increase.

Behavioral addictions such as SNS addiction can be viewed from a bio psychosocial perspective. Similar to substance-related addictions, it appears that in some individuals, SNS addiction involves experiencing 'classic' addiction symptoms, namely mood changes, where engagement in SNS leads to a desired positive change in emotional states.

The second study surveyed 233 undergraduate students (64% female with mean age = 19 years, SD = 2) using a prospective design to predict higher level use intentions and actual higher-level use of SNSs. The extended model of the theory of planned behavior (TPB) is used here. High level use of SNSs was defined as being used at least four times a day. TPB variables include measures of use, attitudes, subjective ideals, and intentions for behavioral control (PBC). In addition, adaptations from self-identity, and belongingness, as well as past and potential future use of SNS are examined. It assesses addictive tendencies using eight questions based on a Likert scale. One week after completing the first questionnaire, participants were asked how many days they visited SNS at least four times a day in the past week. The results of this study indicate that past behavior, within-person ideals, and self-identity predict both behavioral intentions and actual behavior. In addition, self-identity and affiliation predicted addictive tendencies in relation to SNS use. Therefore, students who perceived themselves as SNS users and who sought a sense of belonging toward SNS appeared to be at risk of becoming addicted to SNS.

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In a third study, a small sample of 201 participants (76% female, mean age = 19, SD = 2) of Australian university students assessed personality factors using the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI), Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI), time spent using SNSs, and the research was based on Addictive Propensity Scale. The Addictive Tendency Scale includes three items: impulsivity, loss of control, and withdrawal. The results of the multiple regression analysis indicated that high extraversion and low conscientiousness scores significantly predicted both addictive tendencies and time spent using SNS. Researchers have pointed out that the relationship between extroversion and addictive tendencies may be explained by the fact that extroverts use SNSs to fulfill their need for socialization. The findings regarding lack of conscientiousness are consistent with previous research on the frequency of Internet use in those people who score low on conscientiousness use the Internet more frequently than those who score high on this personality trait.

In a fourth study, Karaïskos et al. studied the case of a 24-year-old woman. Did she use SNS to such an extent that her behavior significantly interfered with her professional and private life? So she was sent to a psychiatric hospital. She used Facebook more than five hours a day and was fired because she was constantly engaged in SNS. She also used her mobile phone to access Facebook during the clinical interview. In addition to the overuse causing significant impairment in various areas of the woman's life, she developed anxiety symptoms as well as insomnia. Which points to the clinical relevance of SNS addiction. Many such cases have forced researchers to conceptualize SNS addiction as an internet spectrum addiction disorder. This study indicates that firstly, SNS addiction can be classified in the larger framework of Internet addictions, and secondly, it is specific Internet addiction, along with other addictive Internet experiences such as Internet gaming addiction, Internet sex addiction, and Internet gambling addiction.

In the fifth study, SNS game addiction was evaluated using the Internet Addiction Test among 342 Chinese students aged 18 to 22 years. In this study, SNS game addiction refers to the addictiveness of the SNS game Happy Farm. Students were defined as addicted to using this SNS game when they endorsed at least five of the total eight items of the IAT. Using this, 24% of the sample was found to be addicted. In addition, the researchers examined the relationship between SNS game use, loneliness, leisure boredom, and self-esteem satisfaction. The results of this research show that there is a positive relationship between loneliness and SNS game addiction and a moderate positive relationship between leisure boredom and SNS game addiction. In addition, satisfaction "involvement" and "accomplishment" (in games), leisure boredom, and male gender predicted SNS game addiction.

This qualitative research shows that from a clinical perspective, SNS addiction is a mental health problem that may require professional treatment. Unlike quantitative studies, case studies focus on the significant personal impairments experienced by individuals in various areas of life, including their professional lives as well as their psychosomatic conditions. Future researchers are therefore advised not only to investigate SNS addiction quantitatively but to further our understanding of this new mental health problem by analyzing cases of individuals suffering from excessive SNS use and mental disorders, such as addiction. First, a large number of mental disorders have additional (sub) clinical problems/disorders. Second, attention to comorbid conditions is essential in clinical practice to improve treatment outcomes. Third, specific prevention programs can be developed that include different dimensions and treatment methods that specifically target relevant mental health problems. From this, it follows that it is important to assess the specificity and potential

comorbidity of SNS addiction. However, to date, research addressing this topic is virtually non-existent. There has been almost no research on the association of SNS addiction with other types of addictive behavior, largely because there have been very few studies examining SNS addiction, as highlighted in the previous section. However, based on a small empirical base, several studies can be hypothesized.

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this literature review is to review the emerging empirical research related to the use and addiction of social networks on the Internet. Initially, SNS was defined as virtual communities. Which gives users the possibility to use their inherent Web 2.0 features, i.e. networking and sharing media content. With the emergence of SNS such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, SNS usage accelerated to the point where it was first considered a global consumer phenomenon. Today more than 700 million users are active participants in the Facebook community alone, and studies indicate that 55% to 82% of teenagers and young adults use SNS regularly. Extracting information from peers' SNS pages is a daily activity. Particularly enjoyable experiences have been had. And it is linked to the activation of the appetite system, which in turn is related to addiction. In terms of socio-demographics, the research presented shows that, overall, SNS usage patterns differ. Females appear to use SNS to communicate with members of their peer group, while males appear to use them for purposes of social compensation, education, and social identity satisfaction. Males with neurotic traits were found to be more frequent SNS users. In addition, it is found that males are more likely to be addicted to SNS games especially compared to females.

Motivations for using SNS have been reviewed based on the needs and gratifications theory. Regular participation of individuals in social networks on the Internet. And, there is a difference between the motivations of extroverts and introverts. Different motivations for users who score high on relevant personality traits may point to potential addictions to SNS in future research. Overall, engaging in specific activities on SNS, such as social exploration, and personality traits appeared to be significantly associated with SNS use.

In addition to being an anchor point for future studies in terms of defining populations at risk of developing an addiction to using social networks on the Internet, it is recommended that researchers assess factors specific to SNS addiction, including practicality, attractiveness, communication, and expectations of SNS use, as these are part of the addiction specificity etiology framework. Based on this, the etiology of SNS addiction can be predicted. Due to the paucity of research in this domain with a specific focus on the specificity and comorbidity of SNS addiction, further empirical research is needed. Examining the relationship of potential addiction with narcissism appears to be a fruitful area for empirical research. In addition, it is necessary to pay attention to the motivation for use as well as the various negative correlates associated with excessive use of SNS.

In addition to the above-mentioned results and suggestions for future research, special attention should be paid to selecting large samples that are representative of a large population in order to increase the external validity of relevant studies. The generalizability of the results is essential. To assess a population at risk of developing an addiction to SNS. Likewise, further psychophysiological studies are needed to assess this phenomenon from a biological perspective. Furthermore, clear cut and standardized addiction criteria must be evaluated. Limiting studies to addiction to assess only a few criteria is insufficient. Demarcation of pathology from high frequency and problematic use requires the use of references established by the International Classification Manual. Furthermore, in light of

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clinical evidence and practice, attention needs to be paid to the significant impairment experienced by SNS addicts in various life domains as a result of their abusive and addictive behaviors. However, the latent mental health consequences of excessive and addictive use have yet to be explored using the most rigorous scientific methods.

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