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Master Thesis Defense

Entitled

*AN EXAMINATION OF ADDICTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
AMONG COLLEGE-AGED STUDENTS FROM TWO MIDDLE EASTERN CONTEXTS*

by

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Date & Venue

1:00pm

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Room 1078, First floor, Building H1

To join online on MS Teams: shorturl.at/cHLVX

Abstract

The period of COVID-19 has proven to be an especially turbulent period where extreme psychological trends can be observed due to lockdown procedures, social isolation, and public fear. The use of technology such as social media has increased with research highlighting the harm of its overuse. The purpose of the current study is to investigate the psychometric properties of an Arabic translated version of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) to assess for addictive social media use. Secondly, the study further examines the association between depression, social media addiction, and an individual's sense of control. Specifically, the potential mediational role of sense of control in the association between depression and social media addiction. A cross sectional study was implemented within two separate national contexts, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), with a sample of 1322 participants ($m_{age} = 19.50$ years, $SD = 1.54$). Participants completed a questionnaire consisting of the Arabic translated BSMAS, Depression subscale of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21) as well as the Niemeyer Two Item Scale for measuring sense of control. Results found that the Arabic translated BSMAS produced a unidimensional factor structure, like its previous language versions, and satisfied various indices of reliability and validity. Results further indicated a statistically significant link between depression, social media addiction and sense of control, with sense of control contributing as a mediating factor between social media addiction and symptoms of depression. This research is unique to the region and has significant implications for the understanding of social media addiction as well as providing researchers and practitioners with a reliable and valid tool to assess for social media addiction.

Keywords: social media; addiction; depression; control; mediation; coronavirus; COVID-19; Middle East.