**Social Media and Aggression: Introduction**

Jensen Caldwell

Utah Valley University

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Professor Katherine Brickey

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As society progresses into the digital age our behaviors and attitudes are becoming more and more influenced by technology and social media. In this research proposal, I will be discussing the effects of society on us as individuals. I will be examining specifically the impact it bears on aggression. There have been a number of studies done on the effects of social media on our individual psychology. A majority of these studies, however, focus on the impact it has on anxiety, happiness, or depression. In examining its effects on aggression I will explore the impact that social media has on the aggression levels and tendencies of individuals who use it, and how these changes affect our society as a whole.

In this paper, I will be using the word aggression to mean any behavior made with the intention of hurting or causing harm to another person. A proper understanding of aggression is essential to a proper understanding of how we interact with each other in society as a whole. Aggression can take many forms and it can lead to other behaviors as well, it is often associated with violence but it can also lead to greater depression and social isolation for individuals. As for society on a broad scale increased aggression also puts a strain on our efforts to truly accept each other because aggression leads to reciprocating aggression often reinforcing pre-existing beliefs about other groups of people. Because aggression is tied deeply to our emotional states, it follows logically that social media, which frequently alters our emotional state, should have a measurable effect on aggression.

As people spend more time on social media, where they feel anonymous, and less time with in-person interactions we should expect that their aggressive feelings and actions will increase. In his article “Does the Internet Make the World Worse? Depression, Aggression, and Polarization in the Social Media Age.” (2021) Ferguson discusses the impact that the internet, and social media specifically, has had on the world as a whole. In his multi-disciplinary analysis, there are two observations of particular note to the current topic; he draws a link between the internet and a measurable increase in both mental health problems and political division. Both of these outcomes are deeply connected to aggression. Another article, written by Ben-Shalom and his associates, examines the link between sporting fans’ online behavior before the game and the real-world behavior of the players before the game. They found that fans’ negative behavior online before a game correlated strongly with increased player aggression. Interestingly, however, fans’ positive behavior did decrease player aggression, but to a lesser extent. Positive fan behavior only decreased the aggression of the most aggressive players(2021). Both of these studies show some of the broader societal impacts that social media can have, and both also show that it may cause more harm than good.

Honestly, I felt like this was super understandable and easy to see what you are trying to get at. There was professional language, and I understood the problem and how it affected me. I feel like there could be more about how it effects people in the day to day and why I specifically should care about this topic, but otherwise I thought it was good. There also might need to be more references throughout the paper especially for your second paragraph.