Review Article

What Is Social Emotional Intelligence Saying about Internet Addiction and Being "Liked" On Social Media?

Michael F. Shaughnessy[1]*, Rubeli Alvarez[1]

[1]Michael F. Shaughnessy, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico.

*Corresponding Author: Michael F. Shaughnessy, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico.

Abstract

Recently, social emotional intelligence has been fostered by several different theorists and has received much attention during these pandemic times. The present paper attempts to explore the realm of social emotional intelligence and how social emotional intelligence may address internet and game addiction as well as the extensive need for approval that seen on social media.

Social emotional Intelligence has been around for many years- but has undergone many transformations. What would have been called "common sense "and morphed into this construct that we call "social emotional intelligence" to reflect our ability to understand, cope with, and address our emotional needs and deal with the sometimes-harsh emotions, and comments and behaviors of others.

Keywords: social emotional intelligence; internet addiction; social media

Introduction:

The domain of "internet addiction "is also a relatively new construct reflecting the fact that many individuals are into "gaming" and "surfing the net " for long periods of time and ignoring the social and emotional needs of significant others in their environments (for example, wives, husbands, children, and friends and colleagues). Obviously, "internet addiction is a major waste of time-as these individuals spend hours and hours going from Facebook to Google to Tweet and blog and engage in endless discourse regarding any number of topics- such as politics, the latest movies and the exploits of the Kardashians. Some individuals have become enamored of various celebrities and have spent endless hours reading about Tom Cruise or Denzel Washington or the latest boy band.

COVID-19 has obviously exacerbated the problem- since people have been at home and do not have the typical face to face interpersonal interactions that they had in the past. Thus, people have become inordinately dependent on ZOOM, SKYPE and other venues to communicate and true person to person intimacy has been neglected.

Additionally, needed items have been purchased on the Internet, instead of being shopped for in the local stores? Further, food has been delivered rather than individuals going out to a local restaurant.

The Need for Approval

Henry Murray (1983) and Abraham Maslow (1943) have hypothesized that humans have some basic needs. Maslow felt that we have a need for food, water, shelter and acceptance. These could be termed physiological needs. He further indicated that we had needs for safety and security, followed by love and belonging (perhaps to some social group or organization) self-esteem and lastly, self-actualization. Murray discussed the need for achievement, attention, approval, affiliation and power. Murray developed a projective test in an attempt to ascertain people's basic needs. His list is extensive- and needs to be reflected upon. Many of his "needs" are quite apparent, others less so. For example, superiority, achievement, recognition are understandable. Exhibition, acquisition, conservance somewhat relevant. Order, construction, dominance and deference are clearly appropriate, and one can grasp these constructs. Then we have aggression, abasement, affiliation, and blame avoidance. Perhaps most relevant are the needs for nurturance, play, succorance and the need to avoid rejection. Murray wrote in a different time period and a different zeitgeist, but his ideas, (and Maslow's) bear examination in light of social media and the Internet. What do the students, the children and adolescents of this time period "need" and how does the Internet fulfill those needs? Certainly, students who need factual information for a high school term paper or science project may be able to find the needed information for a project or paper. However, those who spend an inordinate amount of time friending, and social mediating with others (in an age or time period of social distance) need to be examined, and their behavior scrutinized.

In addition, social media seems to be connected with depression, anxiety and other mental health issues.

- Depression: This is a very common mental disorder with a list of symptoms that affect everyday life such as eating, sleeping, and working.

- Additionally, this could lead to a list of factors such as anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and suicide.

- Social media has only negatively affected students, one major reason.

- A study of 10,930 adolescents showed that increased social media use and levels of depression had a positive relationship.

- To this day, 20% of students suffer with depression before the hit adulthood.

- Students who suffer with depression would have symptoms such as irritability, fatigue, feeling of

  Emptiness as well as excessive crying

- Those who seek help can either seek counseling or therapy or take antidepressants such as Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs)

The Need for Body Approval

- Researchers determined that were done alongside studies in self-esteem show that social media has led to dissatisfaction in their bodies, leading to Anorexia setting into the life of the adolescent

- Additionally, females are the biggest victim of eating disorders, close to tripling the rate of men

- Sites are available that are seen as "Pro-Anorexia", which include sites such as Instagram, where body image is seen as such a major factor in the popularity of the post. To add to that, these sites allow comments to be made that could cause more of this Anorexic activity

- Finally, many social media sites have created a "Body Perfect" style, being a body style that is seen as perfect and must be followed. This creates a dangerous style that adolescents try to follow dangerously

- Those who suffer through Eating Disorders usually go to specialized individuals for therapy and begin a strict eating schedule in order to familiarize eating once again

- Students who suffer from Eating Disorders will suffer extreme weight loss and lack of appetite. Students will pass up food anytime it is offered

Neither Maslow nor Murray would indicate that there is a need for body approval. Physicians may comment on a patient who is morbidly obsess, or a therapist may be concerned about a thin adolescent who may be showing signs of anorexia nervosa. Hollywood and the movies has certainly inundated the movies and air waves with individuals who are perhaps muscular or females with cleavage. The subtle influence of movies, television and various rock stars needs to be examined.

Social Media, Anxiety and Need for Approval

- Alongside depression, Anxiety is the other most common disorder found amongst adolescents

- Social media usage has been linked to the degree of psychological distress found in adolescents

- Students usually either take medication for their anxiety such as Escitalopram and therapy

- Anxiety plays alongside depression, most students are comorbid with both disorders, and social media has been found as a culprit for both

- Symptoms could include physical fatigue and irritability, as well as mental problems such as overthinking and inability to let go.

Shaughnessy and Johnson (2019) and Shaughnessy (2020) have reviewed the concept of anxiety and further the explosion of different types of anxiety in this age of COVID. People are apprehensive, worried, concerned and have many fears about the present state of the world and of course, the future. Some people seek solace thru the Internet-hoping to find some reassurance or support. They have not, obviously written about the anxiety that some people in social media land feel when they are "unfriended" or did not get as many "likes" as they would have liked or if someone casts aspersions on them.

What SHOULD Social Emotional Intelligence be saying about the "need for approval" and being "liked" on the Internet.

Parents, teachers, guidance counselors, coaches and others have the most contact with children and adolescence and should be addressing internet addition and this Inordinate need for approval and being liked. Certainly, parents need to alert their children that there are predators out there, waiting to exploit unsuspected children and others for their own purposes. Those individuals out there on the net are not necessarily those individuals who we can turn to in times of trouble or crisis. "Friends" on the net may be in another

State or even in another country. And Individuals will not die if they are not accepted by others on the net or social media. The values that are fostered and pushed on the social media services are not necessarily values that will lead to long term success. In fact, time spent on the net is wasted time in that students are not doing homework, reading, or exercising.

Summary and Conclusions

This paper has cursorily reviewed the issue of "internet addiction "from a "need" perspective of both Maslow and Murray. There is much concern about the irrational thinking behind the various "needs" often seen on social media- the need for approval, the need for being "liked" and the concerns about being rejected. Social -emotional intelligence is called for to address these issues that seem to be pervasive and are somewhat unhealthy, as well as being time consuming.

References

1. *Generalized anxiety disorder - Diagnosis and treatment - Mayo Clinic*. (2017, October 13). Mayo Clinic. Retrieved November 16, 2021

2. Keles, B., McCrae, N., & Grealish, A. (2019, March 21). *A systematic review: the influence of social media on depression, anxiety and psychological distress in adolescents*. International Journal of Adolescence and Youth. Retrieved November 16, 2021

3. Maslow, A.H. (1943) A theory of human motivation Psychological Review 50 (4) 370-396.

4. Murray, H.A. (1943) Explorations in Personality New York, Oxford University Press

5. Perloff, R. (2019, May 29). *Social Media Effects on Young Women's Body Image Concerns: Theoretical Perspectives and an Agenda for Research*.

6. Shaughnessy, M.F. (2022) Anxiety and its Variants in an Age of COVID Journal of Psychology and Neuroscience

7. Shaughnessy, M.F., Moffitt, B.,& Cordova, M. (2018) Maslow, basic needs and contemporary teacher training.Current Research International. 14 (4) 1-7. DOI: 10.9734/ACR/2018/YS858

8. Shaughnessy, M.F. & Johnson, A. (2019) Anxiety as we approach 2000. Journal of Anxiety and Depression Vol 1 (2)

9. Shaughnessy, M.F. & Johnson, A. (2019) Anxiety as we approach 2000. Journal of Anxiety and Depression Vol 1 (2)

To Submit Your Article Click Here: **Submit Manuscript**

DOI: 10.31579/2688-7517/038

Ready to submit your research? Choose Auctores and benefit from:

➢   fast, convenient online submission
➢   rigorous peer review by experienced research in your field
➢   rapid publication on acceptance
➢   authors retain copyrights
➢   unique DOI for all articles
➢   immediate, unrestricted online access

At Auctores, research is always in progress.

Learn more https://auctoresonline.org/journals/addiction-research-and-adolescent-behaviour