

The Level of Social Media Addiction of Y and Z Generation in North Cyprus

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Abstract: As technology has advanced, daily interpersonal communication has also altered and shifted to a different level. With the widespread use of the internet and personal technological gadgets hitting the market, social web and social media settings became the essential field of communication for humankind. Now, mostly people use internet-based social communication webs to communicate instead of having face-to-face interaction. This study will focus on the subject of social media addiction in North Cyprus. Our main focal point is the purposes of social media usage, the habits of social media usage and addiction of social media, ranging from the vast majority of the current population, who have experienced technology from a young age, Y generation, and those born into technological innovations, Z generation. During the research it has been used Aylin Tutgun-Ünal's "Social Media Addiction Scale" (SMAS) in order to analyze the social media addiction of Y and Z generations. SMAS consisted of 41 articles and was approved as constituting validity and authenticity in 2015. Besides Facebook, SMAS measured other addictive social media applications in use. It has attempted to find answers for our research questions by comparing and analyzing Y and G generations scores. By the end of this research, results enabled to determine that the Y and Z generations were on a low-scale addictiveness to social media. In any case, it has been noticed how the socially addictive scale was low with occupation, mood adjustment and differentiation on the levels of repetition and conflict. According to the research findings, participants' social media engagement was on a medium level of addictiveness; women spend more time on social media than men, receiving emotional support; social media is mostly used for interpersonal communication; and Y generation has passing more time on social media compared with the Z generation.

Keywords: Interpersonal Communication, Social Media, Social Media Addiction, Y Generation, Z Generation

1. Introduction

As well as bringing changes to the economy, politics and social fields new communication in technology also brought many changes to the daily lives of people. The technology of the internet, pc's and mobiles have played a major role in this new method of communication. This new technological communication has introduced many opportunities and made life easier, such as with fast, easy and cheap communication, acquiring information and removing the sense of time and space. The widespread use of the internet and the emerging internet-based platforms (Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google Plus, Snapchat etc.) led social media to merge into our lives. Apart from communication these platforms have become useful for fun, shopping and many other purposes, making it an essential part of human life. This virtual social environment, named as social media, has become vital in bringing the masses and people together and ensuring interaction to take place. Many researchers have demonstrated how people are spending much more time on virtual reality every day (Akyazı and Tutgun Ünal, 2013; Vural and Bat, 2010; Issaa and Isaias, 2016). The distinction between virtual reality and actual reality is becoming more indistinct as a result of growing usage, particularly among the youth. As Öze (2016b) cited, "In recent years, social media has become a big part of social life; this is related with sociology and social psychology. Social media has necessitated a new way of thinking about the relationships in the world" (s.611).

Social media and issues of addictions impact each community differently; whether it be a developed or less developed community, wealthier or poorer nations, or highly populated or less populated communities the interaction varied. For this reason, it is important to determine the level of impact social media played in different communities and level of addiction it caused. It is useful to look at the research facts of the individuals accessing social media for practical reasons in North Cyprus. This is due to its small population, living in a developing community but not being an economically independent country. According to the findings obtained from Öze's research, in 2016a; Turkish Cypriots have easy access to the internet and technological equipment, and the use of social-web and internet applications is on a high frequency. The participants of the research consisted mostly of Turkish Cypriots and 90.7% used social media. Accordingly, 100% of the Y generation, 93%

of the X generation, 75% of the Baby Boomers generation and 16.7% of the silent generation participants used social media. Participants of the research also had accounts with Facebook (83.9 %), Instagram (51.7%) and SnapChat (22.9%). Furthermore, 42.4% of the participants described themselves as taking part and being a follower of the social media, 16.1% considered themselves to be active participants and 15.3% defined themselves as followers. We must remind ourselves that this research was conducted in 2016 and in the last four years' access to YouTube and Instagram have increased considerably, especially among the youth. Having said this, the report also mentions on Digital 2021 Global Overview Report that the most popular social media platform is Facebook. According to this report, Facebook with 2.740 million users was the most used social media platform, the second most used platform was YouTube and the third WhatsApp (Datareportal 2021). According to Öze's research, in 2017, the vast majority of the participants of the research were Turkish Cypriot and used Facebook in order to develop and manage their social media relations. This made up more than half of the participants. In particular, participants within the age group 15-19 were accessing Facebook frequently, on average 81% per day, however as the age gap widened the use of Facebook became less frequent. It is worth noting that although women used Facebook more often than men they were less likely to share, like or make a comment; in other words, women prefer the position of being a passive follower. According to Öze's research in 2018, Teens and adolescents are more addicted to the Internet, and different generations display different attitudes towards technology. When it comes to the silent generation and Baby Boomers, they approach the internet with caution but support the Y and Z generation to use it. The research discovered that the volume of access to social media also depended on individual working life and pastimes.

Since 1974 Cyprus has been divided as north and south. After the 1974 war the Turkish Cypriot community was settled to the north and the Greek Cypriot community to the south of the island. The Greek Cypriots, in the south, continued to live under the official Cyprus Republic state and govern it. This Republic was constituted in 1960 and was based on both communities having eligible rights to govern it on its announcement. The Turkish Cypriots, in the north, however, declared the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on 15 November 1983; this declaration was not recognised by any state apart from Turkey. As cited by Öze (2016a) "This situation causes North Cyprus to be economically and politically isolated from the rest of the world. Individuals living in Cyprus try to break this isolation individually through socio-cultural means. Technology has become one of the instruments in overcoming social entrapment" (p. 281). It is at this point that the purposes of using social media, social media habits and levels of addiction becomes crucial. This work will specifically focus on the level of addiction for the Y and Z generation. It is this generation which will shape the future of North Cyprus (the population of North Cyprus is 286, 257 people, and 48% of the population consists of the Y and Z generation).

2. Media Usage and Satisfaction

The idea of evaluating media usage and satisfaction was developed by Katz in order to assess user's motivation and satisfaction. This kind of evaluation replaced the traditional old method of researching. Katz was interested in what people do with the media rather than what the media does to them (Katz et al., 1973). According to Katz, people have basic communicational and psychological needs and, by being exposed to the media, are able to fulfil some of them (Yaylagül, 2008). In line with this approach, media users are satisfied and motivated in two different ways; one in seeking satisfaction and, two, in obtaining it. When media users explain the kind of satisfaction they expect whilst using the media, they are actually explaining the satisfaction of using the media itself (Katz et al., 1973). In this study, it has been observed how effective media is in fulfilling the needs of users. Today, people have their needs met much more effectively by the media, especially with the opportunities the internet offers in the shape of visual and audio communication (Güngör, 2011). A wide range of accessible social media environments and the frequency and intensity of this access is related to the users seeking and fulfilling their satisfactions. The full motivation gained from media usage is based on individual, social, economic, cultural and political factors. The attraction of individuals using the internet ranged from low-satisfaction in life or high-interpersonal benefits, to keeping in touch and getting emotional support from family and friends (Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000). In light of this information it has been understood how multi-facet structure is used in communication technologies and new media, and how it offers user satisfaction (Güngör, 2011; Yaylagül, 2008; Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000).

3. Social Media Addiction and Generations

Each day social media sites are attracting more users and expanding. It has become the most popular activity of our age. In spite of this the younger generation are accessing the social media irresponsibly and carelessly. As highlighted by Bányai et al. (2017), this manner of problematic use of media and Internet addiction stems from

a mixture of factors with underlying currents. The best example of this misuse is behavioral and obsessive compulsive behavior related to substance addiction (Griffiths, 2005; Griffiths, 2010). Problematic social media addiction is described as: a psychological problem developing from cognition, emotional and behavioural pattern and affecting a person's private, work/academic and social life. The impact of this leads to problems of mood adjustment, occupation, repetition and clash (Tutgun Ünal, 2015). Research has also hinted how various psychological, personal and individual issues were related to misuse of social media (Andreassen et al., 2017; Bányaí et al., 2017; Kircaburun, 2016; Kircaburun et al., 2018a, b). According to a research by Chicago Booth School of Business University, users are more addicted to social networking on Facebook and Twitter than smoking and alcohol, particularly the age group 18-35. It also stated how pining the virtual network has become stronger than the desire of resting and sleeping, and this could lead to a social disaster (The Telegraph, 2012). Kraut's, 'Work on the Internet Paradox' in 1998 is considered to be one of the most important studies about networking and the bad influences it has on users. The outcome of this research has shown that the more the users use the Internet the less they are engaged with their families, feel lonely, depressed and stressful (Kraut et al., 1998). Shaw and Gant's work, in 2002, opposed Kraut's views for exaggerating his facts. They insisted that networking actually decreased loneliness and depression considerably, and improved sense of self-respect and social-contact highly. Two works with opposite outcomes can only be resolved by drafting a law about networking and satisfaction.

4. Y and Z Generation

When we look at our current environment and family settings we notice how much social media and smartphones predominate our lives. In fact, it has become inseparable from the lifestyle of the younger generation. The active users of the new media are mainly the youth/adolescence, the Y and Z generation, born in the 90's (Köroğlu, 2015). As Binark related (2015) the Y generation grew with the digital media and got introduced to computers before they were five years old. It is for this reason that individuals belonging to this generation are described as being smart, free spirited, passionate about technology and highly skilled in using technology. As for the Z generation, they are born into technological innovations and cannot imagine a world without mobile networking. According to Tulgan (2013), thanks to social networking and the internet this generation is much more privileged compared to previous generations. The advantages of accessing the net for this generation are: obtaining a wide range of information, getting to know different cultures and approaching diversity with open-mindedness. Also, it is predicted that this generation will have better career opportunities in the future through the benefits of accessing high levels of social media (such as, youtuber, blog writer and agenda setting Twitter - Instagram phenomenon) (Sarioğlu and Özgen, 2018).

5. Material and Methods

In this research it has attempted to determine the Y and Z generations internet usage and addiction on networking by using the general screening model with quantitative analysis. The General Screening model aims to identify an individual's belief, attitude, view, behaviour and expectation through a questionnaire (Gürbüz and Şahin, 2018).

5.1 Measures

The sampling of the research consists of the Y and Z generations living in North Cyprus. The research covers a two-month period, October-November 2020, and it sample-selected 200 people randomly to fill-in a questionnaire. Looking at the Y and Z generation's classification in North Cyprus, in line with figures given by TRNC's State Planning Organization; a total of 286,257 people permanently reside in North Cyprus. According to Öze (2016a), out of the total population the Y generation represented 29% (1980-2000) and the Z generation 19% (2000-onwards). Having said that, these figures date back to the 2011 census, and, as it has been 10 years, it is not considered to reflect the current figure accurately. The Kıbrıs Postası paper, dated January 2019, also agreed with this view. The paper cited the Home -Affairs Minister's remarks: "when we compare the last census, in 2011, with the birth and mortality rate we, as the Ministry, we come up with the conclusion that there are 350,000 "citizens" (Kıbrıs Postası Gazetesi, 2019). This piece of news acknowledges how the last census did not reflect the current population figure accurately. Therefore, we are unable to classify the generation in an adequate way. Even so, if we are to refer to Öze's (2016) explanation about the 2011 census, we notice that the vast majority of the 286,257 population in North Cyprus is covered by the Y generation with 29%, and they are followed by Z generation with 19%. According to Öze (2016) if they were to do a fresh census the percentage will read differently; whilst the older generation will decline the Z generation will increase.

Personal Information Forum was used to determine the participant's demographic features and habits in using social media. Firstly, the demographic features of the participants were screened (age, occupation, gender); later the kind of social media application that was being used, from what type of device they accessed the application, when they began using this social media and how much time in a day they spent on social media was also screened.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the study participants

Characteristic	Study group
Participants, n	200
Gender, M/F (%)	94/106 (47 / 53)
Generation, Y, Z (%)	81/119 (40.5/59.5)
How long have you been using social media? n (%)	
Under 1 year	2 (1)
Between 1-3 years	21 (10.5)
Between 4-6 years	63 (31.5)
Over 7 years	114 (57)
How many hours are you connected to social media? n (%)	
Less than an hour	
Between 1-3 hours	20 (10)
Between 4-6 hours	87 (43.5)
Over 7 hours	67 (33.5)
	26 (13)
Type of device used to access Apps? n (%)	
Desktop and Mobile	87 (43.5)
Mobile	50 (25)
Smartphone	63 (31.5)

5.2 Participant population

As seen in Table 1., the sample chosen consist of women 53% (106 people), men 47% (94 person), Y generation 40.5% (81 people) and Z generation 59.5% (119 person). Their gender and generation layout was also reflected accurately. The vast majority of the participants engaged with social media for over 7 years (114 people), most used the devices of desktop and mobiles (87 people). Half of that ratio (87 people) accessed social media apps 1-3 hours per day.

5.3 Statistical Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 24.0 software was used in the statistical analysis of the research data. Before proceeding to the statistical analysis, the Cronbach Alpha test was performed for the reliability of the answers given to the Social Media Scale and it was found to be 0.956. The distribution of the participants' socio-demographic and social media usage characteristics was determined by frequency analysis, and descriptive statistics regarding the scores they got from the Social Media Addiction Scale were shown. The normal distribution of the scores of the participants from the Social Media Addiction Scale was examined with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, and it was determined that they did not comply with the normal distribution, and the research hypotheses were tested with nonparametric hypothesis tests. Accordingly, the Social Media Addiction Scale scores according to the gender and generation of the participants were compared with the Mann-Whitney U test, and the Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to compare the Social Media Addiction Scale scores according to the profession, the device accessed the applications, the duration of social media usage and the daily social media access time.

5.4 The Scale of Social Media Addiction

To measure the level of the participants' social media addiction the Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS), developed by Tutgun Ünal (2015) and was implemented for accuracy and reliance. To determine the level of addiction Tutgun Ünal multiplied the scale with the subscale from the 5th degree angle. From this, the lowest and highest points on SMAS is 41-205. By subtracting the highest point from the lowest we assess the gaps of the length; and from the 5th degree on the scale we multiply the gaps by dividing it into 5. Accordingly, the scale has given these general readings on the gaps: a gap of 41-73: "no addiction", 74-106: "little addiction, 107-139: "mild addiction", 140-172: "severe addiction", and 173-205: "very severe addiction".

6. Results

Table 2: Purposes Participants Used Social Media and findings on the Variation between the Generations

Scale/Subscale	Generation	Never n / %	Seldom n / %	Sometimes n / %	Often n / %	Always n / %
To chat	Y	1/0.5	1 /5.0	16/8.0	38/19.0	16/8.0
	Z	1/0.5	4/2.0	14/7.0	45/22.5	55/27.5
To meet with people	Y	39/19.5	26/13.0	10/5.0	3/1.5	3/1.5
	Z	32/16.0	55/27.5	29/14.5	1/0.5	2/1.0
To be known by others	Y	36/18.0	18/9.0	19/9.5	5/2.5	3/1.5
	Z	54/27.0	31/15.5	24/12.0	9/4.5	1/0.5
To share news I find interesting	Y	13/6.5	23/11.5	28/14.0	10/5.0	7/3.5
	Z	43/21.5	29/14.5	26/13.0	17/8.5	4/2.0
To share photo /video/note etc	Y	5/2.5	19/9.5	29/14.5	14/7.0	14/7.0
	Z	17/8.5	26/13.0	36/18.0	28/14.0	12/6.0
To play games	Y	26/13.0	22/11.0	14/7.0	12/6.0	7/3.5
	Z	24/12.0	28/14.0	33/16.5	19/9.5	15/7.5
To look at others profile	Y	18/9.0	20/10.0	25/12.5	12/6.0	6/3.0
	Z	13/6.5	32/16.0	26/13.0	32/16.0	16/8.0
To update status	Y	15/7.5	26/13.0	27/13.5	7/3.5	6/3.0
	Z	35/17.5	38/19.0	30/15.0	14/7.0	2/1.0
To comment on others' updates	Y	13/6.5	24/12.0	21/10.5	14/7.0	9/4.5
	Z	15/7.5	29/14.5	38/19.0	29/14.5	8/4.0
To join/follow groups	Y	16/8.0	15/7.5	19/9.5	22/11.0	9/4.5
	Z	23/11.5	19/9.5	35/17.5	30/15.0	12/6.0
To listen/share music	Y	7/3.5	15/7.5	23/11.5	20/10.0	16/8.0
	Z	13/6.5	16/8.0	22/11.0	29/14.5	39/19.5
To follow celebrities	Y	18/9.0	18/9.0	29/14.5	11/5.5	5/2.5
	Z	20/10.0	31/15.5	29/14.5	25/12.5	14/7.0
Communicating for educational purpose	Y	6/3.0	14/7.0	28/14.0	21/10.5	12/6.0
	Z	25/12.5	23/11.5	34/17.0	26/13.0	11/5.5
To search for information & news	Y	1/0.5	6/3.0	13/6.5	37/18.5	24/12.0
	Z	11/5.5	22/11.0	29/14.5	40/20.0	17/8.5
To communicate with friends	Y	2/1.0	4/2.0	16/8.0	27/13.5	32/16.0
	Z	4/2.0	6/3.0	10/5.0	44/22.0	55/27.5
To check products	Y	18/9.0	23/11.5	20/10.0	9/4.5	11/5.5
	Z	40/20.0	36/18.0	26/13.0	11/5.5	6/3.0
To purchase products/brands	Y	16/8.0	21/10.5	27/13.5	11/5.5	6/3.0
	Z	36/18.0	33/16.5	24/12.0	19/9.5	7/3.5

When the social media usage purposes of the participants shown in Table 2 are examined, 35.5% of the participants are for chatting, 27.5% for listening/sharing music, 20.5% for researching news/information, 43%, 5 of them always use social media to keep in touch with their current friends, 41.5% to chat, 35.5% to communicate with their current friends, 38.5% to search for news/information frequently social media usage was determined.

21.5% of the participants to be recognized by other people, 27.0% to share the news they like or get retweets, 32.5% to share the objects they like, 23.5% to play games, 25% to .5% to browse other people's profiles, 28.5% to post notifications/status, 29.5% to comment on other people's statuses or posts, 27.0% to join groups that interest them or to make a post. to follow the group, 22.5% to listen/share music, 31.0% to follow famous people's pages, 21.0% to search for information/news, 23.0% to brand/share It has been determined that 25.5% use it sometimes to get information about the brand/products, to interact with the product pages.

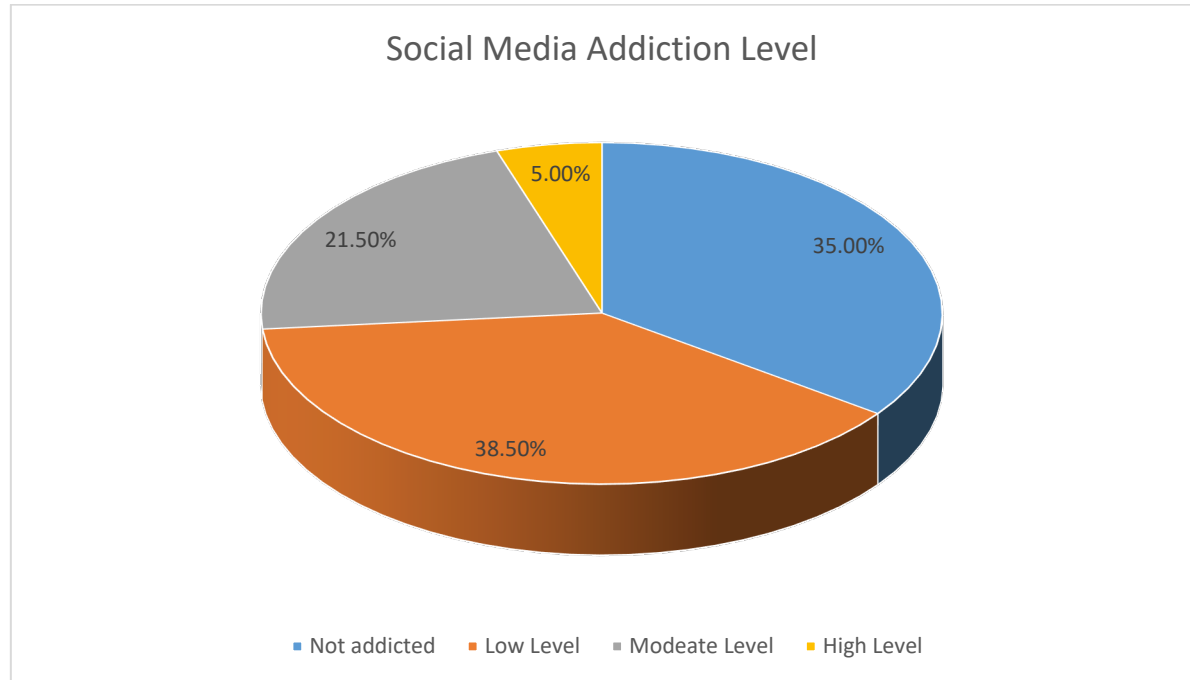
40.5% of the participants to meet new people, 24.5% to be recognized by other people, 26.0% to share the news they like, 25.0% to play games, 26.0% to browse other people's profiles, 32.0% to post notifications/status, 26.5% to comment on other people's statuses or posts, 24.5% to follow famous people's numbers, 29.5% It was determined that 5% of them rarely use social media to interact with brand/product pages and 27.0% of them rarely use social media to get information about brands/products.

Table 3: Comparison of Social Media Addiction Scale scores according to the generation of the participants

	Generation	n	$\bar{x}$	s	M	SO	Z	p
Occupation	Y Generation	81	29,20	10,50	28,00	79,56	-4,223	0,000**
	Z Generation	119	36,11	11,10	35,00	114,75		
Mood Adjustment	Y Generation	81	11,48	5,39	10,00	88,54	-2,415	0,016*
	Z Generation	119	13,39	5,62	14,00	108,64		
Repetition	Y Generation	81	8,11	4,01	6,00	80,54	-4,060	0,000**
	Z Generation	119	10,27	4,80	9,00	114,08		
Conflict	Y Generation	81	26,99	8,78	24,00	70,27	-6,103	0,000**
	Z Generation	119	37,34	13,23	33,00	121,08		
Social Media Addiction Scale	Y Generation	81	75,78	23,64	73,00	75,40	-5,061	0,000**
	Z Generation	119	97,11	29,30	95,00	117,59		

*p<0,05 **p<0,01 (Mann-Whitney U test)

In Table 3, it is seen that there is a statistical difference between the scores of the Y generation and Z generation participants from the Social Media Addiction Scale in general and the sub-dimensions of occupation, mood regulation, repetition and conflict in the scale. it was determined that there was a significant difference ($p<0.05$). The scores of the Z generation participants in the Social Media Addiction Scale in general and in the sub-dimensions of occupation, mood regulation, repetition and conflict were found to be higher than the Y generation participants.



Graph 1: Social media addiction levels of the participants

When Figure 1 is examined, it is seen that 5% of the participants are highly addicted to social media, 21.5% are moderately addicted to social media, and 38.5% are low level social media addicts, while 35% are not addicted to social media.

Table 4: Comparison of Social Media Addiction Scale scores according to the gender of the participants

	Gender	n	$\bar{x}$	s	M	Z	p
Occupation	Male	94	31,26	10,38	30	-2,335	0,020*
	Female	106	35,13	11,91	35		
Mood Adjustment	Male	94	11,99	5,03	11	-1,200	0,230
	Female	106	13,17	6,01	12,5		
Repetition	Male	94	8,84	3,71	8	-0,666	0,506
	Female	106	9,89	5,25	8,5		
Conflict	Male	94	33,20	12,14	31	-0,539	0,590
	Female	106	33,10	13,20	28,5		

	Gender	n	$\bar{x}$	s	M	Z	p
Social Media Addiction Scale	Male	94	85,29	26,17	81	-1,152	0,249
	Female	106	91,29	31,24	88,5		

*p<0,05 (Mann-Whitney U test)

According to Table 4, it was determined that there was a statistically significant difference between the scores of the participants in the occupation sub-dimension in the Social Media Addiction Scale according to their gender ($p<0.05$). The scores of the female participants in the sub-dimension of occupation were found to be significantly higher than the male participants.

According to the gender of the participants, it was determined that the difference between the scores of the Social Media Addiction Scale in general and the sub-dimensions of mood regulation, repetition and conflict in the scale was not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). The scores of female and male participants in the Social Media Addiction Scale in general and in the sub-dimensions of mood regulation, repetition and conflict in the scale were similar.

7. Conclusion and Discussion

The research discovered that the participants displayed little addiction to social media. The subscale did detect that users had mild addiction in the category of occupation. Although this rate of addiction was not considered to be concerning, the widespread use of Wifi, portable pc's, mobiles and networking environments will pose the risk of addiction levels to rise. The readings did not show any addiction variation between the genders. Women, however, were more predisposed towards addiction on the subscale of occupation and mood adjustment. Compared with men, women are more occupied and achieve emotional support from social media. There was no noticeable addiction variation between the Y and Z generations. On the entire subscale reading, however, the Z generation was on a higher level of addiction compared to the Y generation. This showed that the generations of Y and Z did not perceive the technology in the same way. The main reason for this is, the Y generation can manage to live in a world without technology whereas the Z generation cannot.

The research also surveyed the purpose of using social media, and these were; keeping in contact with current friends, chatting, listening to music, searching for information and following news. This pointed out that the participants actively used social media for interpersonal communication and fully benefited from the opportunities it offered (for instance, quick, easy, cheap communication, fun and information gathering).

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