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

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Dear Editor,

Dear Authors,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review this paper titled **"Youth Attitudes Towards the Effects of Social Media Addiction- A Study on College Students in the United Arab Emirates"**. Overall, the paper provides some details on youth attitudes towards the effects of SMA among college students in the UAE, and some findings might contribute to filling the gap in knowledge related to this form of problematic internet use in the specific geographic region.

However, the manuscript would benefit from several major changes and revisions.

Abstract:

Background is clear. I would suggest replacing **adolescents' health and physical activity,** with **mental and physical health**, as the link between *physical activity* and *including addiction* is not clear.

I would suggest removing: **This study aimed to understand youth attitudes toward the effects of social media usage and its risk factors**, as the aims are reported in the following part: **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.** I would suggest specifying young individuals from the UAE.

I would suggest removing this part: **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,** and summarizing the main aims all together in the previous part of the abstract.

Introduction:

I would suggest that the authors reorganize some parts of the introduction:

1. To add some lines on the problematic use of the internet in general at the beginning of the introduction, as SMA is a part of PUI.

2. To move/summarize here (the beginning) the following paragraph: **"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).**

3. To add some lines on the general definition of social media, types and devices involved, and then describe the epidemiology.

4. To add a reference at the end of these sentences: **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.**

5. Please explain the abbreviation **GCC sub-region.**

6. I would suggest describing first the SMA (please be consistent with the abbreviation) and its symptoms, then to add evidence from the literature.

7. To add some reviews to better describe the background of the study (e.g., Nesi J. (2020). The Impact of Social Media on Youth Mental Health: Challenges and Opportunities. North Carolina medical journal, 81(2), 116–121. https://doi.org/10.18043/ncm.81.2.116; Alonzo, R., Hussain, J., Stranges, S., & Anderson, K. K. (2021). Interplay between social media use, sleep quality, and mental health in youth: A systematic review. Sleep medicine reviews, 56, 101414. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smrv.2020.101414; Abi-Jaoude, E., Naylor, K. T., & Pignatiello, A. (2020). Smartphones, social media use and youth mental health. CMAJ : Canadian Medical Association journal = journal de l'Association medicale canadienne, 192(6), E136–E141. https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.190434; Weigle, P. E., & Shafi, R. M. A. (2024). Social Media and Youth Mental Health. Current psychiatry reports, 26(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-023-01478-w).

8. To add evidence on the students' population.

9. Please add references to these sentences: **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. ….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.

10. Some parts of the introduction are related to the study's results (e.g.,**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; 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.),** and I would suggest moving them to **discussion.**

11. Please add hypotheses and aims at the end of the introduction.

Methodology: Participants and Procedures

I would suggest some revisions:

1. To add demographic details of participants because the following sentence seems too broad:**The participants represented a diverse mix of gender, academic year, and field of study.**

2. To add details on the advertisement and dissemination of the survey.

3. Please specify if **with universities** authors mean all departments.

4. Please specify which criteria were used to define a valid or not valid response.

5. Please specify if participation was voluntary or not.

6. Please specify the inclusion/exclusion criteria for participants.

7. Please add an ethics statement and number of protocol.

8. Please move the following part to the statistics section (try to avoid repetition)**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.**

Methodology: Measures

Please explain which language the questionnaires were in and/or if they were translated.

Please check this part better and indicate how many items are in the 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).**

With regard to the part below, I would suggest summarizing it/them as aims/hypotheses at the end of the introduction.

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, mood 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.

Data Analysis

I do not have any suggestions; just see my previous comment on statistical analysis in **Methodology: Participants and Procedures.**

Research Results

I would suggest authors rename this section simply **Results.** I would also suggest reorganizing and rewriting some parts (including both tables and text) of these section(s). My suggestions are reported below:

1. I would suggest simplifying names/titles of results' subsections in line with changes of aims/hypotheses as suggested in the previous comments.
2. I would suggest moving this part to the discussion: **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.**
3. I would suggest moving this part to the discussion: **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 usages.**
4. I would suggest moving this part to the discussion: **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.**
5. I would suggest moving Table 2 to supplementary.
6. Please try to avoid repetition of values available in the tables (e.g., page 12, I would suggest summarizing only what youth refused or agreed).

7. I would suggest summarizing all correlational analyses in one table and all related results in 1 or 2 paragraphs.

8. I would suggest moving all data related to the relationship between your results and your hypotheses to the discussion.

Discussion

It seems that a discussion section is missing. I would suggest adding a specific **Discussion section.** For the latter, I would suggest:

1. To briefly describe the study aims, hypotheses, and results.
2. To provide an explicit contextualization of what the study adds to extant knowledge, what is new, and what confirms previous research.
3. To add a limitations section.

Conclusions

I would suggest summarizing the **conclusions**, avoiding repetition of information, and I would also suggest moving **recommendations for future research** under this section.

Other comments

Finally, in revising the manuscript, I would suggest:

1. To use the third person as the subject of many sentences instead of "we";
2. To be consistent in the references' style when citing authors;
3. To be consistent in abbreviations, using the explanation first and then the abbreviation throughout the manuscript;
4. To be consistent in the style of parts related to questionnaires (e.g., this scale consists of...total score..dependent variables..etc);
5. To change p = to p = through the manuscript;
6. To check English throughout the manuscript;
7. To check/correct typos.