

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AND PERSONALITY TRAITS AMONG ADOLESCENTS *

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The article examines the relationship between adolescent social media addiction and personality traits. The research is highly relevant as social media is an integral part of modern people's daily lives. Although the Internet has numerous advantages, such as communication, information sharing, and access to educational resources, excessive use can lead to addiction. In this regard, teenagers are particularly vulnerable due to their developmental stage.

A total of 165 teenagers aged 12-17 participated in the research. Tests and psychological interview methods were applied, and mathematical-statistical analysis was performed by calculating the Pearson linear correlation coefficient.

The study found that social media addicts have higher levels of neuroticism and openness to experience than non-addicts. However, those with social media addiction had lower levels of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness than those without.

Thus, the research shows a strong correlation between social media addiction and personality traits. The research has practical significance. The results can be used for further research and the prevention of addiction to social media.

Keywords: *social media addiction, adolescence, neuroticism, openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness.*

Introduction

The internet has revolutionized the world in recent years, molding fresh perspectives and embedding new stereotypes and attitudes, especially among young people. It also impacts personal psychological traits like self-assurance, anxiety, and mood fluctuations, which subsequently influence behavior (Ghazaryan 138-139). Social media occupies an increasing amount of space in the daily lives of modern adolescents, becoming an integral part of their everyday routines. Its role is continually expanding alongside the rapid growth in the number of active users. As online interaction has surpassed face-to-face communication for many adolescents, social media has begun to significantly influence their lifestyles, communication, interests, and psychology.

Social media encompasses digital platforms and technologies enabling users to create, share, and exchange information, ideas, and content within online communities

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like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Primarily utilized for maintaining connections with family and friends, it also serves as a source of entertainment. To understand the role of social media, it can be categorized into two components. The first involves media research, focusing on aspects like social presence and media richness. The second component pertains to social processes such as self-presentation and self-disclosure. Examples of contemporary social media platforms include content communities (e.g., YouTube), social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), and virtual gaming and social communities (e.g., Reddit, World of Warcraft, etc.) (Fischer-Grote 1418-1424). Seeking affirmation is a fundamental human trait, and social media provides a reward system through likes, comments, shares, and followers that satisfies this need for validation and affirmation (Kaplan 59-68).

Adolescence is considered the intermediate stage between childhood and adulthood. It is the time when a young person must learn to become an adult. This is why society sets developmental tasks before them. It's often said that it's hard for a teenager to find their place in the world because they are already too grown-up for their previous interests but still too young for adult activities. At the same time, they face the crisis of adolescence — a time when relationships with close people are rebuilt, values are reassessed, self-perception changes, and ideas about the future are formed.

Anna Freud noted that adolescents are excessively egoistic, regarding themselves as the center of the universe and the sole object of interest, and yet at no time in later life are they capable of so much self-sacrifice and devotion. They form the most passionate love relationships, only to break them off as abruptly as they began them (Freud 137).

Thus, adolescents, in particular, are susceptible to developing social media addiction due to their developmental stage, where peer influence and identity formation play crucial roles. Consequently, there is a growing interest in understanding the link between social media addiction and personality traits.

This research addresses the contemporary issue of social media addiction in the digital age, providing insights into how these platforms influence adolescent psychology and behavior. By exploring the relationship between personality traits and social media use, we aim to contribute to the development of strategies and interventions that can help mitigate the negative impacts of social media on young people.

Methods and Results

The research was carried out in three stages. In the first stage, we employed Dr. Kimberly Young's Internet Addiction Test to evaluate the levels of internet addiction among adolescents (Young 237–244). Next, psychological interviews were conducted to explore why teenagers specifically use the internet and what aspects of it attract them, potentially contributing to the formation of psychological addiction. In the second stage, we utilized the Big Five Personality Test (NEO-FFI) by McCrae and Costa. This test assesses personality traits based on five fundamental dimensions: openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (McCrae, Costa 587). In the third stage of the research, mathematical-statistical analysis was conducted using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) to measure the linear correlation between social media addiction and personality traits (Edwards 33-46).

A total of 165 teenagers, aged 12-17, participated in the research: 90 girls and 75 boys. In the first stage of the research, using Yang's Internet Addiction Test, we found that 65% of the 165 individuals ($n=107$) have internet addiction, while 35% ($n=58$) do not. The following trend was observed: among 12-year-old girls, severe internet addiction was not prevalent. However, addiction levels increased with age. By age 14, approximately 7% exhibited severe addiction, and this trend persisted among subsequent age groups—15, 16, and 17—showing a steady rise in severe dependency. A similar trend was noted

among boys. The significant levels of internet addiction observed among 16- and 17-year-olds are particularly concerning. Specifically, among 16-year-old boys, 29% reported mild addiction, 45% moderate addiction, and 17% severe addiction. For 17-year-olds, the percentages were 30% mild, 46% moderate, and 13% severe.

Based on the psychological interview, it was discovered that teenagers are active users of social networks. All participants are registered on various social platforms, often on multiple ones simultaneously. Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are the most popular among teenagers.

After completing the first stage of our research, we identified two groups: 1) those who have social media addiction—107 teenagers (58 girls and 49 boys), and 2) those without social media addiction—58 teenagers (32 girls and 26 boys).

The Big Five Personality Test (NEO-FFI) by McCrae and Costa was used in the second stage of the research.

The analysis of the Big Five test results for girls with social media addiction highlights key trends in personality traits over time. Starting at 13% at age 12, the percentage of girls exhibiting high neuroticism increases progressively, reaching 21% by age 17. This steady rise in neuroticism indicates that as girls with social media addiction age, they experience greater emotional instability and anxiety. Extraversion shows a gradual decline from 28% at age 12 to 20% at age 17. This decrease in extraversion implies that girls with social media addiction become less sociable and enthusiastic about face-to-face interactions over time. Openness to Experience grows from 37% to 47%, reflecting increased curiosity and engagement with online content. Agreeableness decreases significantly from 22% to 14%, pointing to diminished empathy and cooperativeness. Conscientiousness also falls sharply from 35% to 15%, indicating struggles with self-discipline and organization. Overall, the analysis reveals that as girls with social media addiction age, they exhibit increasing neuroticism, decreasing extraversion, and growing openness to experience, alongside a decline in agreeableness and conscientiousness (Figure 1).

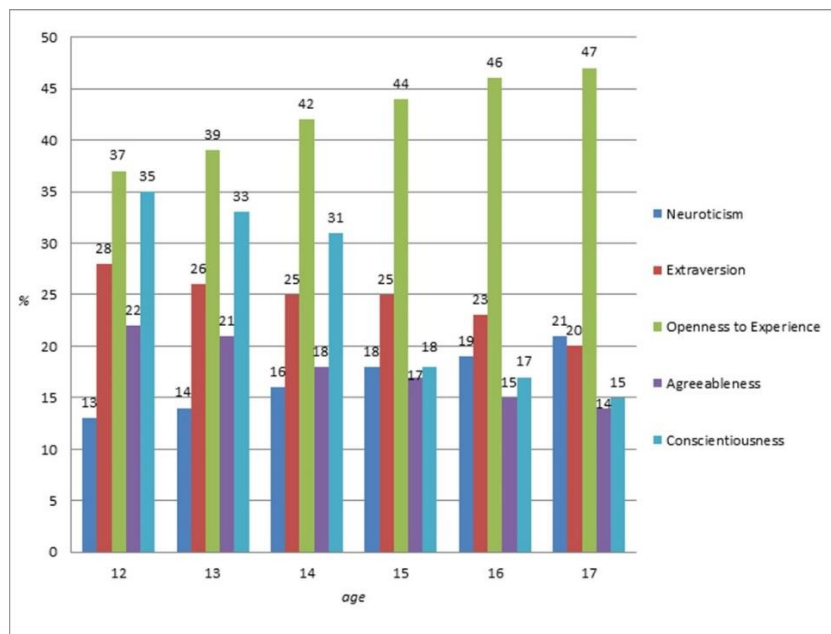


Figure 1. Big Five (NEO-FFI) test results for girls with social media addiction

For girls without social media addiction, the Big Five test results show notable trends. Neuroticism starts at 6% at age 12 and increases gradually to 17% by age 17. Extraversion, initially at 34%, rises steadily to 43%, reflecting growing sociability and enthusiasm. Openness to Experience starts at 22% and rises to 34%, indicating a moderate increase in curiosity and exploration. Agreeableness increases significantly from 33% to 45%, showing enhanced empathy and cooperation. Conscientiousness remains high, starting at 34% and reaching 43%, reflecting stable self-discipline and organizational skills. These results indicate a positive development in personality traits, with significant increases in extraversion and agreeableness, while neuroticism remains low and stable (Figure 2).

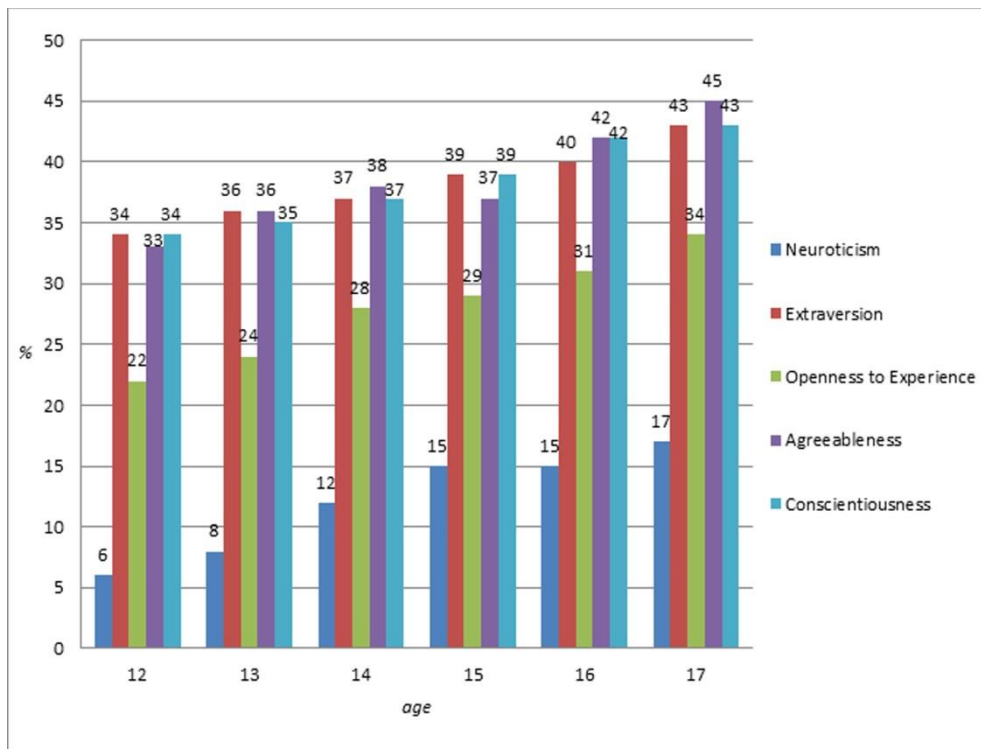


Figure 2. Big Five (NEO-FFI) test results for girls without social media addiction

Comparing the Big Five test results for girls with and without social media addiction highlights clear psychological differences. Girls with social media addiction show a marked rise in neuroticism, indicating increasing emotional instability, while those without addiction experience a more gradual, stable increase. Extraversion declines for girls with addiction, suggesting a shift from face-to-face interactions to online communication, whereas non-addicted girls maintain or increase their sociability. Openness to Experience is notably higher among girls with addiction, reflecting their engagement with diverse online content, while it remains stable in the non-addicted group, indicating a balanced approach to new experiences. Agreeableness decreases for girls with addiction, pointing to potential struggles with real-world relationships, whereas it increases for non-addicted girls, highlighting their growing interpersonal skills. Finally, conscientiousness drops among girls with social media addiction, likely due to the distraction and time demands of social media, whereas it remains stable for those without addiction, indicating more effective management of their responsibilities.

Boys in the social media addiction group, similar to girls in the same group, demonstrate high Openness to Experience, which steadily increases until the age of 17, reaching 34%. However, neuroticism increases steadily from 15% at age 12 to 23% by age 17, indicating growing emotional instability and anxiety as these boys age. Extraversion declines consistently, dropping from 18% at age 12 to 14% at age 17, suggesting a shift from active social engagement to a preference for online interactions. Agreeableness decreases from 20% at age 12 to 15% at age 17, indicating reduced empathy and difficulties in maintaining real-world relationships. Conscientiousness also declines significantly, falling from 28% at age 12 to 13% at age 17, showing a reduction in self-discipline and organizational skills, likely disrupted by the demands of social media (Figure 3).

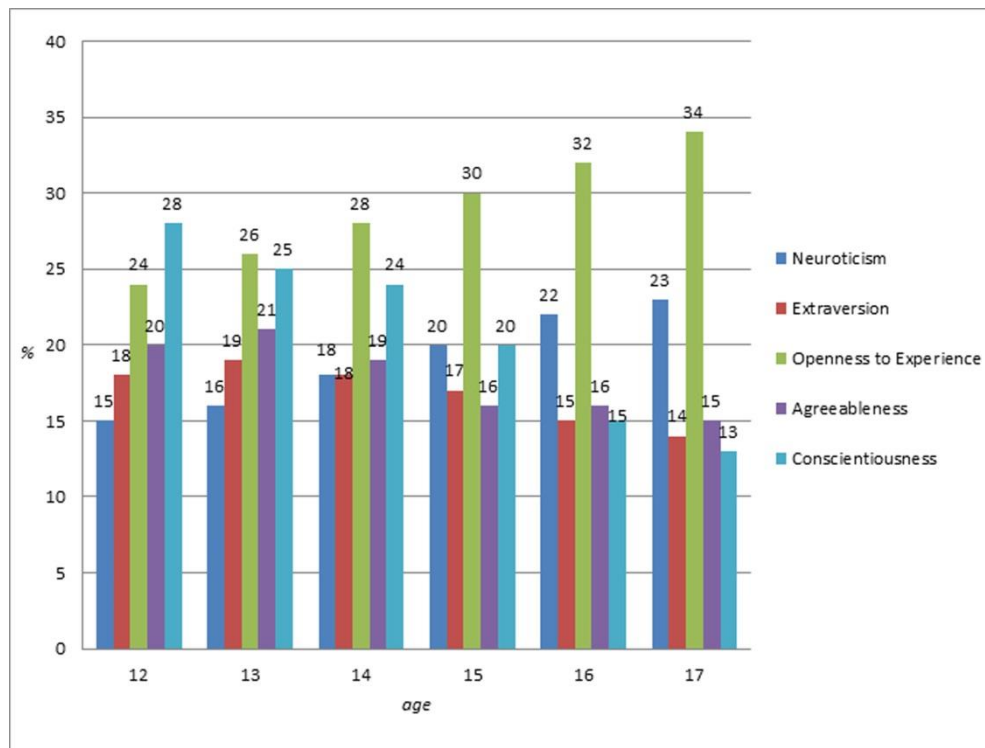


Figure 3. Big Five (NEO-FFI) test results for boys with social media addiction

Figure 4 illustrates the results of the Big Five (NEO-FFI) test for boys in the group without social media addiction. Neuroticism increases from 8% at age 12 to 18% by age 17, indicating growing emotional instability. Extraversion rises significantly from 20% to 32%, suggesting a greater engagement in social interactions. Openness to Experience grows modestly from 21% to 27%, reflecting a slight increase in curiosity. Agreeableness improves from 25% to 35%, showing enhanced empathy. Conscientiousness also rises from 28% to 33%, indicating better self-discipline. Overall, while emotional instability increases, other traits like extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness also show positive development (Figure 4).

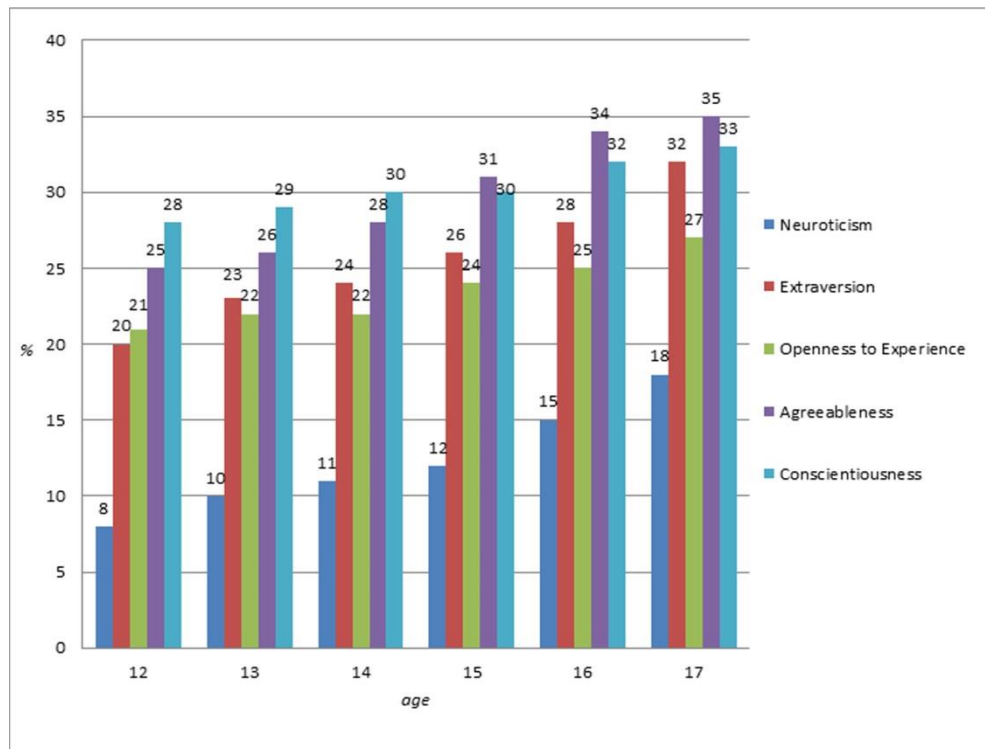


Figure 4. Big Five (NEO-FFI) test results for boys without social media addiction

Comparing the Big Five personality traits between boys with and without social media addiction (Figure 3, Figure 4) reveals several key psychological differences. Boys with social media addiction show rising neuroticism, signaling increasing emotional instability, and decreasing extraversion, suggesting less engagement in face-to-face social interactions. Their openness to experience rises, suggesting deeper engagement with online content, while agreeableness and conscientiousness decrease, pointing to lower empathy and responsibility. In contrast, boys without social media addiction show stable or gradual increases in neuroticism and extraversion, reflecting steady emotional development and active social engagement. Their openness to experience remains stable, and they demonstrate growing agreeableness and conscientiousness, indicating improved social skills and responsibility.

Personality traits	Girls (r)	Boys (r)
Neuroticism	0.98	0.96
Extraversion	-0.94	-0.83
Openness to Experience	0.98	0.96
Agreeableness	-0.97	-0.92
Conscientiousness	-0.96	-0.91

Table 1: Correlation between social media addiction and 5 main personality traits

The mathematical-statistical analysis utilized the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) to examine the linear relationship between social media addiction and personality traits. The results reveal a strong positive correlation between social media addiction and

neuroticism ($r > 0.8$), meaning higher addiction is linked to increased emotional instability. Similarly, social media addiction strongly correlates with Openness to Experience ($r > 0.8$), suggesting it enhances curiosity and engagement with novel content. Conversely, social media addiction negatively correlates with extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. As addiction increases, individuals become less socially active, struggle with maintaining positive relationships, and face difficulties in managing responsibilities due to the demands of social media (table 1).

Discussion

This study provides significant insights into the relationship between adolescent social media addiction and personality traits, emphasizing the importance of understanding this connection due to the pervasive nature of social media in the lives of young people. Given the rapid rise in social media usage and its profound impact on daily life, particularly among teenagers, this research is both timely and relevant.

The findings of this study were largely consistent with previous research. Understanding why some people are addicted to social media while others are not can shed light on the role of personality and usage patterns. This study offers valuable insights into how personality traits and individual differences affect social media addiction (Maylaf 269; Piko 367; Amichai-Hamburger 1289). Our findings reveal that adolescents who are addicted to social media exhibit higher levels of neuroticism and openness to experience compared to their non-addicted peers. Conversely, those with social media addiction display lower levels of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. This indicates a reduced engagement in face-to-face social interactions, and challenges with self-discipline.

In our future research, we will investigate how social media addiction develops and affects personality over time. We will also evaluate the effectiveness of various interventions to create effective prevention strategies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study delves into the connection between social media addiction and personality traits among adolescents, examining how traits such as neuroticism, openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness impact susceptibility to social media addiction. The research has highlighted several critical points:

- A strong positive correlation exists between social media addiction and neuroticism, suggesting that individuals prone to anxiety and emotional instability may use social media as a coping mechanism.
- There is a significant association between social media addiction and openness to experience, indicating that adolescents with a curiosity for new experiences may be particularly drawn to the interactive features of social platforms.
- Conversely, social media addiction shows negative correlations with extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. This suggests that adolescents characterized by sociability, empathy, and self-discipline tend to exhibit lower levels of addiction.
- Overall, the findings underscore how specific personality traits influence susceptibility to social media addiction among adolescents. Neuroticism and openness to experience may heighten vulnerability, whereas extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness may act as protective factors.

The study's originality lies in its detailed, age- and gender-sensitive exploration of social media addiction, offering new insights into how personality traits influence this modern phenomenon among adolescents. Before this study, there was a notable gap in

research specifically addressing the relationship between personality traits and social media addiction within this age group. By focusing exclusively on adolescents, this research fills that gap, offering fresh perspectives and empirical evidence that were previously missing. Its findings not only enhance our understanding of adolescent psychology in the context of social media but also lay a foundation for future studies to build upon.

These insights provide valuable guidance for educators, parents, and mental health professionals in developing targeted interventions to promote healthy online behaviors tailored to individual personality traits associated with addiction risks.

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ՍՈՑԻԱԼԱԿԱՆ ՑԱՆՑԵՐԻՑ ԿԱԽՎԱԾՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՎ ԱՆՁՆԱՅԻՆ ԳԾԵՐԻ ՓՈԽՅԱՐԱՔԵՐԱԿՑՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԴԵՌԱՅԱՍՆԵՐԻ ՇՐՋԱՆՈՒՄ

ԱՐՄԻՆԵ ԻՍԿԱՋՅԱՆ

*Խ. Աբովյանի անվան հայկական պետական մանկավարժական համալսարանի կիրառական հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ,
Երևանի Հայբուսակ համալսարանի բժշկական հոգեբանության դասախոս,
ք. Երևան, Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն*

Հոդվածն ուսումնասիրում է դեռահասների՝ սոցիալական ցանցերից կախվածության և անձային գծերի փոխհարաբերակցությունը: Հետազոտությունը խիստ արդիական է, քանի որ սոցիալական ցանցերը ժամանակակից մարդու առօրյա կյանքի անբաժան մասն են: Թեև համացանցն ունի մի շարք առավելություններ, ինչպիսիք են՝ հեռահաղորդակցությունը, տեղեկատվության ստացումն ու տարածումը, կրթական ռեսուրսներին հասանելիությունը, սակայն համացանցի՝ չափից շատ կիրառումը կարող է հանգեցնել կախվածության ձևավորման: Այս առումով հատկապես խոցելի են դեռահասները՝ պայմանավորված տարիքային առանձնահատկություններով:

Հետազոտությանը մասնակցել են 12-17 տարեկան 165 դեռահասներ: Կիրառվել է թեստերի, հոգեբանական գրույցի մեթոդները, կատարվել է մաթեմատիկական-վիճակագրական վերլուծություն Պիրոսոնի գծային համահարաբերակցության գործարկի հաշվարկման միջոցով:

Հետազոտության արդյունքում պարզվեց, որ սոցիալական ցանցերից կախվածություն ունեցողները, ի տարբերություն կախվածություն չունեցողների, ունեն ավելի բարձր ներուժիզմ և լայնախոսություն: Սակայն սոցիալական ցանցերից կախվածություն ունեցողներն ունեն էքստրավերտության, բարյացակամության և բարեխղճության ավելի ցածր մակարդակ, քան չունեցողները:

Այսպիսով՝ հետազոտությունը ցույց է տալիս, որ առկա է խիստ փոխհարաբերակցություն սոցիալական ցանցերից կախվածության և անձնային գծերի միջև:

Հետազոտությունն ունի կիրառական նշանակություն: Ուսումնասիրության արդյունքները կարող են օգտագործվել սոցիալական ցանցերից կախվածության հետագա ուսումնասիրությունների և կանխարգելման նպատակով:

Հիմնաբառեր՝ սոցիալական ցանցերից կախվածություն, դեռահասություն, ներուժիզմ, էքստրավերտություն, լայնախոսություն, բարյացակամություն, բարեխղճություն:

ВЗАИМОСВЯЗЬ ЗАВИСИМОСТИ ОТ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ СЕТЕЙ И ХАРАКТЕРИСТИК ЛИЧНОСТИ У ПОДРОСТКОВ

АРМИНЕ ИСКАДЖЯН

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Статья исследует взаимосвязь между зависимостью подростков от социальных сетей и их личностными чертами. Исследование является весьма актуальным, поскольку социальные сети стали неотъемлемой частью повседневной жизни современных людей. Несмотря на многочисленные преимущества интернета, такие, как коммуникация, обмен информацией и доступ к образовательным ресурсам, их чрезмерное использование может привести к зависимости. В этом контексте подростки особенно уязвимы из-за своих возрастных особенностей.

В исследовании приняли участие 165 подростков в возрасте от 12 до 17 лет. Были применены методы тестирования и психологических интервью, а также проведен математико-статистический анализ с расчетом линейного коэффициента корреляции Пирсона.

Исследование показало, что у зависимых от социальных сетей подростков более высокие уровни невротизма и открытости к новому опыту по сравнению с не зависящими от соцсетей. Однако у тех, кто зависим от социальных сетей, уровни экстраверсии, доброжелательности и добросовестности были ниже, чем у тех, кто не имеет зависимости.

Таким образом, исследование демонстрирует сильную корреляцию между зависимостью от социальных сетей и личностными характеристиками. Исследование имеет практическую значимость, поскольку его результаты могут быть использованы для проведения дальнейших исследований и разработки профилактических мер по борьбе с зависимостью от социальных сетей.

Ключевые слова: *зависимость от социальных сетей, подростковый возраст, невротизм, открытость, экстраверсия, доброжелательность, добросовестность.*