

# Research on the Ways to Overcome Social Media Addiction

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**ABSTRACT.** With the development of technology, social media has been disseminated to the masses, and now basically everyone has their social media accounts. People may not realize that they are addicted to social media, but on the subway, on the bus, while waiting for a meal, when relaxing, or when people are alone, people often use social media to pass their time, they subconsciously open social media to browse, but they can't live without it. The term "low-headed" is also used to describe those people who are always on their phones. The topic of this article is how to overcome social media addiction. Some case studies or personal experiences will be cited. It is divided into "what," "why," and "how" sections so that people understand what social media addiction is, whether they have this symptom, and why they are addicted to it. Finally, it will explain how to choose a better choice, i.e. how to overcome social media addiction. The study is focused on people who are addicted to cell phones. In this era of new media, cell phone addiction has its causes and many external factors, but people can still avoid social media addiction if they are conscious to overcome other aspects such as dependency.

## 1 Introduction

In today's society, with the support of technology, citizens can easily communicate with others online through social media. Social media is an application or collaborative website that facilitates communication, interaction, sharing, and collaboration. When people are waiting for the bus, riding the subway, or alone, they pick up their phones and open social media to see who has posted messages, what interesting news is out there, etc. This takes up a lot of people's time. But before people know it, they have fallen into an addiction to social media. People tend to talk about addiction to drugs, and addiction to smoking, but rarely do they talk about a person who is addicted to social media. Because of this invisible addiction, people don't know how they are heading to this black hole and they don't realize it. This article is about how to overcome social media addiction and wants to explore the reasons behind social media addiction and how to overcome it. The research method used is a combination of some case studies. The point of this research is to make people aware of the causes of online addiction and their feelings of dependence on social media and their hidden gratification. It is not scary to recognize internet addiction and look at it in a straightforward way, what is scary is that people are unknowingly and deeply addicted to it without doing anything about it or not caring about it. First, this article will clarify what social media addiction is. Then it will explain why people are addicted to social media, both from themselves and their environment. Finally, the paper will suggest some ways to overcome social media addiction.

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## 2 Reasons why people addiction

Three billion people now use online social media, about 40% of the world's population. According to some surveys, people spend an average of two hours a day sharing, liking, tweeting, and updating content on these sites. This means that 500,000 tweets and Snapchat photos are sent every minute around the world. People can see that people have developed a dependence on social media, but this is actually a social media addiction [1]. So, what is social media addiction? It is a behavioral addiction, defined as an excessive focus on social media, an uncontrollable need to log on or use social media, and an investment of so much time and energy into social media that it gets in the way of other key areas of life[2].

### 2.1 Self

**2.1.1 Dependency.** First of all, from people's own perspective, people have a deep sense of dependence on social media.

Now, people no longer use newspapers because there are already many social media that will cover news on their platform. For example, Twitter and Facebook, so that people can not have to wait for the newspaper to be delivered at a specific time and worry about whether the content of the day is to their liking. In the past, when citizens read the newspaper, they often feel deeply about a certain content or event in the newspaper and have a lot of their own thoughts and opinions, but people may only be buried in their own hearts or told to their familiar people.

When citizens have some suggestions about the content of the newspaper, they can only find the publisher by writing or calling. This takes up most of people's time. But when the news flows to social media, people can choose what they like to read, and they can comment and express their own opinions and views, which can be seen by strangers first and read by the author first. People can also use the comments section to get different views. This greatly increases the interactivity between us as readers and the author.

Let's look at a statistic. In 2016, Facebook had 1.55 billion active users, with each user spending at least twenty minutes each day reading the newest news in their timeline. This exceeds the population of China or India, making Facebook the world's largest country if it were a country. Furthermore, these populations are expanding: By 2019, the number of active social network users worldwide is expected to be around 2.72 billion, or roughly one-third of the global population[3]. This shows that just the news part of social media makes most people already inseparable from social media.

Social media certainly makes it easier for citizens to communicate and interact with people they know well. People no longer have to worry about whether their different schedules will affect their relationship and communication with each other. It also avoids some of the awkwardness that can arise in chats, where people can think again and again and can respond selectively. The content of the conversation between the two parties is more private for the third party. People can post their recent life or thoughts in their circle of friends. All these features can enhance the emotion between friends and family and reduce the distance.

According to the latest statistics released by We Are Social and Hootsuite, the number of online games worldwide has reached 4.55 billion as of January 2021. There are 4.2 billion social media users, compared to an increase of 490 million people in the past year. And, the number of social media users is equivalent to more than 53% of the total world population now. Some typical social media users now spend 2 hours and 25 minutes a day on social media, in other words, they stay awake about one day a week[4].

**2.1.2 Satisfaction.** "In atomized social relations, the social life and cultural picture appear fragmented, and inadequate social networks make loneliness a diffuse psychological state, with isolated individuals experiencing unprecedented self-identity confusion and a lack of belonging[5]." People are in a noisy society, in which their initial network of relationships will certainly be damaged due to various reasons, such as the pressure of work and study, or the difference in regions. But with that comes new branches as well. When people feel lonely, they use social media to satisfy their needs, and they use it as a friend to relieve their inner stress and all kinds of insecurities.

In real life, citizens will have many inadequacies that are slowly revealed in the process of being with people, which may be pains or flaws. But these holes will gradually weaken people's self-confidence and make us

feel inferior. The emergence of social media allows citizens to enter a virtual world where people can package themselves, they will gain respect, and will get compliments. Because of the protection of privacy, people can talk to strangers and they can export their inner thoughts. People will find their own sense of belonging because they meet like-minded friends and have common topics.

Mass through the virtual fortress built by the new media technology, people can freely enjoy and release their worries. The new media meet people's psychological needs in many ways, penetrating "the key texture of people's psychological structure[5]." They provide people with a spiritual home where they can seek solace, allowing them to rely on and follow them [6].

Once, there was an article called "I lurked in Shanghai "celebrity" group and became a celebrity observer for half a month". The article was about some "celebrities" who are trying to create their own rich persona in the form of collusion. The author said: "Some people may be more vain, like to take pictures, but the money is not enough, so they look for the same needs of people together to put together a single, take pictures and send friends. These people in addition to netizens, there are micro-businesses, some are bloggers, they need good photos to support their operations, but their own money is not a lot. "This is not exactly the satisfaction that social media brings to people, because of their own shortcomings, through social media to befriend some people with a common purpose and goal, they will help each other in the form of mutual help to achieve a win-win situation. When people need some "decoration", social media can provide some very good resources from all over the world, these resources help people to package and beautify themselves.

## 2.2 Environment

**2.2.1 Major trends of the times.** In this digital age, the preferred medium for people to access information is social media, which can determine what people are accessing very accurately and quickly. It also helps people to know what is going on in the lives of different people at the same time. TikTok is one of the most popular social media platforms these days, and it is a good way to know what is popular now. When people come across some very funny and useful videos, they will forward them to their friends. But without this social media platform, when other people talk about some popular phrases or hot things, it's hard for those who don't know to participate or join in the discussion of the topic. Over time, there will be a generation gap between people. Why do people often say that there is a generation gap between people of different ages, and where does this generation gap come from? Because nowadays young people know a lot of memes through various social media platforms, while older people don't because they don't read these social media or download them. This time, when they get together, they can rarely resonate with each other, usually about life, which is exactly the topic that some young people now reject, and thus do not want to communicate with older people, which also creates a generation gap.

In addition to TikTok, there is also the output of shopping, audio, social communities, meta-universe, cultural creations, etc[7].

Online shopping is not new to people. China's Taobao has brought great convenience to the Chinese people. Without leaving home, people can simply search for what they want on Taobao, sit at home for a few days, and receive their package very quickly, and many businesses on Taobao accept seven-day, no-questions-asked refunds and returns. Taobao is Asia's largest online retail merchant circle, with 98 million registered members in 2008, which shows its popularity of Taobao[8]. Taobao has become a way of life, completing a seamless connection between the physical and digital experience. Without Taobao, how could the Chinese have ensured their quality of life during the epidemic and under the influence of the environment? Perhaps people would think of offline supermarkets, but what if they lived far from a store? What if citizens don't have easy access to transportation? In this case, people can hardly come to the store, they will definitely buy double to avoid continuing to welcome this inconvenience in a short time. But the shelf life of these things is the same, and people do not control the problem of fresh food. This shows that the advent of Taobao has improved the quality of life for people.

NetEase Cloud Music is also a very popular music platform where people can follow their favorite singers, share songs with good friends, or share songs, and comment on their favorite songs. People no longer use the radio to listen to their favorite music by dialing channels, and they don't have to keep time for fear of missing music. And with one of the latest features that allows people to listen to music in sync with their friends, they can shed the problem of distance and listen to common music directly with a specific person. Imagine if there were no such platforms, how could people know better what music is popular or new now, and how could people quickly and conveniently tell their friends which songs are good.

These social media affect us in the general trend of the times. Citizens may have to, or they may want to, accept these social media. But it is undeniable that without these social media, people would face being eliminated by technology.

**2.2.2 App is behind the shenanigans.** In the huge market of social media, it is important to compete with each other and it is the goal of a social media company to better attract people's attention and become the most popular social media. A very important point is marketing[9].

In the case of tourism, for example, it is crucial for those working in the tourism industry to understand places, especially towns, and how these should be marketed to and consumed by tourists. By creating and promoting a unique brand destination, new visitors can be attracted to the advertised location. With the rise of social media, travel marketers have more room to explore how they can use their own or other social media sites to communicate with today's technology-connected travelers. They will focus on clearly explaining how to develop branded destinations, with a particular emphasis

on product analysis, promoting authenticity, and using social media to create the personalized experience travelers want[10]. So when people open relevant social media about the travel industry or see it on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or WeChat, people will click on it. Over time, when people want to go to a particular destination, they will open these social media outlets on their own to browse and read. It's good for both social media and travel companies to help them increase traffic, more people will start creating accounts on social media, travel companies will increase more exposure and readings, thus increasing the cases of successful transactions.

There is another type of marketing called the "celebrity effect". Through celebrity endorsement of a product, it can help a company's products and services stand out in the industry. Traditionally, celebrity advertising has been used to market and communicate by demonstrating their high social influence and authority[11]. They are usually sent to social media platforms, and because celebrities themselves carry a certain amount of traffic and fans, when they are sent to social media platforms, these fans will immediately check the social media, start commenting and liking their favorite celebrities, and then move on to another social media to buy or retweet them for the reason of "support". The content is sent by the star.

The target group of social media is also an important point. Let's take teenagers as an example. With the advent of social media, teenagers may not even watch TV as often as they used to, they will spend most of their time on their smartphones, some social media to watch videos and some other entertainment[12].

Social media content needs to be kept fresh and consistent. It needs to be in some form that brings something tangible to the viewer, whether it's an opinion or a smile[13]. Take TikTok for example, more and more people choose to open TikTok in their free time, there are many videos on TikTok that they are interested in, as long as the platform uses big data to classify their preferences, when people scroll down the video, the next video will be their favorite. As long as they keep pushing relevant videos, people will keep spending time watching them, thus this is why many people like to pass time by using TikTok.

### 3 Recommendation

Prolonged use of social media can affect people's moods, which can influence their perceptions of something, increase stress, cause anxiety, become irritable and worried because of something, and lead to sleep disturbances and decreased concentration [1]. To get out of the dilemma of addiction to the use of new media on the Internet, people need to awaken the value of the subject, return to the real world of life and art, pay attention to the body's senses, use their mind to feel, go beyond the noise created by consumer culture, and return to spiritual peace and enrichment[14].

First of all, people have to be their masters[14]. As the saying goes, if they want others to change, it is better to let

themselves change first. As long as people have determination and self-control, they can do many things they never thought they could do and reach higher goals. In fact, people have a lot of things to accomplish in a day, whether it's big, small, or urgent, people need to go through them all, and many of these things maybe they need to use social media, need to communicate with others. At this point, people can list the things they want to do today in the morning, set goals and priorities for themselves, and list the equipment and time needed for each of these things. This will not only make it clear how long people want to spend on their phone but also prevent them from subconsciously tapping on some social media for irrelevant things when people open their phone. One study showed that the average person lights up their phone screen about 100 times in a day. People can set a small goal for themselves, for example, only allow themselves to light up the screen no more than 50 times in a day. When people reach their goal they can reward themselves with something, which will increase their motivation. Or people can limit the amount of time they spend on social media. People can set a certain period of time to look at social media or to respond.

Furthermore, people need to find ways to keep themselves from getting caught up in the virtual world, when the real world is also very beautiful. People can also keep themselves busy so that their lives are enriched. No more starting to focus on social media as soon as people have time. In their free time, they can read a book, study, exercise, or spend time with their families[15]. If it happens to coincide with a break and a vacation, get out and about too. Go see what the beauty that people swipe on their phone looks like in real life. Nesbitt cautions parents not to let their children get too caught up in the computer, but to guide them away from the computer and the Internet and get outside to experience nature. Because, in the information society, people use more brain power than physical power, they need to use their hands and bodies more in their spare time to balance the overuse of brain power[14].

## 4 Conclusion

Social media affects people in different ways depending on the prerequisites and the personality of the person[1]. Social media has brought a lot of advantages to people's life and has helped them to improve their quality of life. But as people spend more time using social media, it seems from the reality and some results that it is social media that is controlling them. There are many temptations that people keep encountering in this society, and excessive use of social media can have some negative effects on people. So, how to overcome social media addiction requires willpower and self-control. It is difficult to put down the phone at first, but people have to get used to it and people have to keep saying to themselves that they can do it. People can spend a lot of the time they spend on their phones on other meaningful things such as being close to nature, exercising, and spending time with their families. This paper needs to be improved by adding some surveys on the approximate number of hours of

social media use per day by different groups of people, or surveys on the purpose of social media use by different groups of people, which can better support the ideas of this paper.

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