

SOCIAL MEDIA HABITS AND SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTIONS

In recent years, online services have become integral elements of our lifestyle that we constantly reach for throughout the day.



Information systems (IS) researchers have recognized that frequent use of information technology (IT) is often habitual and involves markedly different psychological states and behavioural consequences than those that over time occur with merely continued use.



But for some users, online services such as SNS might be more an addiction than a habit.



Habit of information technology (IT) use is the routinization of behaviour, which is a driving force of the automatic mechanism.



Users of social network sites (SNS) read and post messages to socialize with others.



The routine use of IT can eventually become habitual in that it is automatically triggered, without deliberation, whenever an intended goal needs to be achieved.



Habitually using SNS can be helpful to users because they expend little cognitive effort to activate participatory behaviours that help them meet their personal and social goals and also because this habit can be discarded when no longer useful.



Some users find that their relationship with an IT application has spiralled into addiction.



Neuroscience uses the theory of incentive-sensitization to address the process by which initially benign behaviour turns compulsive.



According to this theory, repeated exposure to highly pleasurable stimuli can hypersensitize neural systems and amplify the pleasure associated with rewarding behaviour.



Hypersensitization subsequently leads to incentive salience, wherein addicts feel compelled to pursue behaviours that are registered in memory as previously having triggered pleasure.



Incentive salience is essential to addiction because it activates the change from "liking" to "wanting".



In SNS use, repeated visits can make the neural systems of certain users increasingly sensitive to the pleasure of social participation.



But as these users immerse themselves in such interactions, they may become increasingly concerned about the possibility of being denied or derided by others.



In the end, addicted users may reach a point where they are obsessed with using their SNS despite the failure of this excessive usage to continue meeting their needs.



Two factors most often associated with addiction are 'loss of control' and 'negative consequences'.



Users must first avoid daily temptations to overuse an information service beyond what they might typically need.



It is expected that one's ability to determine one's own goals and then constantly regulate one's behaviours will largely determine whether users become habitual and addicted with long-term use.

