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The impact of Facebook and smart phone usage on the leisure activities and college adjustment of students in Serbia

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the simultaneous impact of Facebook (FB) and smart phone usage (SP) on the leisure activities (LA) and college adjustment (SACQ) of students in Serbia. The moderating effects of gender on the observed relationships were also examined. An exploratory study of students in Serbia (N = 485) revealed that: 1. Students in Serbia spend a daily average of 2.76 h on Facebook, while the average total daily smart phone use is 8:34 h 2. Facebook and smart phone use has no decisive influence on the allocation of time for leisure activities and college adjustment. 3. Facebook and smart phone use still has a certain positive effect on leisure activities, but this influence can become slightly negative if Facebook and smart phones are used too much. 4. In cases of a lack of time, students are more likely to sacrifice academic work, rather than time for Facebook, smart phones, or leisure activities. 5. The moderating effects of students' gender on the observed relationships are weakly expressed. Finally, Facebook and smart phone use has become a common and integral part of life for the majority of Serbian students, and the time for these activities is integrated into their overall time.

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1. Introduction

Facebook is a social network founded on February 4th 2004 and was intended only for students at Harvard University, but in September 2006, Facebook allowed all those who wanted to join it. In October 2007, Facebook introduced the launch of the Facebook mobile platform. The number of users grows every year, and in December 2014 the total number of active users a month reached 1.39 billion users worldwide with 1.19 billion monthly mobile active users (newsroom.fb.com). According to data published in 2013 by the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications of the Republic of Serbia (<http://mtt.gov.rs>), the most popular social networks in Serbia are Facebook and Twitter, and 93.4% of the population between 16 and 24 years of age has a profile on at least one of these two social networks. The website <http://marketinguj.me> published data that in 2014, Serbia had about 3.5 million Facebook users, 47% of whom were women and 53% men. Most Facebook users (2.26 million) are between the ages of 18–24 and 25

to 34, which is approximately 60% of the total number of users in Serbia. The website <http://www.statista.com> presented data on the use of smart phones in Serbia in 2014: smart phones were mostly used as an alarm clock (73%), for photos (59%), news (50%), weather (44%), music (42%), and games (26%).

Considering these data, today it is reasonable to assume that excessive use of Facebook and smart phones can lead to addiction and may have a negative impact on the behavior of young people. Facebook usage and a depressive character can significantly predict Facebook addiction (Hong, Huang, Lin, & Chiu, 2014). Sanchez-Martinez and Otero (2009), found that cell phones are directly linked to the consumption of alcohol and cigarettes, as well as to failure at school and depression among high school students in Madrid. The study by Thomee, Harenstam, and Hagberg (2011) showed that high frequency of mobile phone use at baseline and stress may be risk factors that influence the occurrence of sleep disturbances and symptoms of depression among young people in a 1-year follow-up.

Facebook and smart phone use affects the leisure activities of students. Kuo and Tang (2014) gave a questionnaire containing 30 questions to Taiwanese students in order to establish the link between personality types, use of Facebook and leisure time. They concluded that highly extravert and open people socialize with

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other people both in the virtual and real worlds. They have a lot of friends on Facebook and share many photographs, and in real life they are mainly engaged in team sports. Numerous studies have shown the influence of smart phone usage on students' free time activities (Barkley & Lepp, 2013; Lepp, 2014a, 2014b; Lepp, Li, Barkley, & Salehi-Esfahani, 2015). Lepp (2014a) showed that cell phone use may have an impact on the behavior of students and their leisure activities. On a sample of 379 students from state faculties in the USA Lepp (2014b) demonstrated that „low, medium, and high-frequency cell phone“ users „understand leisure“ in the same way, while they have a different „perception of the cell phone's role in facilitating leisure“. Lepp et al. (2015) state that the use of cell phones has a significant place in the lives of students and greatly affects their „traditional“ leisure, as well as that students used cell phones much less for the purposes of education and much more for leisure. They concluded that in order to solve this problem it is necessary to pay more attention to „traditional leisure education.“

Facebook and smart phone use affects the college adjustment of students. In his paper Hew (2011) described the effects of the use of Facebook on academic performance among students. The final conclusion is that students use Facebook to a lesser degree for educational purposes, and much more for contacting their friends. There is no direct link between the use of Facebook and students' academic performance. On the other hand, Wohn and LaRose (2014) showed that some dimensions of Facebook use is in correlation with student college adjustment. The excessive use of mobile phones leads to poor results in learning (Lepp, Barkley, & Karpinski, 2014).

The motivation and usage of Facebook and mobile phones depend on many factors such as: gender, personality traits, geographic location, sociocultural context, demographic characteristics (Sheldon, 2008; Barker, 2009; Haferkamp, Eimler, Papadakis, & Kruck, 2012; Ong et al., 2011; Hew, 2011; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Lepp et al., 2015; Kuo & Tang, 2014).

The aforementioned discussion shows that there are studies which examine the connection between Facebook and students' leisure activities, the relationship between Facebook and college student adjustment, and the link between smart phones and the academic performance among students and their leisure activities. However, there seems to be a need to examine the joint impact of the independent variables Facebook and smart phones on the overall allocation of students' time (free time, and time for college adjustment). Students must invest a certain amount of time in leisure activities and college adjustment, so the question arises as to what the impact of Facebook and smart phone use on the redistribution of their time is. Therefore, in this paper, free time activities and college adjustment will be the dependent variables. The impression is that only in this way can we gain a complete picture of the impact of Facebook and smart phones on the total remaining time that students spend on leisure activities and college adjustment. In this study the effects of two moderators: gender and extraversion in the relation between the influence of Facebook and Smart phone use on students' leisure activities and college adjustment will be examined. The survey was conducted among students in Serbia.

2. Literature review

2.1. Facebook usage, smart phone usage and gender

The use of Facebook depends on many motivations such as: to maintain existing relationships, to meet new people, using Facebook is cool, fun, to make oneself popular, to pass time, to express or present oneself, and for learning purposes (Hew, 2011). The

motivation for the use of Facebook differs depending on gender. Women use Facebook for fun and to maintain existing friendships, while men want to make new friends and new relationships (Sheldon, 2008). Women have a greater positive collective self-esteem, which is positively associated with communication, and the amount of time spent and fun had on social network sites. Among men there is a negative collective self-esteem and they have a need to communicate through SNS so as to compensate for the lack of communication in their real lives (Barker, 2009). Haferkamp et al. (2012) discussed how men and women differ in their self-presentation on SNS.

An increasing number of users access social networks via smart phones (Ha, Kim, Libaque-Saenz, Chang, & Park, 2015). The most important feature of smart phones is that unlike cellular phones they allow access to the Internet (Hsiao & Chen, 2015). In our work under the term smart phone we will consider phones that have Internet access. In this way Internet applications and SNS are available to users at any time, which can easily turn into excessive use of smart phones. The use of smart phones depends on many factors (we use the original terms for phones, i.e. as they were denoted by the authors in their papers). One of the factors that influence the use of smart phones is definitely the user's gender. Sanches-Martinez and Otero (2009), did a research on cell phone use among high school students in Madrid. The results show that girls use mobile phones more than boys, as well as that high school students use mobile phones at school.

2.2. Facebook usage, smart phone usage and personality traits

It is generally accepted that there are different personality traits and research studies (Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky, 2010; Carpenter, 2012; Lee, Ahn, & Kim, 2014; Ong et al., 2011) indicate that personality traits (The Big Five personality traits, self-esteem, narcissism) can predict Facebook usage. According to The Big Five Factors Model, there are five types of personality: openness, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and neuroticism. Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, and Perugini (1993) describe extraversion as talkative, energetic and assertive.

Contradictory results can be found in studies about how personality traits can predict Facebook usage. In the first group are the studies in which there was no significant influence of personality traits on the use of Facebook. In their study Ross et al. (2009) showed that personality types do not have as great an impact on the use of Facebook as expected at the start of the study. Only some levels of personality traits were related to some aspects of the use of Facebook. Hong et al. (2014) examined the use of and dependence on Facebook under the influence of different psychological traits and concluded that extraversion was not significantly correlated with the use of Facebook. On the other hand, numerous studies indicate the existence of correlations between Facebook and personality traits. Amichai-Hamburger and Vinitzky (2010) showed that there is a high correlation between personality types and Facebook. Ong et al. (2011) presented the results of a survey which show that narcissism and extraversion have a direct impact on the rating of profile pictures and the frequency of writing status updates, while they are not related to the number of friends and photos a person may have on Facebook. In his work Seidman (2013) observed two human needs: belonging and self-presentation. He linked these with the use of Facebook and showed that different personality types use Facebook in different ways. Lee et al. (2014) examined the relationship between personality traits and self-presentation on Facebook. One of the results was that extroverts frequently change statuses, post new photos and have more friends than introverts. Also, extroverts upload photos and update statuses more often, have more friends displayed on their Walls and use

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