

Social Media: Friend or Foe?

Methods

Data Collection Methods

We used surveys as our research method to aid us in answering our research questions. Using an assortment of open/close-ended questions and distributing them in an online survey format allowed us to gather data from 100 undergraduate students. The survey was easy to distribute virtually and in person, which made it versatile enough to suit our teams needs. We were able to gather demographic and contextual information through our research method without intruding upon our subjects. Our survey was comprised of 20 multiple choice and 2 open response questions.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Techniques

The target population for our research project is current Florida State University undergraduate students. The two most appropriate data collection methods are voluntary and convenience sampling. We used convenience sampling, by sending emails with a link of our survey to the members of our current classes and the course instructors. combat gaining responses from the same participants we each selected classes that have a different demographic, there was no overlap in course distribution. We used voluntary sampling, by posting links to our surveys on the class pages on various social media platforms. For instance, all classes have an official Facebook group page so we posted the link on those pages, asking users to take the survey.

Participant Recruitment Process

To recruit participants for our research proposal we created an online survey and posted a link to different groups the researchers are in. The recruitment will take place around the Florida State University campus and will be distributed virtually through a Florida State Qualtrics survey link. This will ensure that we have a concrete database of our results. The link was sent out to various groups and Facebook pages to ensure the largest sample size possible, we posted these with a goal of reaching 100 participants. In the end we reached 103 FSU undergraduate students. Being that we distributed the survey to people virtually we are relying on voluntary participation from our participants.

Analysis

By distributing the link to our survey to CCI students through sending messages to their professors, through sending Canvas emails to people in our own classes, and through posting in Facebook groups, we were able to obtain 103 responses, and 98 of them are complete.

Our survey participants were mostly females – specifically, 56 (62%) of the participants were females, while only 32 (35%) were males. Additionally, as shown in figure 1, the majority of our participants were upperclassmen: 37 (41%) of the participants were juniors; 36(40%) were seniors.

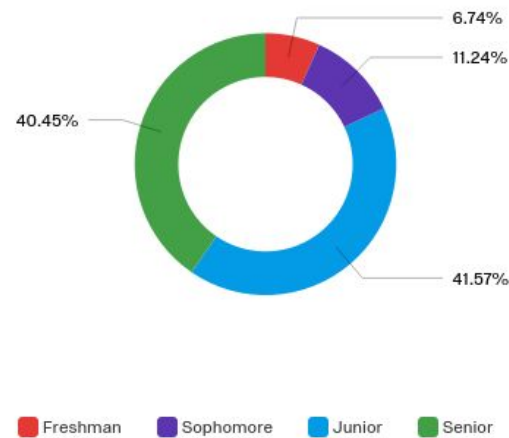


Figure 1. School Year of FSU Sample College Students

For social media platforms students used we found the mean of usage per social media platform, as indicated in Figure 2, 58 (69%) indicated that they used Snapchat more than 7 times a day, making it the most-frequently utilized social media platform. Other frequently used platforms include Instagram, which was used by 38 (45%) of users more than 7 times a day, and Twitter, which was also used by 23 participants (27%) more than 7 times a day. Youtube and Facebook were among the other most frequently used platforms. On the other hand, Tumblr, Pinterest, and Reddit were among the least- frequently used social media platforms for our participants.

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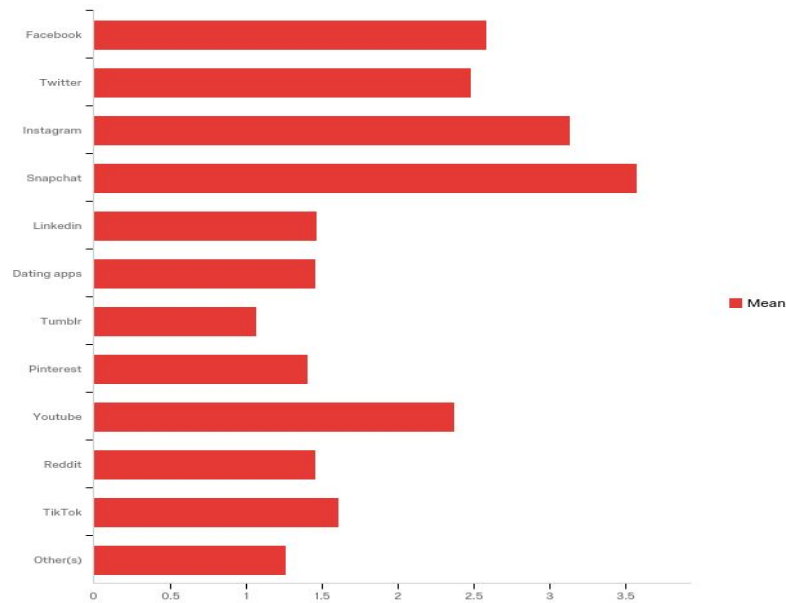


Figure 2. Social Media Platform Used by FSU Sample College Students

RQ1: Do FSU undergraduates believe that social media has negatively impacted their ability to communicate in a physical environment? How? Why?

Daily usage of social media for undergraduate students.

Through our survey questions, we found that 32 participants (38%) use social media 0-3 hours per day. Only 1 respondent (1%) used social media for more than 12 hours a day, while slightly more than 5% used their social media 8-12 hours a day. However, a much larger number of participants, 46 (54%) indicated that they use social media for 4-7 hours every day, Figure 4 shows these responses.

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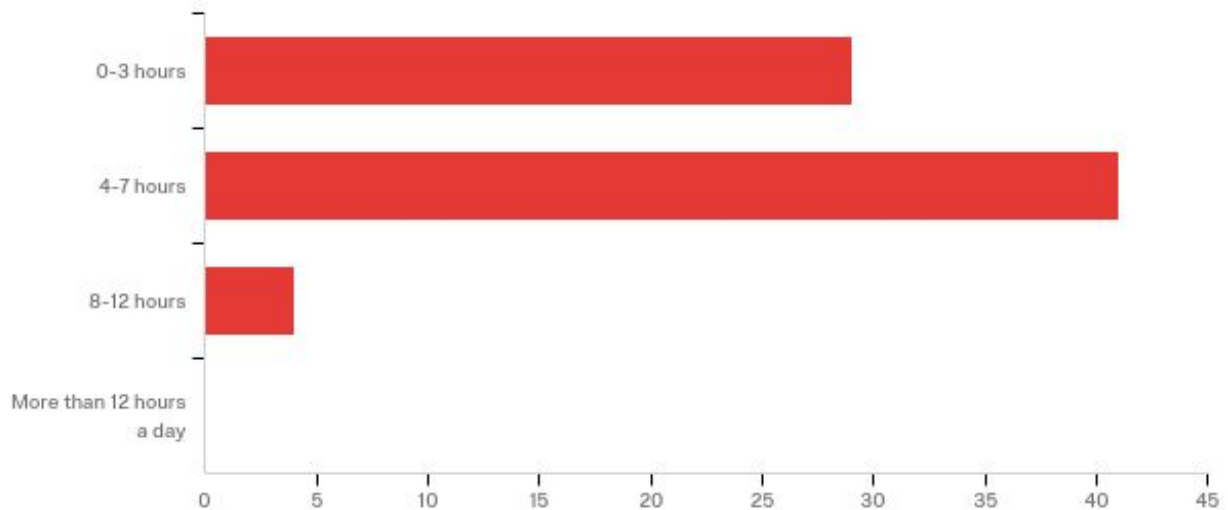


Figure 3. How much time FSU undergraduate sample spent on social media per day

Face-to-face communication.

Delving deeper into FSU students' use of social media in the presence of others, we found that 51 participants (60%) used social media 1-3 per week instead of interacting with family and friends. Additionally, 20 participants (23%) used social media 4-7 times per week when they could have been interacting with family and friends in person, and only 4 participants (5%) stated they do not use social media when in the presence of family and friends. Figure 3 provides a visual breakdown of these usage patterns.

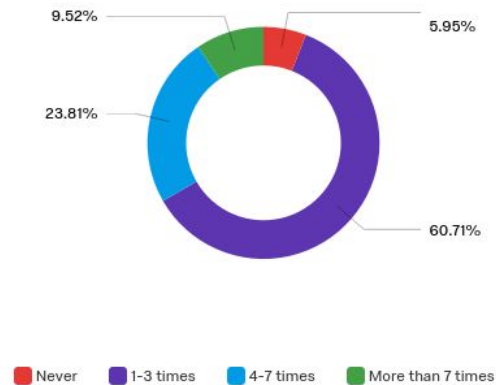


Figure 3. use of social media per week when in the presence of friends/family

When asked if they prefer communicating in person or via social media majority, 67 (79%), of the students preferred face-to-face communication. 10 people (11%) responded that they had no preference. Figure 4 shows the visual results of this specific revelation.

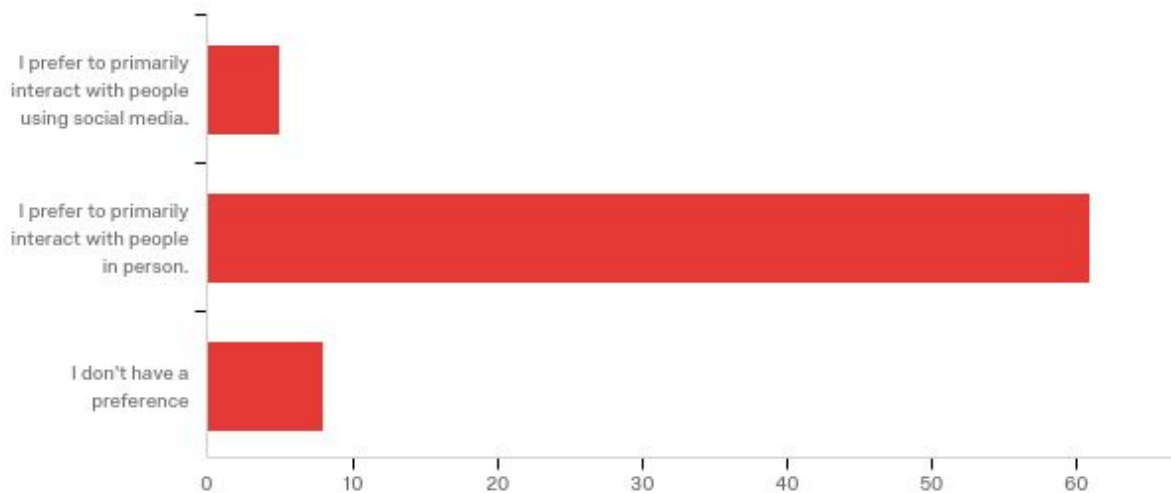


Figure 4. Primary interaction medium

Perceived emotions in response to social media.

Students had a rather positive outlook when evaluating their attitude towards social media as a communication medium. 41 students (48%) responded that they had a “somewhat positive” attitude for using social media to communicate with others. The other majority, 25 students (29%), were indifferent to a positive response in regards to their attitude about using social media in this way. Figure 5 shows the visualizations for this data.

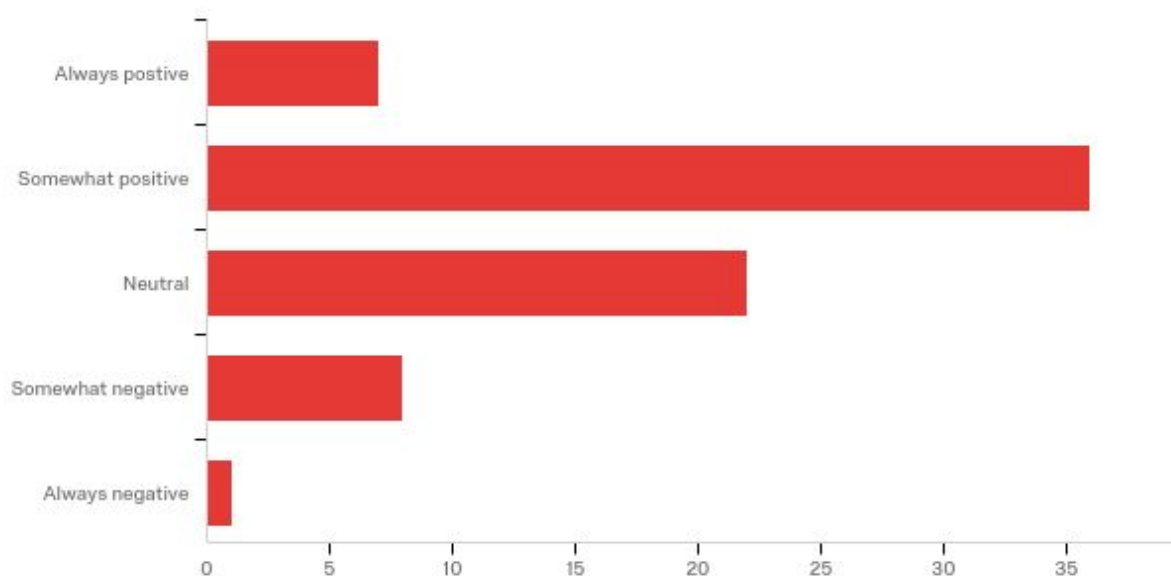


Figure 5. Attitude towards social media use to communicate

Overall, our sample indicated that majority of FSU undergraduates use social media more than 4 hours a day. Although there is frequent use they prefer to communicate with people in person and are positive about the way they use it to communicate. In other words, FSU undergraduates use social media for communication when they can not be face-to-face with their peers or family.

Figure 6. Word cloud

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Figure 7. Students responses to which they believe if social media causes them stress.

When students were asked whether or not social media has caused stressed the majority of students, 54.55%, responded by saying that social media does occasionally leave the student feeling stressed out, (*Figure 6*).

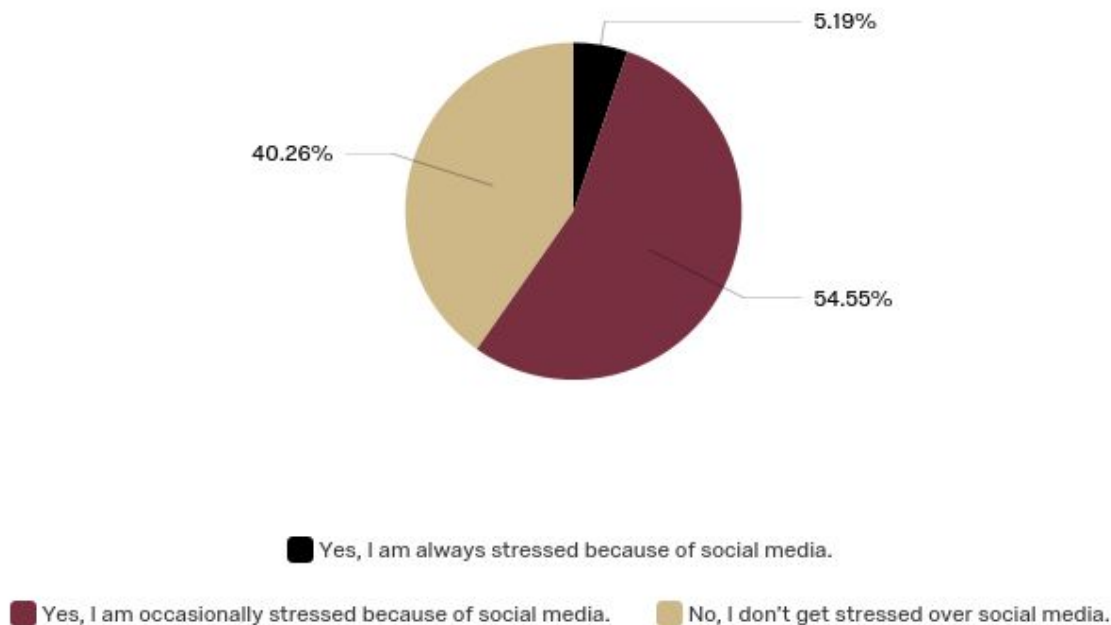


Figure 7: Perceived stress level towards social media

Do FSU undergraduate students think the time they spend using social media affects their self-esteem?

Figure 8. Student responses to emotions felt when a post does not get the attention they expected. Looking deeper into the mental effects that social media has had on FSU undergraduates, 53% of students reported that they felt upset or underappreciated when one of their social media posts didn't receive the recognition that they expected (*Figure 7*). Additionally, 43% of students

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reported that their main purpose for posting on social media was “self confidence”, “satisfaction from peers”, or “influencer aspirations.” These two statistics When students were asked whether or not social media ~40% of students surveyed reported that “Self Confidence” or “Satisfaction from peers” was their purpose for posting on social media.

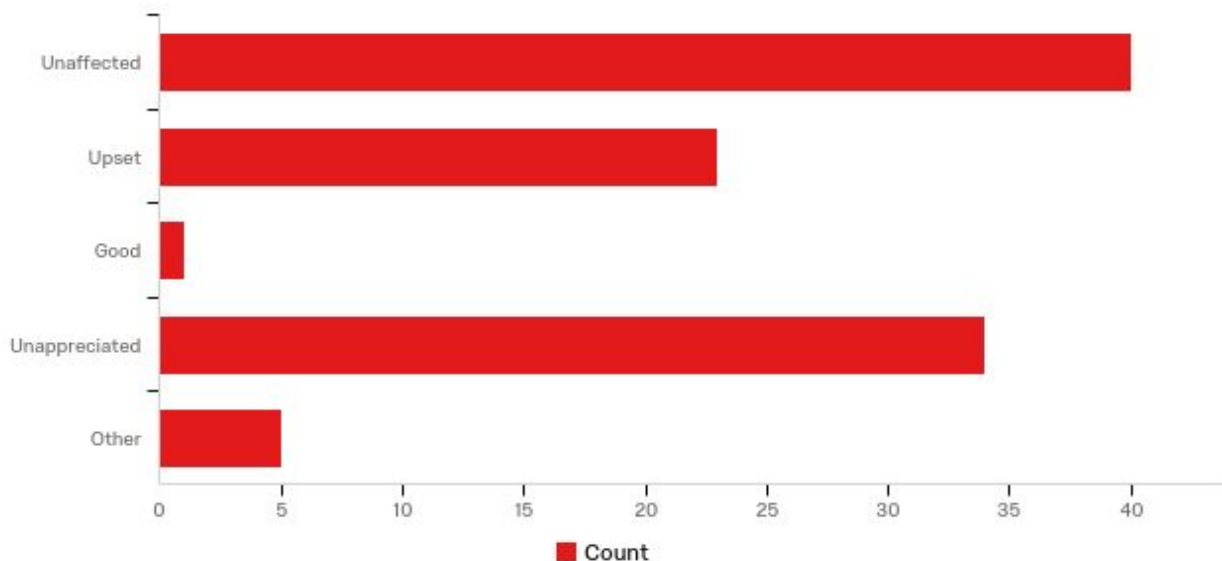


Figure 8: Emotions toward not getting anticipated recognition

Do FSU undergraduate students think the time they spend using social media help or hinder them to sustain a healthy lifestyle?

Based off of the responses from students, there is a slight majority of them, 53.57%, are in agreeance that the quick availability of social media has hindered the attitude towards in person communication, (Figure 9). In other words, because of social media, the majority of students think that it has affected the in person communication.

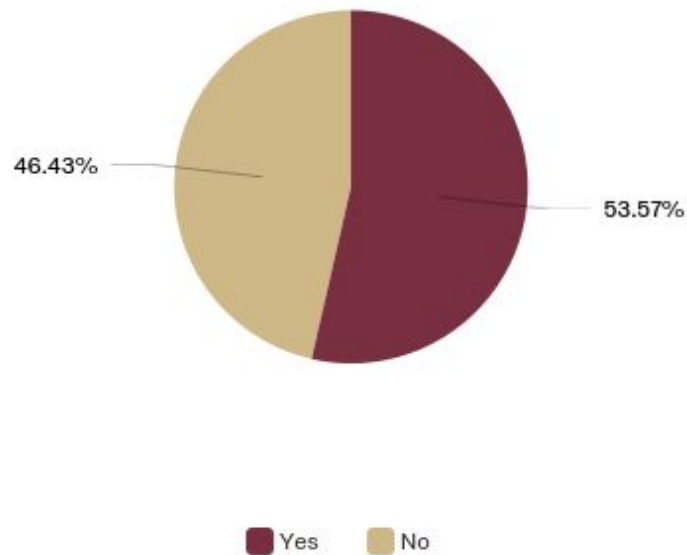


Figure 9: Attitude towards social media effect on in-person communication

Overall, after analyzing the responses from students, it appears that the sample of FSU undergraduate students are evenly split when it comes to cognitive and emotional impact as a result of social media. It can be concluded that the same sample of students who responded to the survey using words like “unaffected” were also the same students who reported that they were “never stressed out by social media” and did not feel like their communication skills had been hindered because of social media. With the exception of some outliers, the remaining half of the sample existed at the other end of the spectrum: heavily affected in both the cognitive and emotional department. This half of the majority was largely affected when social media did not deliver responses that they had hoped for and felt unappreciated; they also felt as though their communication skills had been impacted as a result of social media. This survey begs the question as to whether the majority that was unaffected uses social media less or are they just more confident with their communication skills, and as a result don’t need as much gratification from social media posts?

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RQ 3: With the knowledge of the negative impact that heavy social media use has, will FSU undergraduates change their communication habits and or social media use?

Does the FSU student feel a change in social media usage would be beneficial?

Students were asked whether or not they feel like they would benefit from a decreased use of social media, the results showed that 56 (66%) felt that they would in fact benefit from a decrease. While only 22 (26%) students felt that they did not feel a need to change their social media usage. Figure 10 shows the data from this survey response.

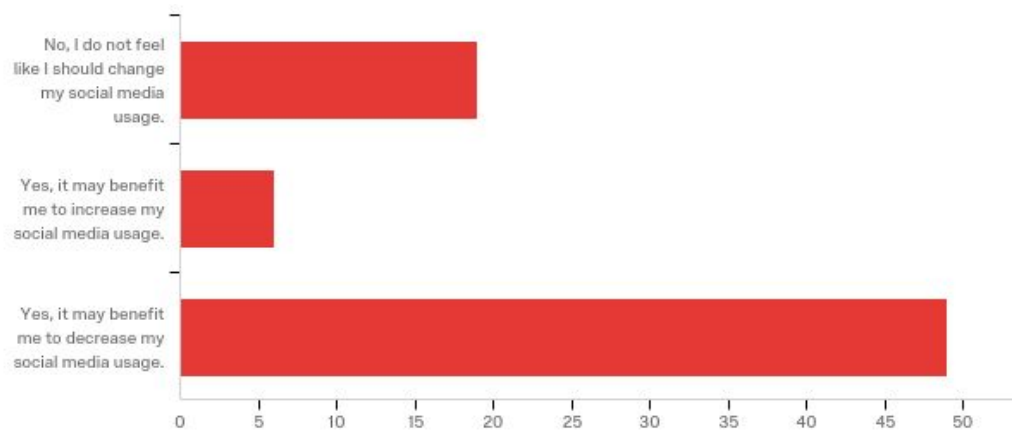


Figure 10: Change in social media tendencies

Overall, it appears knowing that social media usage has negative implications does cause students to recognize the need to change their habits, based on the entire study it does not appear students have made any changes. Many still feel they can benefit from actively using social media less in their day-to-day activities.

LIS 3201-FA19

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Criteria	Rating
Provision of project title (3pts)	
Finalized data collection method(s) (6pts), sampling technique(s) (6pts), and recruitment process (8pts)	
Data analysis and discussion: sample description (5pts); findings for each research question (15pts); provision of visualization in APA format (5pts)	
File format: 2pts	

Consent Form

In the table below, list what contributions each of the team members made to this assignment.

Name	Contribution
Hannah Rittenhouse	Set up document + RQ1, RQ2 and RQ3
Kallayah Henderson	RQ1 and RQ3
Camden Carter	RQ2
Lily Bodolay	RQ2
Avery Hinchman	RQ2 and Editing
Mason Layfield	RQ2 and Editing