The Negative Impact of Social Media Networks on Graduates

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Abstract: In today's information age, the advancement of the Internet has accelerated the growth of social media networks, resulting in an increasing number of recent graduates using social media. This study sought to investigate the detrimental impacts of social media networks on attachment anxiety, loneliness, and longing anxiety in recent graduates. Overuse of social media might have a negative impact on fresh grads. The convenience of social media networks, as well as people's lethargy, contribute to these detrimental impacts. The convenience of social media networks, as well as people's lazy dependence, selective indifference to interpersonal interactions, unhappiness, and lack of information, all contribute to these negative impacts. This study proposes related proposals and remedies at the individual, university, and government levels to ease or remove the negative feelings of recent graduates, lessen social pressure, and maintain the stability of society.

Keywords: Attachment Anxiety, Loneliness, Fear of Missing Out, Social Media Networks

1. Introduction

The globe is currently experiencing a network explosion, and individuals rely heavily on social media. addicted to the network, mixed information is filled with them, it is difficult to distinguish between true and false, and its existence is like a double-edged sword so that the masses will participate in the event, analyze the event, and even change the outcome of the event; the majority of the capital will seize the characteristics of its network, seeking to maximize the benefits of the increasingly whitewashed social network world, so that people are intoxicated by the proliferation of visually appealing material, which has significantly increased people's time spent on social networks. This is especially true for college students who grew up using the Internet. College students now spend significantly more time on social media networks due to their curiosity about new things on the Internet, their desire to learn about a wide range of topics, and the fact that they seek the pleasure and thrill they can't get in real life by putting their emotions on display in the social media world.

With the fermentation of social events, the proportion of people who participate in the debate of events has increased dramatically, as has the length of time that events have received public attention. As of June 2023, China's social media users were 1.047 billion, while online video users totaled 1.044 billion. With more than half of them holding a university degree, the large number of users will result in the phenomenon of a plurality of mouths, often known as "opinion leaders" [1]. "Opinion leaders," as the primary social media network for public opinion, spark moral leadership and chain reactions. Some researchers conclude that when college students receive network refutation information, it is

unavoidable that they will be unable to identify the authenticity of the information, such as some of the COVID-19 of public opinion, resulting in a higher risk of anxiety or depression [2]. Furthermore, some studies have examined the research findings of upward social comparison of social media at home and abroad, demonstrating the impact of upward social comparison on individual cognition, emotion, and behavior [3]. Other research used the analytic hierarchy technique to examine the impact of online social media material on college students' national security awareness and offer appropriate measures [4].

Due to the update of the Internet era and the development of the information explosion, there is an increasing demand for information and network dependence, especially for the group of fresh graduates who are about to enter social employment or continue their studies. When fresh graduates face the choice of their future life path, they will have more information needs and tend to rely on the Internet. Therefore, this paper studies the negative impact of fresh graduates' dependence on social media networks.

Regarding the dependence of fresh graduates on social media networks, this paper, through event investigation, case analysis, and other methods, finds out that most of the dependence of fresh graduates on social media networks is due to psychological anxiety yielded by poor information, which will reduce the effective time of fresh graduates' lives and increase the probability of fresh graduates' suffering from mental illnesses, which will affect their normal lives and even social unrest. This will reduce the effective time of fresh graduates' lives and increase the probability of fresh graduates suffering from psychological diseases, which will affect normal life in the slightest case, generate social hatred in the worst case, and even yield social unrest. Therefore, the rational use of social media networks and a correct and scientific view of the virtual world of social media networks are more effective measures to solve the problem.

2. Case Description

Nowadays, the Internet has become an essential part of modern people's lives, particularly among the younger generation, who have been exposed to the Internet since childhood, and the use of social media networks has become a daily routine. Social media is used in daily activities such as eating, commuting, resting, studying, and working. It is difficult to disconnect from the online world during daily studying, eating, sleeping, and even the final week review stage, which is especially noticeable among recent graduates [5]. As this group prepares to leave school, it is unavoidable that they will experience choice anxiety when deciding whether to continue their education or enter society for employment. As a result, the group of fresh graduates will be eager for information acquisition, and social media networks, as one of the most convenient ways of information acquisition, will be more appealing to them.

According to interview survey data, in the current situation, 80% of college students use social media, with roughly half of them using it for a significant amount of the day [6]. The survey found that 36.61% of college students spend 2–4 hours per day on social media, 20.03% for 4–6 hours, and 20.21% for more than 6 hours. In terms of time spent on social media, the top three are "using it all day long," "using it at no specific time," and "using it at a specific time (non-learning time)," accounting for 32.99%, 32.99%, 32.99%, and 32.21% of the total, respectively. 32.99%, 32.82%, and 32.3%, respectively, with only 1.9% of respondents stating that they "use it at a specific time (before going to bed)" [7]. With the increase in time spent on online social media, the group of fresh graduates has become more serious about staying up late and missing sleep, resulting in the appearance of anxiety, fear, and emptiness [7].

Anxiety and loneliness are becoming increasingly common difficulties among recent graduates. College students have higher levels of attachment anxiety and loneliness than the median, indicating

that they experience attachment anxiety and loneliness in general. They also have higher levels of error anxiety and problematic social network use than the median [8].

3. Analysis on the Problems

3.1. Dimensions of Attachment Anxiety

Individuals exhibit a tendency towards laziness, and their cognitive faculties display a disinclination towards active thinking. Visual stimuli on social media can immediately transmit information to the brain. The demand for knowledge among fresh graduates surpasses that of other demographics due to their desire for extensive guidance and direction in selecting their future trajectory. Moreover, these cohorts are increasingly captivated by social media platforms owing to their little social burden in contrast to real-life interactions, the occasional sense of void experienced by recent graduates, and the captivating information available on these platforms. Research has indicated that college students exhibit an excessive reliance on social media, leading to aberrant interpersonal relationships with their peers [9]. Additionally, survey research indicates that the utilization of social networks by college students would indeed have a detrimental effect on interpersonal communication [10].

3.2. Loneliness

Fresh graduates exhibit a higher propensity to excessively utilize social media platforms, resulting in their disregard and apathy towards both their immediate surroundings and others. Nevertheless, whenever recent graduates disengage from social media platforms and reenter the physical world, their desire for connection remains unfulfilled. Consequently, this leads to feelings of isolation. Loneliness fosters a perpetual cycle where recent graduates persist in engaging with social media networks. According to research, there is a link between people's levels of loneliness and how frequently they engage in online socializing [11]. Research has established a connection between attachment anxiety, loneliness, and the use of mobile phone social media for conflict among college students. It has been proven that attachment anxiety and loneliness significantly influence the extent to which college students engage in conflict through mobile phone social media [12].

3.3. The Fear of Missing Out

Recent graduates encounter the challenge of selecting their future trajectory, therefore, they possess a strong desire for impactful information. Nevertheless, individuals are perpetually discontented and seek to acquire additional information while also harboring apprehensions about the potential loss of essential information. This worry will create a positive feedback loop in the use of social media, resulting in a vicious cycle. Research has validated that there is a direct relationship between the level of engagement in social media and the experience of fear of missing out [13]. According to research, data analysis has shown that online social reliance and online social anxiety are directly related [14].

4. Suggestion

4.1. Suggestions on Dimensions of Attachment Anxiety

Given the sudden and challenging nature of attachment anxiety in recent graduates, it is advisable to provide focused advice through psychological interventions in colleges and universities. This approach aims to enhance the well-being of college students struggling with attachment anxiety. Simultaneously, it is imperative for school mental health centers to prioritize the well-being of college students and mitigate their excessive reliance on mobile phones and social media by implementing beneficial and rational alternatives, such as horticultural therapy. Provide guidance to college students

on the rational usage of mobile phones and help alleviate their attachment anxiety [12]. Consider horticultural therapy as an illustrative example. Research has indicated that horticultural therapy is a successful approach for college students to cope with the loss of emotions, spirits, and values [15].

4.2.   Suggestions on Loneliness

Recent college graduates face a critical decision point in their lives, and it is unavoidable to experience feelings of isolation in a demanding setting. Nevertheless, there are several methods to enhance it. For instance, on an individual level, students who have recently graduated can develop an understanding of loneliness, find pleasure in solitude, and engage in self-psychological counseling. At the university level, the institution can arrange graduation parties and other events to enhance the daily experiences of fresh graduates and alleviate their feelings of isolation [16]. According to research, college students can benefit from experiencing a modest level of loneliness. However, excessive loneliness can be alleviated by engaging in school activities that promote interpersonal connection, as viewed from a design perspective [17].

4.3.   Suggestions on Fear of Missing Out

Individually, fresh graduates should recognize that life is varied and extends beyond self-evaluation. At the university level, schools can offer campus activities like career counseling or support for postgraduate entrance exams to enhance fresh graduates' knowledge and motivation for pursuing higher education. The government has the ability to implement appropriate policies in order to alleviate the employment burden on recent graduates and guarantee the consistent employment of skilled individuals. The employment of graduates has been relatively steady following the implementation of several government initiatives, including unemployment subsidies and the increase in job recruitment opportunities [18].

5.   Conclusion

This study uses the Internet era's social media network as a research backdrop, fresh graduates as the research subject, and investigates the impact of social media on the negative feelings of fresh graduates. By investigating the current situation of recent graduates' excessive use of social media networks, as well as the negative effects of social media networks on the group of recent graduates, and using relevant analysis data and case studies, this paper concludes that social media networks will cause attachment anxiety, loneliness, and anxiety about missing out. The convenience of social media networks, as well as people's laziness, selective disinterest in interpersonal communication, human unhappiness, and a lack of information, are to blame for these negative effects. Individuals, universities, and governments make the corresponding suggestions.

This study briefly outlines the detrimental impact of social media networks on recent graduates, confirms the significance of the negative impact, and proposes appropriate alternatives. This study also compares the application of various theories in this subject, determines the correlation between them, and summarizes the research status for these theories in this field. However, the data sources in this research are largely sampling surveys, which do not account for the influence of geographical characteristics, etc. Thus, the reference value is limited. In the future, data sources for data analysis can be more general, potentially compensating for the drawbacks of this paper.

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