REVISTA DE PSICOLOGÍA
2022, 31(2), 1-11

ISSN 0716-8039 - ISSNe 0719-0581
www.revistapsicologia.uchile.cl

Effects of Social Media Use on Life Satisfaction, Optimism, and Affect

Efectos del uso de las redes sociales en la satisfacción con la vida, el optimismo y el afecto

Janaina Chnaider, Laís Santos-Vitti, & Tatiana de Cassia Nakano

Pontifical University Catholic of Campinas, Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil

A study of the psychological effects of social networking can be used to develop strategies to promote mental health. In the present study, we evaluated the effects of sociodemographic variables, optimism, life satisfaction, affect, and the frequency of use of social networking websites (SRS). This study involved 257 Brazilian adults, 69 % of whom were females, with a mean age of 36 years (*SD* = 15.32). Positive and Negative Affects Scale (PANAS), Life Satisfaction Scale (EVS) and Life Orientation Test (TOV-R) were utilized. In the three measures, ages of participants were the most significant factor, followed by their time spent using social media (in terms of satisfaction with life and negative affect). Participants who reported using SRS for five hours or more a day were less satisfied with their lives and suffered from higher levels of negative affect. Elderly people show higher levels of optimism and satisfaction with life, as well as lower levels of negative affect. According to the analysis, using social networking sites frequently can negatively influence the subjective well-being of the population, whereas an increase in age contributed positively to the positive mental health of the participants.
Keywords: psychological assessment, positive psychology, social media, subjective well-being.

La investigación del impacto psicológico del uso de las redes sociales permite desarrollar estrategias de promoción de la salud mental. El objetivo de este estudio fue evaluar la influencia de variables sociodemográficas, optimismo, satisfacción con la vida, afectos y frecuencia de uso de redes sociales (SNS). Participaron de esta investigación 257 brasileños, de los cuales 69 % eran mujeres, con una edad media de 36 años (*DE* = 15,32). Se utilizaron la Escala de Afectos Positivos y Negativos (PANAS), la Escala de Satisfacción con la Vida (EVS) y el Test de Orientación a la Vida (TOV-R). La edad fue la variable más significativa en los resultados de los participantes (en las tres medidas), seguida del tiempo de uso de las redes sociales (en satisfacción con la vida y afectos negativos). Los participantes que informaron usar SNS durante cinco horas o más al día tenían niveles más bajos de satisfacción con la vida y niveles más altos de afecto negativo. Los mayores tenían promedios más altos en optimismo y satisfacción con la vida, así como menos afecto negativo. Se concluyó que la frecuencia de uso de las redes sociales puede influir negativamente en el bienestar subjetivo de la población, siendo favorable el aumento de la edad para la salud mental positiva de los participantes.
Palabras clave: evaluación psicológica, psicología positiva, redes sociales, bienestar subjetivo.

A grant in support of this research was provided by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) and the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES).

Contact: J. Chnaider. PUC-Campinas Department of Graduate Studies in Psychology. John Boyd Dunlop Avenue, s/n. Jardim Ipaussurama. CEP: 13060-904. Campinas, sp, Brazil. Email: jana_chnaider@hotmail.com

How to cite: Chnaider, J., Santos-Vitti, L., & Nakano, T. C. (2022). Effects of Social Media Use on Life Satisfaction, Optimism, and Affect. *Revista de Psicología*, *31*(2), 1-11.
http://dx.doi.org/10.5354/0719-0581.2022.57702

The development of social network sites (SRS) was aimed at enabling people to share and obtain additional information, encouraging communication, and, eventually, building relationships with those of a similar origin. Internet use has facilitated the interaction of individuals from all over the world, regardless of their geographical location. The use of these tools can influence the social life of an individual (Nikbin, Iranmanesh, & Foroughi, 2020).

The convenience and effectiveness of these sites cannot be disputed; however, it is imperative to acknowledge that technological advances have contributed to this. In addition to influencing the way individuals experience their lives (Guedes, Nardi, et al., 2016), it may also result in positive or negative consequences. The time spent on these platforms has raised important questions regarding the effects of online social interactions on well-being, although no consensus has been reached (Shakya & Christakis, 2017). The impact of using social networking sites on mental health is receiving increasing attention from academics (Nisar, Prabhakar, Ilavarasan, & Baabdullah, 2019) even though its nature is subject to debate.

There is no doubt that social networks play a significant role in the adoption of behaviors, attitudes, tastes, and beliefs (Lin, Faust, Robles-Granda, Kajdanowicz, & Chawla, 2019). As a result, interactions arising from its use have been used to learn about the emotions felt by users, activity patterns, as well as information about mental health, specifically about psychological traits associated with either its healthy or unhealthy use. Therefore, various studies have been undertaken to examine the effects of social networking sites on mental health, because these tools can facilitate social interactions, but can also negatively affect people's health (Huang, 2022).

Studies have demonstrated that social support networks improve general well-being by reducing stress, enhancing self-confidence, increasing life satisfaction, and reducing depression, better mental health and self-esteem, as well as more social support, life satisfaction, and subjective happiness than non-users (Zhang, 2017). A study conducted by Gilmour, Machin, Brownlow and Jeffries (2019) indicated that social support provided by SNS improved physical and mental health, wellbeing and reduced symptoms associated with mental illness (depression, anxiety, victimization and loneliness). Consequently, certain traits and positive variables have been found to be protective of mental health. However, some research highlights negative results, indicating that the use of social media can increase the risk of mental health problems, compromise well-being, impair social relationships, decrease investments in meaningful activities, increase sedentary behaviors, lead to internet addiction, and lower self-esteem (Shakya & Christakis, 2017). There is also evidence that such relationships are associated with greater occurrences of disputes, stress, lower self-esteem, limitations in daily life, and worse subjective health, negative influence on academic performance and high levels of social anxiety (Twomey & O'Reilly, 2017).

People with a lower level of psychological well-being are more likely to become addicted to the internet and social networking sites (Guedes et al., 2016; Nikbin et al., 2020). One of the main symptoms is a persistent desire to be online, thereby affecting daily activities, eventually leading to addiction and problems related to mental health, including problems related to adjustment, self-esteem, stress (Rahman & Ahmed, 2018), and depression (Yoon, Kleinman, Mertz, & Brannick, 2019). A similar concern was brought up by Guedes, Nardi, Guimares, Machado and King (2016), who examined the literature and concluded that abusive use and dependence lead to damage in different areas (personal, professional, academic, social, and family).

In general, individuals who are highly dependent on social networking sites tend to have lower self-esteem and life satisfaction than those who are moderately dependent on them (Blachnio, Przepiorka, & Pantic, 2016). As an example, the prevalence of Facebook addiction has also been linked to certain personality traits, such as extroversion, narcissism, loneliness, social anxiety, and low self-efficacy (Atroszko et al., 2018), and so that excessive use negatively affects well-being. Consequently, these studies conclude that investigating the relationship between time spent on social networking sites and positive aspects will contribute to understanding how social media can work as an ally in promoting mental health.

Thus, the present study examined the relationship between social networking sites and three specific constructs: subjective well-being, positive and negative affects and optimism, with the aim of

exploring how these two constructs relate to the use of social networking sites. It is pertinent to clarify that the study presented here aimed to go beyond the results commonly reported in the scientific literature. Additionally, we investigated the influence of variables gender, age, education, and time of daily use of social networks, to gain further insight into those variables that may influence this relationship.

To provide a better understanding of the theoretical basis for the study, the following definitions will be presented for each of the investigated constructs. According to Busseri (2018), subjective well-being (SWB) is the evaluation of one's own life, either positively or negatively. In this regard, SWB consists of a cognitive dimension, which refers to the evaluation of various aspects of life based on parameters determined by the individual, and an emotional dimension, comprising negative affect (NA) and positive affects (AP) (Cachioni, Delfino, Yassuda, & Batistoni, 2017).

A few studies have examined the impact of social networks on well-being but reported contradictory results. While some studies have shown that intensive use adversely affects well-being (Nikbin et al., 2020), others have shown positive results (Gilmour et al., 2019). Because several studies reached conflicting conclusions, studies aimed at investigating the relationship between SWB use and well-being are recommended (Shakya & Christakis, 2017).

Optimism is, in turn, defined as the belief that future outcomes will be positive and can also be defined as an individual characteristic associated with positive outcomes in the future (Carver & Scheier, 2019). In addition to expecting more positive results in the future, optimistic people experience less negative stress and are more motivated to complete tasks and keep trying despite obstacles. In addition to being a variable that has relevant implications for healthy psychological aspects, optimism has also been examined in relation to social networking sites (Liu et al. 2017). The optimistic individual will believe that they are less vulnerable to risk concerning the breach of their privacy, since they control their personal data, so that they are less inclined to take precautions (Metzger & Suh, 2017). Therefore, negative consequences can occur, such as being a victim of cyberbullying, interacting with dangerous individuals, or having your data used without your permission.

On the other hand, life satisfaction is defined as people's judgment about their life (Abdullahi, Orji, & Kawu, 2019). This construct is considered an important factor contributing to subjective well-being and quality of life. According to the authors, it is a subjective process in which people evaluate the quality of their lives based on their own judgements, being one of the three primary indicators of well-being along with positive affect and negative affect.

An interest in sociodemographic variables was sparked by a literature review. Most of the studies examined contradictory results related to sex, age, and level of education in the constructs examined. The following are some examples. In the area of subjective well-being, there are nonconsensual results in relation to the influence of age. Some studies affirm the U-shaped curve, inverted U-shaped, and linear relation between aging and subjective well-being (Blanchflower, 2021). Other studies argues that negative affect show a very small differences during the life span (Jebb, Morrison, Tay, & Diener, 2020). More age is associated with the positive affect and males obtained higher scores than females in negative affect or older adults displayed more SWB than youngers (Abdullahi, Orji, & Kawu, 2019). In terms of gender, females are more likely than males to present SWB (Agrawal et al., 2011).

Some studies have shown that life satisfaction increase with age or not drop between 18 and 90 years old (Blanchflower, 2021), indicating a very small differences during the life span (Jebb et al., 2020). There are contradictory results presented by Agrawal et al. (2011), who report that older men and women have less negative affect than their younger counterparts, and the same result is found in the satisfaction of life of the sample of men.

In view of the above, the current study explored how social networks influence subjective well-being and optimism among their users. Its specific objectives were to: (1) understand the reasons for using social networks, (2) assess the subjective well-being (positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction), and optimism of users of social networks, (3) investigate the influence of the variables sex, age, education, and time of daily use of social networks on the investigated constructs, and (4) verify the relationship between the constructs.

Method

Participants

The sample was of the non-probabilistic type, for convenience of 257 respondents. The data collection was conducted in two stages, with 215 subjects participating in the first stage and 42 participating in the second. A second stage of data collection was conducted in the same manner as the first, with the aim of increasing the sample size. The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 78 years old (M = 35.8; SD = 15.32).

There were participants from five geographical regions in Brazil, namely 41.2% from the Southeast, 36.6% from the Northeast, 3.5% from the Midwest, 3.1% from the South, and 2.3% from the North. Most were female (69%), single (61.9%) and white (58%). In terms of education, 44.7% were graduates, 34.2% earned graduate degrees, 19.8% had secondary education, and 1.2% were elementary school graduates.

Instruments

Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS). This scale was originally developed in 1994 by Watson and Clark and subsequently translated and adapted for use in Brazil (Giacomoni & Hutz, 1997). The scale contains 20 items that measure negative affect (NA) and positive affect (PA). Participants answer the instrument using a Likert scale in which they indicate how much they identify with each feeling and emotion described by an adjective.

In the study by Pires, Figueiras, Ribas and Santana, (2013) unidimensionality of the AN and AP scales was demonstrated. In terms of validity evidence, the Positive Affects Scale correlated positively and significantly with subjective happiness, psychological well-being, and mental health index scores. Negative Affects scales were negatively related to positive affect, mental health index, and subjective happiness (Nunes, Lemos, Ribas Júnior, Behar, & Santos, 2019). Precision of the instrument, according to a Cronbach's Alpha, was .90 for NA and .84 for PA, considered adequate (Pires et al., 2013). In this study, α values of .90 were found for PA and .91 for NA, both values being considered adequate.

Life Satisfaction Scale (LSS). The instrument consists of five items, all of which pertain to satisfaction with life in general. These items are rated on a seven-point Likert scale, on which the participant indicates how much he agrees or disagrees with each statement. The LSS presents a version that has been adapted to Brazilian Portuguese (Zanon, Bardagi, Layous, & Hutz, 2013). LSS results are positively correlated with positive affect and negatively correlated with negative affect (Reppold et al., 2019). According to Zanon et al. (2013), the scale proved to be unidimensional and no significant differences in sex were observed. Scale precision was considered adequate for Brazilian sample (α = .87). In this sample, an adequate value of Cronbach's alpha (.84) was found.

Life Orientation Test (LOT-R). LOT-R is a self-report scale consisting of ten items that is designed to determine optimism in terms of expectations regarding future events (Bandeira, Bekou, Lott, Teixeira, & Rocha, 2002). Answers range from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* on a 4-point Likert scale. Studies confirm the existence of a single factor, suggesting that optimism and pessimism are part of the same continuum. Internal consistency was measured by the Alpha coefficient. In terms of its results, it was satisfactory (r = .80) (Bastianello, Pacico, & Hutz, 2014), the scale was found to be capable of predicting lower levels of depressive symptoms between the first and second retest (Bandeira et al., 2002). For this sample, founded the alpha value (α = .77), which is also considered satisfactory.

Questionnaire regarding the use of social networking sites. The purpose is to identify sociodemographic characteristics and the length of time spent on social networking sites. In the survey, questions were asked regarding sex (male or female), ethnicity (white, black, brown, yellow), marital status (single, married, widowed, separated/divorced), education (elementary, high, college, graduate), and Brazilian region (north, northeast, south, southeast and midwest).

To measure the use of social networking, four questions were answered: (1) Which social networks do you use? (2) Considering your previous answer, please indicate which social network you use the most; (3) How often do you access social networks? (4) On average, how many hours do you spend per day on social media?; and (5) Consider the total time of day, even if you log in more than once per day.

Procedures

The data collection held from January and May 2020. All participants signed an informed consent form before participating. Data collection was performed online. We shared the research link on the social media websites Facebook and Instagram, inviting individuals to participate. Upon electronic acceptance, participants completed the questionnaire and the Positive and Negative Affect Scales (PANAS), the Life Satisfaction Scale (LSS) and the Life Orientation Test (LOT-R) on the same form. The data collection process resulted in the sample being considered a convenience sample. Study participants included all those who answered the research questionnaire.

Data analysis

As well as for characterization of the sample, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the results of the three psychometric instruments used. Furthermore, Pearson's correlation was used to verify the relationship between the instruments and the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) to analyze the impact of independent variables (sex, age, education, time spent on social networks each day, and their interactions) on optimism and well-being. In cases where the results were significant ($p \leq 0{,}05$), the Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted, along with Tukey's post hoc test, to determine which groups had significant differences.

Results

In terms of the social networking sites (SNS) used, WhatsApp (98%) was the most dominant followed by Instagram (80.5%) and Facebook (78.2%). As for the frequency of use, 98.4% of participants indicated they accessed SNS every day of the week. The participants reported spending between one and two hours per day on social media, 35.4% accessed social media between three and four hours per day, and 26.1% spent five hours or more per day on social media.

In the second stage of this study, only 42 of the respondents were asked about the reasons for using social media. As a result, 69% of respondents said that they used SNS to keep in touch with friends, 21.4% said they used SNS for work purposes, 7.1% said they used SNS to pass the time, and 2.3% said they used SNS to re-connect with people they had lost contact with. Participants in this study reported viewing posts from other people more than they own post (69%), while others stated that they view posts from other people more than they own posts.

Following our understanding of the profile of the participants' use of social networks, we analyzed the influence of the variables sex, age, education, time of use of social networks, and their interactions using MANOVA. There was a significant impact of the age variable —F (3, 247) = 8.9, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .995$— and hours of use of social networks —F (3, 247) = 2.7, $p = .046$, $\eta^2 = .652$— in relation of satisfaction with life, negative affect and optimism. There were no significant interactions between the variables.

Subsequently, the variables that revealed to be significant were subjected to an ANOVA (table 1). The participants were divided into three groups based on their age range: 18 to 28 years (42.8%; $n = 110$); 29 to 39 years (30.7%; $n = 79$); and 40 years or older (26.5%; $n = 68$). The results revealed significant differences between the age groups with respect to optimism —$F(2, 254) = 3.3$, $p = .038$, $\eta^2 = .025$), with the difference between the groups between 18 and 28 years old and those over 40 years old ($p = .036$) having the highest average value. The results revealed significant differences between the age groups with respect to negative affect —$F(2, 254) = 5.2$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2 = .040$—, in which the mean levels were significantly different between those aged 18 to 28 and those aged 29 to 39 years ($p = .004$), and between those aged 29 to 39 and those aged over 40 ($p = .038$), with participants over 40 having lower levels of negativity. The effect size was considered small.

In terms of life satisfaction, age played a significant role —$F(2, 254) = 13.5$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .096$— and small effect size. Tukey's post hoc test revealed that the difference between the 18-28 age group and the 40-year-old age group was the most significant ($p = .0001$), as well as between 29 and 29 years of age and individuals over 40 years of age ($p = .0001$), the average being highest among the older participants.

Furthermore, the frequency of hours spent on social networking sites was also stratified into three groups: (1) 1 to 2 hours a day, (2) 3 to 4 hours, and (3) 5 hours or more (table 2). The influence of the frequency of use of social networking sites and the life satisfaction measure —$F(2, 254)$

= 3.8, p = .024, η^2 = .029— was significant. The post-hoc test indicated significant differences between the group that uses 1 to 2 hours and those who use 5 hours or more (p = 0.011), with this last group having the lowest average. The effect size was small.

Table 1
Variance analysis for optimism, positive and negative affect, and life satisfaction considering age.

Construct	Age	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Optimism	18 to 28	15.12	4.47	1.4	.243	.013
	29 to 39	15.24	4.13			
	Older than 40	16.69	4.23			
Negative affect	18 to 28	21.84	9.00	1.6	.214	.014
	29 to 39	21.05	7.35			
	Older than 40	18.73	6.58			
Positive affect	18 to 28	29.16	8.98	2.3	.104	.021
	29 to 39	26,72	7.63			
	Older than 40	29.57	7.83			
Life satisfaction	18 to 28	21.74	6,56	4.9	.008*	.044
	29 to 39	21.67	6.28			
	Older than 40	25.80	4.46			

Note. *M* = Media; *SD* = Standard Deviation; *F* = Fisher statistic; * *p* = significative value.

Also, the same variable significantly influenced the measure of negative affect —F(2, 254) = 10.4, p < .001, η^2 = .076—. The effect size is small. A post-hoc test differentiated the group using it for 1 to 2 hours from the group using it for 5 to 8 hours. The most intense users tend to have a higher mean negative affect. Sex and education did not have a statistically significant impact on any of the measures.

Table 2
Variance analysis considering optimism, positive and negative affect, and life satisfaction based on daily use of social networking

Construct	Daily use	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Negative affect	1 to 2 hours	18.64	6.50	9.4	≤ .001*	.081
	3 to 4 hours	20.93	7.64			
	5 hours or more	24.50	9.47			
Life satisfaction	1 to 2 hours	23.25	5.73	3.5	.032*	.032
	3 to 4 hours	22.58	6.11			
	5 hours or more	20.48	7.09			
Optimism	1 to 2 hours	15.77	4.08	1.7	.179	.016
	3 to 4 hours	15.64	3.96			
	5 hours or more	14.50	4.97			
Positive affect	1 to 2 hours	28.97	7.55	0.9	.402	.009
	3 to 4 hours	28.64	8.73			
	5 hours or more	27.11	9.00			

Note. *M* = Media; *SD* = Standard deviation; *F* = Fisher statistic; **p* = significative value.

In the following analysis, we examine the relationship between the constructs. The results indicated that all correlation analyses between the constructs were statistically significant, with varying magnitudes and directions (table 3).

The variables positive affect (r = .43) and optimism (r = .40) showed moderate and positive correlations with satisfaction with life. The variables positive affect and optimism also showed a weak but positive correlation (r = .36). In contrast, negative correlations were found between negative affect and positive affect (r = -.19), life satisfaction (r = -.38) and optimism (r = -.34), as expected.

Table 3
Correlation between positive and negative affect, life satisfaction, and optimism

Variable		Life satisfaction	Optimism	Positive affect	Negative affect
Life satisfaction	Spearman's rho *p*-value	-	-	-	-
Optimism	Spearman's rho *p*-value	.402 < .001	-	-	-
Positive affect	Spearman's rho *p*-value	.430 < .001	.357 < .001	-	
Negative affect	Spearman's rho *p*-value	-.376 < .001	-.343 < .001	-.193 .004	-

Note. $^{**}p < 0{,}01$.

Discussion

In this study, we sought to investigate how the variables of time spent using social networks, age, education, and sex influence satisfaction with life, optimism, and affection (both positive and negative) among users of social networks, as well as the way such constructs are related. The findings showed that age had a significant effect on all constructs assessed, in turn time spent just only on social networks had a significant effect in relation to two (life satisfaction and negative affect). Therebefore, first we will discuss the importance of age in the constructs, followed by an analysis of the time spent on social networks.

About of optimism, the results indicated greater levels of optimism among those aged 40 years or older. This result can be an important indicator, since among the older population, higher levels of optimism are predictors of health-related quality of life, less emotional and mental distress, reduced the risk of depression and greater psychological resilience (Sardella, Lenzo, Bonanno, Basile, & Quattropani, 2021; Weitzer, Trudel-Fitzgerald, Okereke, Kawachi, & Schernhammer, 2022). Nevertheless, this result is not the most common one. A review of the literature has demonstrated that optimism enhances well-being during early adulthood, but that its benefits tendency to decrease as one ages (Chopik et al., 2020). Other point important in this context, is the lack of empirical studies with evaluated the differences between levels of optimism across stages of development (Wrosch, Jobin, & Scheier, 2017). Finally, in relation on this survey, it is important highlight that the results reported here be interpreted with caution since, although the sample was composed of participants ranging from 18 to 78 years, the mean age of the participants in the study presented here was 35 years, so that most of them are in adulthood.

Regarding affections, it was observed that only negatives were influenced by age, with younger participants (18 to 28 years old) having a higher average. Several studies have explored changes in affect throughout development, looking at people of varying ages (young adults, middle-aged, and older adults). With respect to stress, it is known that younger individuals tend to experience more annoyances related to, for example, finances, work, family, friends, personal life, while the elderly reported fewer daily stressors and are less affected by the global perception of stress compared to adults and young (Blaxton, Bergeman, & Wang, 2020). It is observed that, although there is no consensus in the literature, among older people are possible, lower levels of negatives affects are observed, as well as differences in relation to the experience of stressful emotions (Blaxton, Nelson, & Bergeman, 2021). That said, although old age is linked to cognitive, physical and social changes, the elderly tends to deal with their emotions in a more positive way, to improve their quality and satisfaction with life, even in the face of inherent

difficulties and losses this stage of development (Blaxton et al., 2020).

The satisfaction with life, the third construct examined, was also influenced by age, being higher among participants who were older than 40 years old. Numerous studies have examined the effect of age on life satisfaction (Joshanloo & Jovanovic, 2018). While aging is associated with declines across several domains of life, overall life satisfaction does not appear to decline markedly with age. It was noted that participants under 30 years of age had lower levels of life satisfaction, while the average level of satisfaction with life was higher among those over 60 years of age. Research are pointing to the understanding that constructs associated with well-being, for example life satisfaction, tend to occur in a U-shaped pattern, suggesting that levels of well-being are high at younger and older ages (Blanchflower, 2021). That said, the life satisfaction would follow a curvilinear pattern, reaching its lowest point during middle age, increasing thereafter and remaining high even in the face of several declines experienced by the elderly (Blanchflower & Oswald, 2019; Graham & Ruiz Pozuelo, 2017).

In terms of the relationship between time of use of social networks and life satisfaction, the results indicate that the variables are inverse, that is, the shorter the time of use, the greater the level of life satisfaction. This result supports the argument that the more time individuals spend on social networks, the less satisfied they are with their lives, as their extensive use can replace time spent in social activities in real life. In a similar study involving adolescents and children, Valkenburg, Meier and Beyens (2022) found that the length of stay directly affects a user's mental well-being, and that, when compared between groups, those who spend more hours on social networking sites are more likely to be suffering from mental disorders such as depression. Thus, SRS abuse may be related both to low well-being scores, as well as to the development of mental disorders. It has also been shown that the use of social networks and negative affect are related, confirming that perception in the literature. There is evidence that the use of social media negatively impacts people's well-being, with the use of Facebook, for example, leading to a drop in mood within 20 minutes of active use. internet browsing time (Tromholt, 2016). Specifically, they claim that the use of social networks negatively impacts people's emotional state, and that the more active they are, the more negative their mood becomes because of the perception that they have done nothing significant. Commonly, they claim that people think that they will feel better after using social media, but they feel worse.

It was found strong positive correlations between the positive constructs (life satisfaction, positive affect, optimism) and weak negative correlations between negative affect and the other measures. Given that both positive and negative affect and life satisfaction contribute to subjective well-being, such relationships should be expected. These results are in accordance with the theoretical model adopted in this research, which considers the balance of positive and negative emotional experiences.

Conclusions

According to the findings, prolonged use of social media could negatively affect positive psychological factors, including self-esteem, social functioning, and optimism as well as indicating that younger people may be more vulnerable. Nevertheless, considering that social media is a reality prevalent today, which directly interferes with the routine of individuals, enabling more ease and agility in interpersonal communication, whether in the professional context or in the consolidation of social bonds and social support networks, research on the effects derived from its use should be encouraged.

A priori, several studies have indicated that, when used in a moderate manner, such tools can have positive effects, particularly when it comes to the maintenance of interpersonal relationships. As a result, taking into consideration that wellbeing and optimism are constructs that act as protective factors for mental health, there is a need to develop strategies that reconcile the use of social medias and the maintenance of well-being and optimism in its users to prevent any comorbidities that may arise when these media are misused or excessively used.

Despite finding that long-term use of social medias can negatively impact the mental health of its users, particularly as it pertains to reducing positive aspects such as SWB and optimism, it is important to note that this research is limited by factors such as the size and variability of the sample. Participants do not represent a variety of groups,

especially when considering the number of individuals over 60 years of age who were a minority among participants. As well, the high educational level of the sample, which does not adequately reflect the general population, may have influenced the results.

Further research is suggested considering the possibility that there may be moderating or mediating variables between the use of social networking sites, subjective wellbeing, optimism, and other constructs. Also, we recommend studies that examine the relationship between the form and purpose of use, including those that may be characterized as dependence, and those that use other instruments that assess constructs related to positive psychology.

Additionally, the present study confirmed the results found in other studies concerning the negative influence of the abuse of social networking sites on the health of the population. In this sense, one hopes that the findings presented here can be used to guide future studies and interventions in this area to reduce the negative effects on the subjective well-being and optimism of the population.

References

Abdullahi, A. M., Orji, R., & Kawu, A. A. (2019). Gender, age and subjective well-being: Towards personalized persuasive health interventions. *Information*, *10*(10), 301. http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/info10100301

Agrawal, J., Murthy, P., Philip, M., Mehrotra, S., Thennarasu, K., John, J. P., Girish, N., Thippeswamy, V., & Isaac, M. (2011). Socio-demographic correlates of subjective well-being in urban India. *Social Indicators Research, 101*, 419-434. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-010-9669-5

Atroszko, P. A., Balcerowka, J. M., Bereznowski, P., Biernatowska, A., Pallesen, S., & Andreassen, C. S. (2018). Facebook addiction among Polish undergraduate students: Validity of measurement and relationship with personality and well-being. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *85*, 329-338. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.04.001

Bandeira, M., Bekou, V., Lott, K., Teixeira, M., & Rocha, S. (2002). Validação transcultural do Teste de Orientação da Vida (TOV-R). *Estudos de Psicologia*, *7*(2), 251-258. https://doi.org/fvr8tv

Bastianello, M. R., Pacico, J. C., & Hutz, C. S. (2014). Optimism, self-esteem and personality: Adaptation and validation of the Brazilian version of the Revised Life Orientation Test (LOT-R). *Psico-USF*, *19*, 523-531. https://doi.org/10.1590/1413827120140190030

Blachnio, A., Przepiorka, A., & Pantic, I. (2016). Association between facebook addiction, self-esteem and life satisfaction: A cross-sectional study. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *55*(B), 701-705. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.10.026

Blanchflower, D. G. (2021). Is happiness u-shaped everywhere? Age and subjective well-being in 145 countries. *Journal of Population Economics*, 34, 575-624. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00148-020-00797-z

Blanchflower, D. G. & Oswald, A. J. (2019). Do humans suffer a psychological low in midlife? Two approaches (with and without controls) in seven data sets. In M. Rojas (Ed.), *The economics of happiness* (pp. 439-453). Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Blaxton, J., Bergeman, C. S., & Wang, L. (2020). Daily stress reactivity across the life span: Longitudinal and cross-sectional effects of age. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, *75*(3), 494-503. https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gby046

Blaxton, J. M., Nelson, N. A., & Bergeman, C. S. (2021). The positive and negative affect relation in the context of stress and age. *Emotion*, *21*(8), 1712-1720. https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000975

Cachioni, M., Delfino, L. L., Yassuda, M. S., Batistoni, S. S. T., Melo, R. C., & Domingues, M. A. R. (2017). Bem-estar subjetivo e psicológico de idosos participantes de uma universidade aberta à terceira idade. *Revista Brasileira de Geriatria e Gerontologia*, *20*, 340-351. https://doi.org/10.1590/1981-22562017020.160179

Carver, C. S. & Scheier, M. F. (2019). Optimism. In M. W. Gallagher & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Positive psychological assessment: A handbook of models and measures* (pp. 61–76). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000138-005

Chopik, W. J., Oh, J., Kim, E. S., Schwaba, T., Krämer, M. D., Richter, D., & Smith, J. (2020). Changes in optimism and pessimism in response to life events: Evidence from three large panel studies. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *88*, 103985. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2020.103985

Giacomoni, C. H. & Hutz, C. S. (1997). A mensuração do bem-estar subjetivo: Escala de afeto positivo e negativo e escala de satisfação de vida [Poster presentation]. Congresso Interamericano de Psicologia, São Paulo, Brasil.

Gilmour, J., Machin, T., Brownlow, C., & Jeffries, C. (2019). Facebook-based social support and health: A systematic review. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, *9*(3), 328-346.

https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000246

Graham, C. & Ruiz Pozuelo, J. (2017). Happiness, stress, and age: How the U curve varies across people and places. *Journal of Population Economics*, *30*(1), 225-264. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00148-016-0611-2

Guedes, E., Nardi, A. E., Guimarães, F. M. C. L. Machado, S., & King, A. L. S. (2016). Social networking, a new online addiction: A review of Facebook and other addiction disorders. *Medical Express*, *3*, 1-6. https://doi.org/10.5935/MedicalExpress.2016.01.01

Guedes, E., Sancassiani, F., Carta, M. G., Campos, C., Machado, S., King, A. L. S., & Nardi, A. E. (2016). Internet addiction and excessive social networks use: What about Facebook? *Clinical Practical Epidemiology and Mental Health*, *12*, 43-48. https://doi.org/10.2174/1745017901612010043

Huang, C. (2022). A meta-analysis of the problematic social media use and mental health. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, *68*(1), 12-33. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764020978434

Jebb, A. T., Morrison, M., Tay, L., & Diener, E. (2020). Subjective well-being around the world: Trends and predictors across the life span. *Psychological Science*, *31*(3), 293-305. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797619898826

Lin, S., Faust, L., Robles-Granda, P., Kajdanowicz, T., & Chawla, N. V. (2019). Social network structure is predictive of health and wellness. *PLoS ONE*, *14*, e0217264. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0217264

Liu, Q., Zhou, Z., Yang, X., Niu, G., Tian, Y., & Fan, C. (2017). Upward social comparison on social network sites and depressive symptoms: A moderated mediation model of self-esteem and optimism. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *113*, 223-228. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2017.03.037

Metzger, M. J. & Suh, J. J. (2017). Comparative optimism about privacy risks on Facebook. *Journal of Communication*, *67*, 203-232. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12290

Nikbin, D., Iranmanesh, M., & Foroughi, B. (2020). Personality traits, psychological well-being, Facebook addiction, health and performance: Testing their relationships. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2020.1722749

Nisar, T. M., Prabhakar, G., Ilavarasan, P. V., & Baabdullah, A. M. (2019). Facebook usage and mental health: An empirical study of role of non-directional social comparisons in the UK. *International Journal of Information Management*, *48*, 53-62. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2019.01.017

Nunes, L. Y. O., Lemos, D. C. L., Ribas Júnior, R. C., Behar, C. B., & Santos, P. P. P. (2019). Análise psicométrica da PANAS no Brasil. *Ciências Psicológicas*, 13(1), 45-55. https://doi.org/10.22235/cp.v13i1.1808

Pires, P., Filgueiras, A., Ribas, R., & Santana, C. (2013). Positive and negative affect schedule: Psychometric properties for the Brazilian Portuguese version. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology*, *16*(e58), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1017/sjp.2013.60

Rahman, M. & Ahmed, O. (2018). Facebook use, Facebook addiction, mental health of Chittagong university students. *Bulgarian Journal of Science and Education Policy*, 12(2), 345-358.

Reppold, C., Kaiser, V., Zanon, C., Hutz, C., Casanova, J., & Almeida, L. (2019). Escala de Satisfacción con la Vida: evidencias de validez y fiabilidad en universitarios portugueses. *Revista de Estudios e Investigación en Psicología y Educación*, *6*(1), 15-23. https://doi.org/10.17979/reipe.2019.6.1.4617

Sardella, A., Lenzo, V., Bonanno, G. A., Basile, G., & Quattropani, M. C. (2021). Expressive flexibility and dispositional optimism contribute to the elderly's resilience and health-related quality of life during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*(4), 1698. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18041698

Shakya, H. B. & Christakis, N. A. (2017). Association of Facebook use with compromised well-being: A longitudinal study. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, *185*, 203-211. https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kww189

Tromholt, M. (2016). The Facebook experiment: Quitting Facebook leads to higher levels of well-being. Cyberpsychology, *Behavior and Social Networking*, *19*(11), 661-666. https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2016.0259

Twomey, C. & O'Reilly, G. (2017). Associations of self-presentation on Facebook with mental health and personality variables: A systematic review. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, *20(*10), 587-595. https:/doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2017.0247

Valkenburg, P. M., Meier, A., & Beyens, I. (2022). Social media use and its impact on adolescent mental health: An umbrella review of the evidence. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *44*, 58-68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2021.08.017

Weitzer, J., Trudel-Fitzgerald, C., Okereke, O. I., Kawachi, I., & Schernhammer, E. (2022). Dispositional optimism and depression risk in older women in the Nurses' Health Study: A prospective cohort study. *European Journal of Epidemiology*, *37*(3), 283-294.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s10654-021-00837-2
Wrosch, C., Jobin, J., & Scheier, M. F. (2017). Do the emotional benefits of optimism vary across older adulthood? A life span perspective. *Journal of Personality*, *85*(3), 388-397. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12247
Yoon, S., Kleinman, M., Mertz, J., & Brannick, M. (2019). Is social network site usage related to depression? A meta-analysis of Facebook-depression relations. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, *248*, 65-72. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2019.01.026
Zanon, C., Bardagi, M. P., Layous, K., & Hutz, C. S. (2013). Validation of the Satisfaction with Life Scale to Brazilians: Evidences of measurement non-invariance across Brazil and US. *Social Indicators Research*, *119*, 443-453. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-013-0478-5
Zhang, R. (2017). The stress-buffering effect of self-disclosure on Facebook: An examination of stressful life events, social support, and mental health among college students. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *75*, 527-537. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.05.043

Date of reception: June 19th, 2020
Date of reception 1st review: June 24th, 2020
Date of reception 2nd review: October 21st, 2022
Date of reception 3rd review: November 3rd, 2022
Date of acceptance: November 15th, 2022