The Influence of Gender on Relapse in Adults Addicted to Social Media

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In recent years, social media has become one of the most popular ways for people to connect virtually. However, this rapid surge in its use has brought to light its capability to become an addiction. Social Media Addiction (SMA) is a behavioral disorder that is defined by the excessive and compulsive use of social media sites such as Instagram and Facebook. This study addresses an important gap in research, the influence of gender on relapse, which is the return to problematic use of social media after a period of time away from it. Based on research about gender-based differences in the effects of social media abstinence, and the influence of gender on relapse for a drinking addiction, I hypothesized that women are more prone to relapsing than men. In the experiment, 43 adults(18 years and over) were initially tested for social media addiction using the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS). Out of the sample, 16 people tested addicted and a sample of 6 men and 6 women chose to participate in a 7-day social media abstinence experiment. During the abstinence period, a total of 4 females and 2 males relapsed, proving my hypothesis and allowing me to conclude that women addicted to social media were more prone to relapse than men. The majority relapsed between Day 3-5. Furthermore,out of the individuals who relapsed, half indicated that Instagram was their most used social media site, the others split between Whatsapp and Facebook.

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