

The Relationship Between Social Media Use and Negative Mental Health Outcomes

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Introduction

- Social networking sites (SNSs) such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, which gained prominence in the early 2000s, have become a staple among teenagers and young adults. All of these platforms incorporate self-expression, explicit positive feedback, and implicit negative feedback.
- Key contributors to SNSs' prominence are technological advancements and the increase of their availability (i.e., smartphones, tablets, laptops).

Variables

All of the variables were obtained through self-reported questionnaires or measures, which are subject to recall and other biases.

Measured SNS-related behaviors

- Frequency of technology use
- Overall SNS use
- Nighttime-specific SNS use
- Emotional investment in social media
- Excessive reassurance-seeking
- Technology-based Social Comparison and Feedback Seeking (SCFS)
- Social support

Wellbeing outcomes

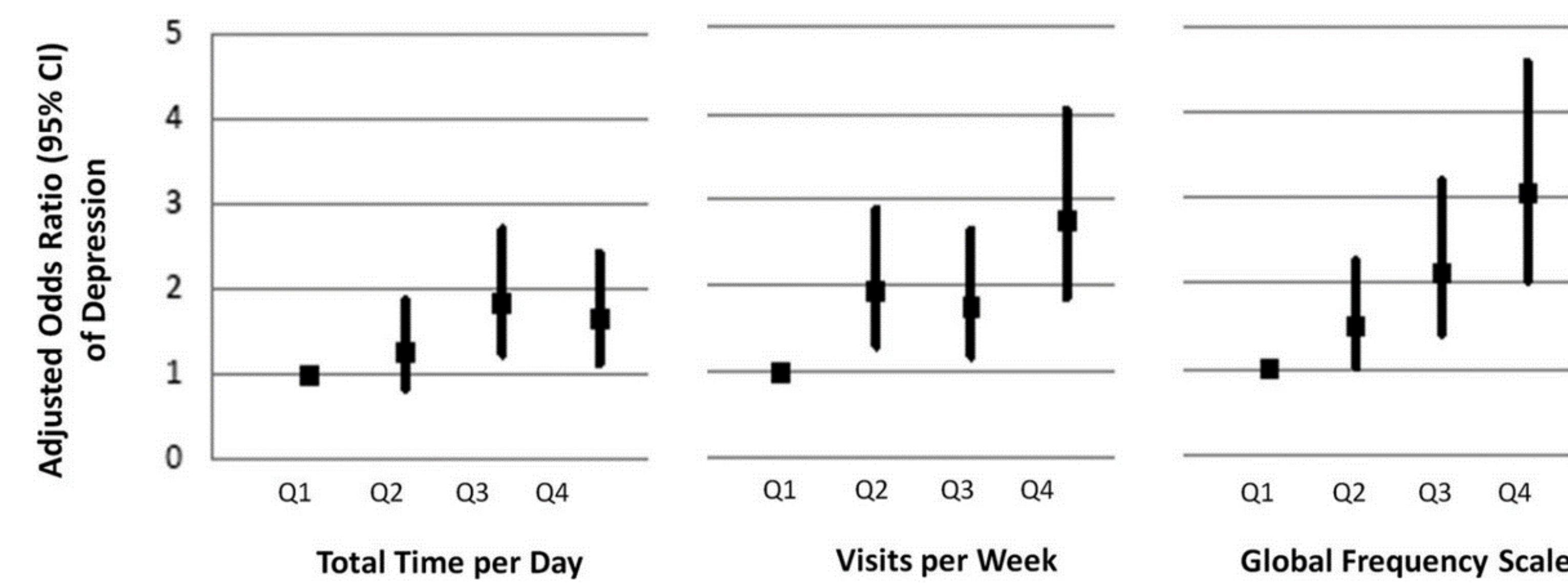
- Depression or depressive symptoms
- Anxiety
- Self-esteem
- Sleep

Moderators

- Popularity
- Gender
- Sense of self-purpose

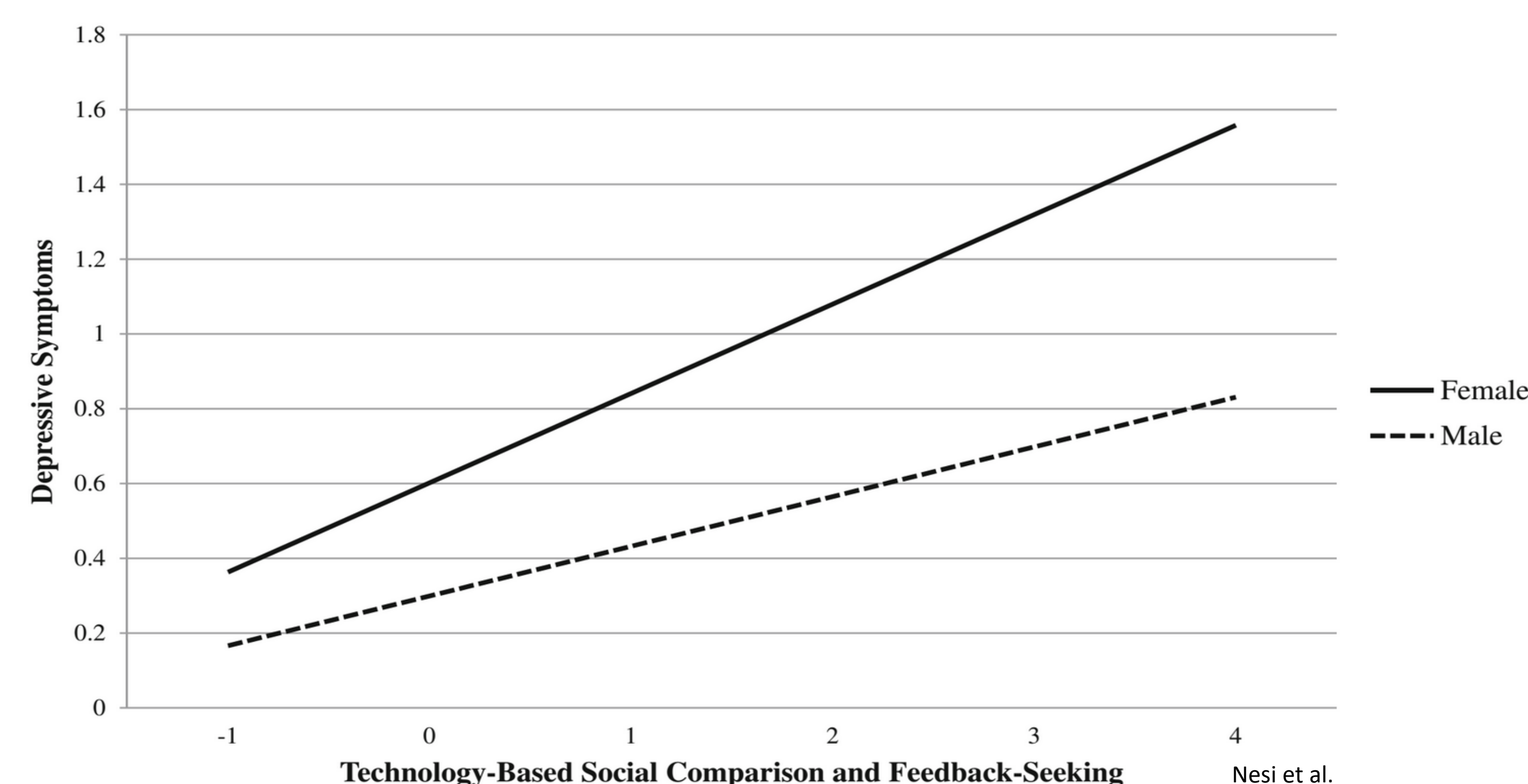
Results

- **An increase in SNS use is associated with an increase in the incidence of negative mental health outcomes.**



Multivariable associations between depression and SNS use variables. Each SNS use variable is divided into quartiles from lowest (Q1) to highest (Q4). Vertical bars represent 95% confidence interval and point estimates of adjusted odds ratio. P value for overall linear effect was .002, <.001, and <.001, respectively, for each social media use variable. The multivariable model is adjusted for age, sex, race, relationship status, living situation, household income, and education level.
Lin et al.

- The number of “likes” an individual receives is positively associated with self-esteem.
- A greater perceived social support lessens the likelihood of probable mental health issues.



- Technology-based SCFS is positively associated with depressive symptoms.

Correlations between variables

	Poor sleep quality (1)	Overall social media use (2)	Nighttime-specific social media use (3)	Emotional investment (4)	Self-esteem (5)	Anxiety (6)	Depression (7)
1		.24***	.34***	.28***	-.41***	.53***	.42***
2			.67***	.47***	-.17***	.21***	.11**
3				.46***	-.17***	.27***	.21***
4					-.24***	.32***	.24**
5						-.53***	-.54***
6							.53***

N = 467

p < .01 *p < .001

Woods et al.

- Nighttime-specific SNS use was most strongly associated with poor sleep quality.
- Nighttime-specific use and emotional investment both significantly predicted poorer sleep quality even after adjusting for anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.
- Anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem were most strongly associated with emotional investment in social media.
- Moderators such as popularity, gender, and sense of self-purpose affect the intensity of the effects of SNS use such that unpopular females with a low sense of self-purpose are much more greatly affected than other groups.

Future Work

- Since SNSs are a new phenomenon, there is a need to examine long-term effects and other effects such as addiction, bullying, and social support.
- A causative relationship can be examined and established between SNS usage and negative mental health outcomes as only a correlative relationship has been established.
- Ways to monitor negative mental health issues through the use of SNSs can be developed and implemented in the future.

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