



Consumption of and Dependence on Multiscreen Technology and Management

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Abstract

Introduction: In the past two decades, there has been a significant uptick in the amount of focus placed on studies and publications concerning addiction to the internet and other forms of technology and management. However, most of the studies in this body of research concentrate on the links between physical, educational, and social factors, and internet addiction. **Literature Background:** Relatively few of the studies examine the link between internet addiction and emotional factors such as anxiety. Considering the growing popularity of mobile technologies and the increased use of numerous devices, there is a pressing need to get an understanding of the ways in which dependence on many screens affects emotional factors. **Methods:** For providing a foundation for a more extensive study that is currently under way, two exploratory studies were carried out. **Discussion:** This study makes use of an exploratory technique, which consists of a focus group as well as semi-structured interviews, to investigate these links and offer a deeper comprehension of the influence that multiscreen usage has on customer sentiment and dependent behavior. **Conclusion:** The findings presented here also demonstrate that people's level of abstraction is altering, as evidenced by the fact that they are focusing more on the immediate future and have fewer long-term expectations.

Keywords: *Mobile Technologies; Technology & Management; Customer Sentiment; Dependent Behavior*

Introduction

The international multiscreen user spends about seven hours per day consuming screen media, with smartphones (35%) and tablets (12%) accounting for 47% of the total time spent. In response to this development, businesses in the United States intend to boost their multi-screen campaign spending by 149% over the course of the next three years (Holiencinová *et al.*, 2018). Because of the proliferation of digital connectivity, it is now significantly more difficult to attract the attention of consumers due to the increased complexity of marketing in the context of the increasing prevalence of the use of multiple screens. Consumers, on the other hand, are influenced as a result of this "have it all, share it all, anywhere, at any time" mentality, which changes behavior and communal conventions. A consumer's sensation of continuous connectivity, which can be provided by an incorporated experience that allows movement from fixed to transportable devices and vice versa, can increase one's anxiety levels. This, in turn, can lead to dependence and possibly addiction if it happens frequently enough.

Review of Literature

The literature on the relationship between technology and addiction is broad, and it has attracted interest from a wide variety of study fields in management and technology. Despite the significance of research on devices that are primarily used for recreation and enjoyment when on the move (Kim *et al.*, 2019). On the other hand, smartphones are the "do-it-all" devices that enable customers to stay continually connected, check on their social status, and/or do work while they are on the road. However,

because people's attention is being divided between devices, this is not a dedicated consumption (Bener *et al.*, 2019). In fact, 35% of screen interactions occur simultaneously, indicating that this is not a dedicated consumption. Mobile devices are responsible for around 47% of the total daily screen time consumed by the average user across the globe. Kim (2018) reported that the top reason respondents utilized multiple screens at the same time was to socialize online (for example, to continue a conversation about a television show or sporting event that they had just witnessed). This finding is pretty similar to the findings of this particular poll (Montagud *et al.*, 2020).

Even though previous studies have shown that increased use of technology, the internet and management in certain situations is connected with decreases in the extent of one's societal circle, feelings of isolation, lower levels of self-respect and life fulfillment, a desire for sensation seeking, poor mental health, and low levels of family function, using multiple screens at once can increase socialization by making it easier to participate in online communities. (Castellacci & Tveito, 2018). However, this does have a negative consequence because consistent online interaction can lead to reliance, which in turn may lead to increased levels of anxiety and stress. According to this school of thought, the findings of this research suggest that an upsurge in multiscreen devices and concurrent usage raises anxiety levels and places constraints on the societal interactions of individuals rather than making them more socially engaged. This detachment from one's social circle is a symptom of a wide variety of addictive behaviors (Khan *et al.*, 2020; Thomas *et al.*, 2022).

According to Kirchner, Fairclough and Kirchner (2019), One definition of addiction is the addition of dependency and compulsion. The use of positive reinforcement, or the pursuit of an internally enjoyable state through the fulfillment of one's demands, is an essential component of dependency (Hadlington & Scase, 2018). Compulsion, on the other hand, resembles a paradigm of negative fortification or an endeavor to escape or prevent an unpleasant emotional state (such as anxiety, grief, guilt, shame, or fury). Compulsion is a form of avoidance behavior. Therefore, while using many screens at the same time causes reliance because it makes pleasure more accessible, it also has the potential to provide negative reinforcement since it heightens the anxiety of having to stay connected and respond to the expectations of others when one is 'always' available. According to the findings of earlier studies, anxiety can be understood as an internal condition that entails the formation of expectations with the goal of their speedy fulfillment (Hunsaker & Hargittai, 2018). In the context of consumption, anxiety is typically connected to the time of sustaining a gratification need that, despite the fact that it will have external implications (for example, a loss of social engagement), must be realized quickly or with a speedy turnaround. Not only is anxiety investigated as a variable within the addiction viewpoint, but it is also investigated as an emotion that drives consumption across many screens in this study (Rahi *et al.*, 2018; Alimoradi *et al.*, 2019).

Methodology

Exploratory Research

Method and Sample

For the purpose of providing a foundation for a more extensive study that is currently under way, two exploratory studies were carried out. A focus group that was held online, followed by a total of twelve interviews that were only semi-structured, and all of them took place in June of 2014. A convenience sample of twelve Facebook users participated in the discussion during the focus group. These individuals represented a diverse cross-section of the population in terms of the extent to which they utilized various forms of technology & management, the occupations they had, and their ages, which ranged anywhere from 25 to 60 years old. However, each and every one of them claimed to be frequent users of multiple screens, including personal computers, laptops, smartphones, and tablets. The participants' reactions to the subject matter were very animated. The conversation in the secret Facebook group took place over the course of approximately three days. The same set of people that took part in the focus group also participated in the interview process. Telephone interviews normally lasted over an hour and a half and were carried out in their entirety. After recording the interviews, a

transcription was done of them. The findings of this investigation will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Focus Group

Prior to the beginning of the focus group, a guide for the group's discussion was prepared, while the questions for the semi-structured interview were fostered after an examination of the data from the focus collection. These discussion guides included a number of discussion points as well as recommended questions. These questions ranged from more general inquiries regarding multiscreen usage (such as "How many devices do you use every day and what do you mainly use them for?") to more specific inquiries regarding specific situations (such as "I'd like you to think of a situation where you were not supposed to use these devices due to tasks of your everyday routine. How worried are you when you don't know what's going on in the world of social media? In light of the circumstances, to what extent are you able to focus on the task at hand? Have you encountered any challenges as a result of the utilization of these tools? If that is the case, are you able to elaborate on what transpired?"), and dependency usage (for example, "When you think about the constant use of numerous screens, do you believe that the degree of involvement you have with various devices can become an addiction? If this were the case, what kinds of things would be going on that would point to its occurrence? The debate was allowed to progress beyond the particular subject matter that was brought up in the focusing question, which enabled fresh ideas and topics to come to light.

Results

The results of their research, which focused on analyzing two major categories of debate, are presented in the following section. In the first part of this article, they will talk about how customers feel about the context and delivery of the device's connection. After that, they investigate the anxiety that is caused by the use of many devices at the same time and how this affects social behavior and individual routines.

The attitudes of consumers regarding their routines that are related to any of the four devices are very important and are seen as an extension of their own bodies.

"I have to have access to my mobile device at all times. For me to feel alive, I need to share my experiences with the people in my network, and I can't do that until I'm connected. When I leave my phone at home, I get the strangest sensation, like if a part of my body is missing" (subject 8).

This remark offers a perception of how the dynamic of the association necessitates an expansion from the usage of virtual existence, which has an impact on how consumer feelings have been built up recently. There appears to be a relationship between the desire to feel connected to others, the physiological requirement to feel attached to the device, and the sense of success that comes from accomplishing something. Additionally, people felt the need to relate not only to the equipment itself but also to the potential advantages that using it could bring to them personally. The anticipation of receiving, sharing, or interacting with content on the internet or through social media can produce a significant level of apprehension, as shown by the following statements:

"The usage of several devices, most notably mobile, makes me very nervous to check any reply on everything that I post on Facebook and from content that I create on other social platforms. This anxiety stems from the fact that I can check these responses very quickly" (subject 3)

"I simply can't hold out any longer. I want immediate responses, and if something does not pique my attention or causes me boredom in the here and now, I look for ways to distract or entertain myself using other gadgets, even if it is only for a few minutes at a time" (subject 11).

"I simply cannot go more than an hour without checking in on what is going on in the world or with my pals. I just can't do it. I try to remain online whenever I can, and the only time I log off is when I am too exhausted to continue or when I absolutely have to attend to something else" (subject 2).

"When none of this was present, I was able to take far greater pleasure in the things that were going on around me. I was able to embrace this interconnected world because I am resilient. Today, I see that there is no benefit to being connected, and it is difficult to suppress the want to check on my status at

all hours of the day and night. My attention is easily diverted, and the real world seems to hold less fascination for me than what's happening on the screen" (subject 5).

Some people were able to figure out on their own that they are more likely to have connections to people who are physically distant from them than to those who are physically close to them.

Discussion

The current life values do not compare favorably to the potential ones that could be attained through the sharing of one's life with several individuals. These individuals have demonstrated that they are much less engaged in what they consider to be the 'real' world, despite the fact that they appear worried about the fact that they are not taking full advantage of the environment in which they find themselves. Their worries aren't nearly as compelling or alluring as the messages, alerts, and events brought to them by their digital occurrences (Hadlington & Scase, 2018). They appear to have lost their usual attention to what is happening 'outside' of the screens as a result of being constantly diverted. In conclusion, participants revealed that, despite their lack of attention to the external environment, they were more worried about meeting their own needs and pursuing their own interests. This made it more difficult to attract their attention, even with items that were important to them and would initially be interesting to them. If people are paying attention, then it needs to pique their interest at first glance in order for it to be worthwhile to keep them holding on. Even yet, it won't be enough to keep them there for very long because they are already looking forward to the next big thing (Montagud *et al.*, 2020).

The use of many screens at once is a recent development in consumer behavior that has piqued the curiosity of numerous marketing professionals and academics. In this pilot study, their goal was to investigate the connections between using multiple screens at once, being dependent on technology and management, and experiencing anxiety (Thomas *et al.*, 2022). They were able to define several significant issues that affect users of many devices by carrying out an experimental survey that incorporated both an online focus group and semi-structured interviews. It is not difficult to see that being digitally connected is a one-way street. There is no way out after you have entered the building. It is extremely difficult for folks to unplug from the digital world due to the ease with which they may access many devices that keep them connected to it around the clock. Simply put, the offer is much more alluring than it should be, which makes the "real" setting appear less fascinating (Khan *et al.*, 2020).

Conclusion

The findings presented here also demonstrate that people's degree of abstraction is shifting, as seen by the fact that they are increasingly focused on the near term rather than having expectations for the long run. This, in turn, affects how people perceive and connect with slow answers to their actions, which frequently results in frustration and disappointment for the individuals involved. The connection between the use of many screens and psychological factors ought to be investigated further in subsequent studies. Additionally, another avenue for research would be to further investigate the difference between reliance and compulsion in this setting, as well as how the rise of multiscreen consumption affects these concepts.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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