



Insomnia and Excessive Use of Social Media among Young Adults

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Abstract: Significant roles at this age are played by psychological mechanisms like social comparison, increased cognitive consciousness and FOMO (fear of missing out). Because social media is so widely used, it can cause worry, inferiority and hyperarousal all of which may interfere with the start and maintenance of sleep. Additionally, the blue light that comes from electronics suppresses the creation of melatonin, which throws off circadian rhythms and contributes to sleep disorders. A total sample of 30 young adults in the age group 18-25 was collected. Standardized scales were used. The results found out that there is a significant positive relationship between social media and insomnia. Even though young adulthood is an exciting age, individuals at this age might put social media use ahead of more traditional sleep-inducing activities like reading, meditation or spending quality time with close friends and family. Insufficient sleep rhythms and disturbed sleep patterns can also be caused by the combination of work, socializing and time spent on social media platforms, especially for those who use screens late at night. A diverse strategy is required to solve these issues. Young adults can also benefit from raising awareness of the value of offline pursuits like hobbies, physical activity, and quality time spent with loved ones. This will help them maintain a balance between their online and offline lives.

Keywords: *Insomnia, Social Media, Young Adults*

1. Introduction

“The pendulum of the mind alternates between sense and nonsense, not between right and wrong.”

Carl Jung

Insomnia comes from the Latin word “somnus” meaning sleep. In Latin, adding the prefix into the front of a word negates its meaning, implying the opposite; thus, the word insomnia which means no sleep or sleepless. The term we know today, insomnia, finally came into use in the 1700s to describe sleeplessness as a state.

However, insomnia was to be a recognized ailment affecting those who would like to sleep even before it had an official term to represent it. Eluned Summers-Bremnar, a historian from New Zealand, even went so far as to link chronic sleeplessness to the epic Gilgamesh, which was written down in Iraq around 2700 B.C. (The narrative centers on a character’s chronic insomnia following a friend’s passing.) Anguish is undoubtedly what all insomnia sufferers have in common. Doctors frequently receive complaints about sleep deprivation and with good reason most patients have discomfort following a sleepless or tossing and turning night. One’s health, mood and mental state can suffer by not getting enough sleep.

The term “social media” (SM) was first used in 1994 in a Tokyo online media environment, called Matisse. It was in the early days of the commercial internet that the first SM platforms were developed and launched. Social media refers to the means of interaction among people in which they create, share, and / or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

These days social media is becoming increasingly common. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, twitter and others enable people to communicate with each other even if they live far apart. Put another way, social media has allowed us to have access to the entire world. Young people especially are the most active social media users.

An increasingly common problem in society, addiction. It is a complicated and multi-dimensional problem. Studies have demonstrated that addiction may take place in different forms. These include behavioral addictions like internet, gaming and gambling as well as substance addictions like drug and alcohol addiction. One well-known type of addiction is the use of substances that are addictive, such as alcohol and narcotics. These drugs have the ability to change brain chemistry, which can result in obsessive use and dependence. Additionally, in recent years there has been an increase in awareness of addictive behaviors like gaming, gambling and internet use. These actions have the potential to stimulate the brain’s reward regions, which may lead to a vicious cycle of obsessive use and unfavorable outcomes. Developing successful preventative and treatment programs requires an understanding of the elements that contribute to addiction. It has been discovered that a number of variables can indicate problematic internet use and other types

of addiction. Personality qualities, family and parenting styles, alcohol consumption and social anxiety are some of the variables. Problematic computer and internet use can also be influenced by the nature of the computer medium and the sensation of control one has when using it. Students' pathological use of the internet has increased on college campuses; an internet addiction is a psychological dependence on the internet.

Insomnia and excessive use of social media have become significant concerns in today's age. Research has shown a strong correlation between the two, with excessive use of social media leading to disrupted sleep patterns and insomnia (Keleş et. al., 2019). This has negative implications for mental, emotional and physical well-being, as poor sleep can contribute to increased anxiety, depression and low self-esteem. Furthermore, studies have found that the use of social media before bedtime can have detrimental effects on sleep quality and duration. It is important for individuals to be mindful of social media usage and establish their healthy boundaries to prioritize sleep and overall well-being (Vidal et. al., 2020). In summary, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that excessive use of social media can contribute to insomnia and poor sleep quality among adults (Keleş et. al., 2019). To address this issue, individuals are encouraged to limit their screen time before bed, create a relaxing bedtime routine and establish technology-free zones in the bedroom to promote healthy sleep habits. It is crucial for researchers, healthcare professionals and individuals alike to recognize and address this issue to promote better sleep habits and overall mental health. Action needs to be taken to educate individuals about the potential negative effects of excessive social media use on sleep and mental health and to encourage the development of healthy screen time habits and digital detox strategies.

Since social media addiction is a kind of internet addiction and social media use is increasing rapidly, it is needed for the process to emerge as psychometric to evaluate a possible addiction (Andreassen, 2012; Kuss and Griffiths, 2011). Recent studies made attempts to produce measurement tools to reveal the social media addiction particularly in Facebook (Andreassen, 2012; Çam ve İşbulan, 2012; Wilson, Fornasier and White). In these studies, some addiction types such as (1) salience, (2), mood modification, (3) tolerance, (4) withdrawal, (5) conflict, and (6) relapse have been reported (Andreassen, 2012; Brown, 1993; Griffiths, 1996, 2005). That the number of Facebook users in Turkey has exceeded 30 million (Socialbakers, 2013) requires a Turkish measurement tool to measure the addiction to this matter. There is a study in our country

conducted in accordance with the development of measurement tools specific to Facebook and applied to teacher candidates (Çam ve İşbulan, 2012).

Insomnia

Insomnia is a common prevalent sleep disorder characterized by difficulty falling or staying asleep. This can result in disrupted sleep patterns and have negative effects on physical and mental well-being. Insomnia is often associated with psychological and behavioral disturbances, such as anxiety or stress. Treating insomnia typically involves a multidimensional approach including sleep hygiene measures, psychotherapy and medication. Additionally, research has shown that insomnia and other mental health conditions often have bidirectional relationships, with disrupted sleep acting as a causal factor in the occurrence of other psychiatric problems. It is important to assess and treat insomnia in the context of mental health disorders, as addressing sleep disturbances can help alleviate other psychiatric difficulties.

Insomnia is a prevalent sleep disorder characterized by difficulty in falling asleep, staying asleep, or experiencing restorative sleep. It affects individuals across various age groups, but its prevalence is notably high among young adults and the elderly. The implications of insomnia extend beyond sleep disturbances, impacting physical health, mental well-being, and overall quality of life (Dewald et al., 2010).

The term "insomnia" has roots in Latin, derived from "somnus," meaning sleep, with the prefix "in-" signifying negation. Though the term emerged in the 1700s, references to sleep disturbances date back to ancient texts, including the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, illustrating that insomnia has long been recognized as a significant health issue (Summers-Bremner, 2010).

Research indicates that insomnia affects approximately 30% of the adult population, with higher rates among women and individuals over 60 years old (Ohayon, 2002). Young adults, particularly those aged 18-25, are increasingly reported to experience insomnia, often linked to lifestyle factors, including stress, academic pressures, and increased use of technology (Hirshkowitz et al., 2015).

Insomnia is often associated with various psychological disorders, including anxiety and depression. A meta-analysis by Zhu et al. (2018) found a bidirectional relationship between insomnia and mental health issues, suggesting that poor sleep can exacerbate psychological conditions, while existing psychological disorders can contribute to sleep disturbances.

Behavioral patterns also play a significant role in insomnia. Poor sleep hygiene practices, such as irregular sleep schedules, excessive screen time before bed, and consumption of stimulants (caffeine and nicotine), have been shown to contribute to insomnia (Hirshkowitz et al., 2015).

Chronic insomnia can lead to various health complications, including cardiovascular disease, obesity, and weakened immune function (Cappuccio et al., 2010). Additionally, insomnia has been shown to impair cognitive functions, leading to decreased attention, memory deficits, and reduced academic performance (Lo et al., 2016).

Addressing insomnia typically involves a multidimensional approach. Cognitive-behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I) has emerged as an effective treatment, focusing on modifying behaviors and thought patterns associated with sleep (Morin et al., 2006). Pharmacological interventions may also be utilized, though they are generally recommended for short-term use due to potential side effects and dependency issues (Hohagen et al., 1998).

Social Media

Social media has become an integral part of modern life, with a significant impact on individuals' well-being and psychological variables. Researchers have found that individuals who are able to authentically express themselves on social media experience greater subjective well-being and lead happier lives. Furthermore, the way individuals engage with social media can heavily influence their well-being. In addition, the effects of social media on well-being can vary depending on how it is used (Griffioen et al., 2020). Some studies suggest positive effects of social media use on youth well-being, while others suggest negative effects.

Internet use for communication and social behavior is becoming increasingly integrated into the lives of North Americans (Correa, Hinsley & De Zúñiga, 2010; Ross et al., 2009), with 95% of adults aged 18 to 33 years reporting activity online in recent years (Zickurth, 2010). One specific area that has seen a significant and rapid rise to prominence (Pempek, Yermoleva & Calvert 2009) has been social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook.com online social media through which to share experiences and communicate within social relationships (Ross et al., 2009). Facebook has quickly become the most popular SNS for young adults, especially those in college (Cheung, Chiu, & Lee, 2011). As this online social medium is increasingly integrated into the daily lives and social behavior of young adults (Correa et al., 2010; Stanfield, Ellison & Lampe, 2008), new research must seek to assess and understand the nature of using this medium and its potential implications, especially for social behavior and development (Brown, 2006).

The research made nowadays shows that young people largely made use of social media (Akyazı and Tutgun Ünal, 2013; Köroğlu and Tutgun Ünal, 2013; Usluel and Mazman, 2009; Vural and Bat, 2010). Most of the uses are emphasized to be exaggerated (Andreassen, 2012; Çam and İşbulan, 2012; Hazar, 2011). The negativities such as little and poor quality sleep, excessive mental occupation, recurrent thoughts to control and limit the use, failure to prevent access requests, to spend more time with the internet at any time, and to desire while not being online have been reported in the literature (Andreassen 2012; Çam and İşbulan, 2012; Dewald et al., 2010).

2. Review of Literature

Insomnia, a common sleep disorder, is defined by difficulty falling or remaining asleep and poor-quality rest. It occurs in nearly 30% of adults, is more common in women, older adults, and increasingly among young adults aged 18–25 (Ohayon, 2002; Hirshkowitz et al., 2015). Contributing factors include academic pressure, non-traditional sleep schedules, and increased screen time. Insomnia has repeatedly been associated with adverse physical health conditions, e.g., cardiovascular disease and compromised immunity and with psychological disorders like anxiety and depression. The association is commonly mutual: sleep disturbance can enhance mental illness, and pre-existing psychological illness can deteriorate the quality of sleep (Zhu et al., 2018). Cognitive dysfunctions including decreased attention and memory impairments are often linked with chronic sleep disorders (Lo et al., 2016). Treatment strategies are often typically characterized by Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), pharmacology, and behavioral changes (Morin et al., 2006).

Concurrently, the increase in social media use most notably by young adults has come under scrutiny for its contributory effect on psychological and behavioral problems. Sites such as Facebook have become embedded within daily life and identity construction, but excessive use has been associated with sleep problems, compulsivity, and decreased general well-being (Andreassen, 2012; Çam & İşbulan, 2012). What is indicated is that extensive screen time in the hours leading up to bedtime, being on call continuously, and anxiety driven use patterns may directly lead to insomnia symptoms (Dewald et al., 2010). With growing similarity between internet and social media usage and addictive activities in terms of craving, loss of control, and disruption of day-to-day functioning, researchers have started considering their effects on sleep

and mental health together (Griffiths, 2012; Young, 2007). Evidence indicates that this could be vital in reducing insomnia and enhancing psychological well-being in the age of technology.

3. Methodology

3.1 Purpose

The purpose is to study the effect of insomnia and excessive use of social media among young adults.

3.2 Hypothesis

There will be a significant negative correlation between insomnia and social media.

3.3 Sample

A total sample of 30 young adults in the age group of 18-25 was collected in Ferozpur.

3.4 Measures

Social Media Insomnia scale: developed by van den Eijnden et al., 2016 is consisting of 9 items and one dimension. SMDS is scored with a rating of two (yes-no). However, the SMDS has been adapted as a 5-point Likert (1= Never, 5= Always) in terms of being able to give precise results.

Regensburg Insomnia Scale (RIS): Crönlein, T., Langguth, B., Popp, R., Lukesch, H., Pieh, C., Hajak, G., & Geisler, P. (2013). Regensburg Insomnia Scale (RIS): a new short rating scale for the assessment of psychological symptoms and sleep in insomnia; study design: development and validation of a new short self-rating scale in a sample of 218 patients suffering from insomnia and 94 healthy controls.

3.5 Procedure

The participants were informed about the purpose of the research, and the questionnaires were filled through Google Forms. Each participant was thanked for their cooperation and kind help. Standardized psychological tests were administered to the participants.

3.6 Analysis of Data

The responses of participants were analyzed using a correlation matrix to see insomnia and excessive use of social media among young adults. Mean and standard deviation are shown in Table 1, and Table 2 shows the correlation between insomnia and social media.

4. Results

Table 1: *Mean and Standard Deviation data of the same.*

	Social media	Insomnia
N	30	30
Mean	19.0	13.1
Standard deviation	8.24	6.32

Table 2: *Shows the correlation between social media and insomnia.*

	Social media	Insomnia
Social media	—	
Insomnia	-0.020	—

5. Discussion

The correlation analysis issued a weak negative coefficient of correlation ($r = -0.020$) between insomnia and social media insomnia which is statistically and practically insignificant. The result is opposite in the expected direction of the relationship, where an increase in social media use, especially before sleep, would normally mean an increase in insomnia levels. This weak relationship could also suggest that insomnia is affected by a number of other things: stress, lifestyle, or mental health, among others and social media use is but one factor. It is also worth noting that the negative value (-0.020) hovers so close to zero that it might well represent random noise as opposed to plotting any meaningful pattern.

6. Conclusion

The relationship between insomnia and excessive social media use among young adults is a pressing concern, as highlighted by a growing body of literature. Research indicates that a significant portion of these demographic experiences sleep disturbances, often exacerbated by high levels of screen time and the psychological pressures associated with social media engagement. Studies show that the compulsive use of platforms can lead to increased anxiety, stress, and feelings of inadequacy, all of which are known contributors to insomnia (Keleş et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2018).

The literature reveals a bidirectional relationship between sleep and mental health, suggesting that while poor sleep can worsen psychological conditions, anxiety and stress can also lead to disrupted sleep patterns (Morin et al., 2006). Young adults often prioritize social media interactions over more sleep-friendly activities, such as reading or spending time with loved ones, further contributing to unhealthy sleep habits (Hirshkowitz et al., 2015).

Moreover, the impact of blue light exposure from screens on melatonin production has been well-documented, reinforcing the idea that late-night social media use can significantly disrupt circadian rhythms (Hale & Guan, 2015). This highlights the need for interventions that address both social media habits and sleep hygiene.

In conclusion, addressing the dual challenges of insomnia and excessive social media use requires a comprehensive strategy. This includes increasing awareness of the detrimental effects of late-night screen time, promoting healthier sleep practices, and encouraging offline activities. By fostering a culture that values both sleep and mental well-being, we can help young adults reclaim control over their sleep and enhance their overall quality of life. Continued research is essential to further explore this relationship and develop effective interventions that support better sleep health in this vulnerable population.

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