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An Examination of the Association of Social Media Use with the Satisfaction with Daily Routines and Healthy Lifestyle Habits for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Melanie Austin-McCain
New York Institute of Technology, mausti04@nyit.edu

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An Examination of the Association of Social Media Use with the Satisfaction with Daily Routines and Healthy Lifestyle Habits for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Abstract

Background: Social media use has become an integral daily occupation of college and graduate students. In the United States, 90% of adults aged 18 to 29 years use social media (Pew Internet, 2015). Positive and negative data has been found which examined associations between social media use and other daily occupations (activities) that impact emotional and physical health. The purpose of this study is to examine the association of social media use with the satisfaction of daily routines and healthy lifestyle habits for undergraduate and graduate students.

Method: Undergraduate and graduate students responded to survey questions regarding their social media use, healthy lifestyle habits, and satisfaction with daily routines.

Results: Findings revealed that social media use is substantially related to certain healthy lifestyle habits, such as relaxation, leisure, and social participation activities, as well as satisfaction with daily routine. No significant association was found between other healthy habits, such as fitness and healthy eating.

Discussion: Undergraduate and graduate students are part of society's population at risk for poor health (CDC, 2016). Social media use as part of students' daily routines may not be harmful and can inform interdisciplinary practitioners and educators with essential information and strategies to promote overall health and well-being.

Keywords

college and graduate students, daily routines, healthy habits, social media

Cover Page Footnote

I would like to thank Eugene Brusilovskiy for his statistical guidance, analysis, and interpretation for this manuscript.

Credentials Display

Melanie Austin-McCain, DOT, MPA, OTR/L

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The use of social media, defined as online social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn that allow members to interact with one another by sharing information, ideas, photos, and other content, has become an integral activity embedded in the daily routines and lifestyle habits of undergraduate and graduate students. The percentage of undergraduate and graduate students who engage in social media as part of their normal daily routine has increased rapidly over the last few decades. In the United States, 90% of students aged 18 to 29 years use social media (Perrin, 2015). On average, adults aged 19 to 32 years who live in the United States use social media for 61 min each day (Levenson, Shensa, Sidani, Colditz, & Primack, 2016).

Time spent as an undergraduate or graduate student constitutes a period of transition, when one chooses and performs new life roles that are meaningful, purposeful, and satisfying (Arnett, 2000). Daily routines, which often emerge from students' busy schedules, are important for providing structure; forming healthy habits, such as healthy eating, physical activity, relaxation, self-development, leisure, and social participation; and providing meaningful and productive lives. Social media use is also an important daily occupation for students; however, research on how the use of social networking platforms, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, is associated with healthy habits and satisfaction with daily routines is limited. A brief review is provided below.

Literature Review

Time Use Among Undergraduate and Graduate Students

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2016), chronic diseases are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States. Almost one out of two adults aged 18 years and older report having at least one chronic illness (CDC, 2016). Undergraduate and graduate students are part of this population at risk for poor health. Health and well-being are key factors linked to decreased risk of disease and greater productivity.

The way that college and university students spend their time helps to determine their overall health and well-being. However, there is relatively little literature on time use for this population. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *American Time Use Survey* (2014) shows that full-time college and university students aged 15 to 49 years spent more time engaging in leisure and sport activities than they did engaging in educational activities. The study did not provide detailed data on specific activity types and the time spent engaged in them. However, variation in time use for adults aged 19 to 32 years has been greatly attributed to Internet use (Levenson et al., 2016), with a recent study from Spain demonstrating that young people use the internet more than their older counterparts (Callejo, 2013).

Social Media Use and Healthy Habits among Students

Healthy eating, fitness, and exercise.

Scant research exists on the association between social media use and healthy eating in the college-aged population. A recent study conducted by Sidani, Shensa, Hoffman, Hanmer, and Primack (2016) with 1,745 participants aged 19 to 32 years revealed a strong association between social media use and eating concerns. The findings showed that the participants in this study with high use of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, Vine, Snapchat, and Reddit, were at risk for developing eating disorders. Furthermore, an extensive search revealed few studies that look at the association between fitness and exercise and the use of specific social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, for this population. Moreno et al. (2013) conducted a study with 189 college students aged 18 to 23 years who use the Internet for various activities, such as completing academic work, browsing, chatting, downloading files, emailing, gaming, music or video streaming, or social networking. The findings revealed that college students who used the Internet for primarily engaging in social networking platforms had lower levels of vigorous physical activity.

Relaxation, leisure, and social participation. College students who use social media sites such as ICQ (I Seek You), which provides instant messaging and video chats, expressed positive experiences of escape and relaxation in addition to its socialization and

entertainment purposes (Leung, 2001).

Undergraduate and graduate students engage in social media to have social and leisure experiences. According to Leung and Lee (2005), for social media users aged 15 to 24 years who seek a high level of social interaction, there is an association between their off-line engagement in social interaction activities and their use of Internet and social media resources for leisure and social participation. Other studies conducted with participants aged 18 to 25 years (Niland, Lyons, Goodwin, & Hutton, 2015) and college students (Wang, Chen, & Chen, 2015) have also revealed that a high rate of leisure Internet use was linked to positive flow experiences and that “fun times together” was identified as a reason for using social networking sites, such as Facebook (Niland et al., 2015, p. 128).

Self-development. Minimal evidence exists on the use of social media for personal self-development. A study conducted with 218 college freshman revealed that students transitioning into college continue to use Facebook for self-development resources, such as self-presentation skills (Yang & Brown, 2016). Several other studies revealed positive outcomes for adolescents and those aged 16 to 24 years, such as improved social skills, social support, self-efficacy, and self-worth using online methods (Argyris & Xu, 2016; Lehenbauer, Kothgassner, Kryspin-Exner, & Stetina, 2013).

Social Media Use and Satisfaction with Daily Routines Among Students

After extensive review of prior evidence, no studies were found that discussed the relationship

between Internet and social media use and satisfaction with daily routines for undergraduate and graduate students. Several studies did provide data about the association between social media use and overall life satisfaction, a related construct, for undergraduate and graduate students in the United States and abroad. A study conducted with 150 international students aged 16 to 30 years who used Facebook aligned with prior research linking social media use with positive life satisfaction and happiness (Srivastava, 2015). Other studies, however, revealed that although individuals who spend more time on the Internet—and social media—appear to have greater social connections and happiness, their emotional and physical health may be adversely affected because of social comparisons, ultimately leading to negative self-concepts. In addition, for college and university students, high use appears to affect physical health, family life, academic performance, quality of life, and mental health, therefore decreasing overall life satisfaction (Shahnaz & Karim, 2014; Vigil & Wu, 2015).

An Occupational Therapy Perspective on the Importance of Daily Routines Leading to Satisfying, Meaningful, Healthy Living for Students

The history and philosophy of occupational therapy with its foundation in humanism provides the basis for understanding and addressing the needs of all individuals across the life span from a holistic, whole-person perspective. The *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process* (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2014) defines the

focus of occupational therapy as examining the transactional relationship among the person, his or her context, and his or her engagement in valuable occupations that facilitate performance and change. Social media use, an area of occupation in the social participation domain, identifies social media as social engagement via use of technology occurring in a virtual context (AOTA, 2014). To ensure the optimal health and well-being of undergraduate and graduate students, it is important to explore the specific performance patterns related to social media use that lead to healthy and non-healthy habits. Clark, Sanders, Carlson, Blanche, and Jackson (2007) convey the importance of recognizing that habits develop through many mechanisms and become the everyday occupations (activities) and routines that have contextual meaning in one's life. As every individual has unique interests, needs and goals, understanding how occupation is meaningful to the self lends to uncovering more about the science of occupation and the role of occupational therapy in understanding how these occupations affect health, well-being, and life satisfaction (Carlson, Park, Kuo, & Clark, 2014).

Several occupational therapy theories and models align with humanistic, developmental, and social theoretical concepts reinforcing the concept that performance and engagement of daily occupations and routines are motivating and lead toward greater life satisfaction. The Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) describes how occupation is motivated, patterned, and performed. MOHO emphasizes that to understand human occupation we must understand the physical and

social environments in which it takes place (Kielhofner, 2008). The Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E), a client-centered model, is grounded on the concept that daily activities (occupations) are contextually and developmentally determined and influenced (Polatajko, Townsend, & Craik, 2007).

This study, with its foundation in occupational therapy, addresses important gaps in the literature that exist in exploring undergraduate and graduate students' daily routines and lifestyle habits and how they relate to social media use. Although some research in this area exists, results continue to be inconclusive and reveal both positive and negative health and behavioral health factors. A limited number of studies have been conducted with undergraduate and graduate students in the United States that explore the association between social media use and factors such as satisfaction with daily routine and life satisfaction and healthy lifestyle habits, including relaxation, leisure, physical activity, and healthy eating. The current study, a first study to address these identified areas, will use questions instead of a hypothesis to address these gaps by answering the following questions using a sample of undergraduate and graduate students:

1. Is social media use associated with healthy living habits, such as relaxation, leisure, healthy eating, and physical activity?
2. Is social media use associated with greater satisfaction with the daily routine?

Method

Design

This study used a correlational research design involving undergraduate and graduate students in a private, non-profit institution in the United States. Distribution of the variables were categorized for this study design. A self-developed survey was created for this study to examine social media use and its association with health habits and satisfaction with daily routine.

Participants

Undergraduate and graduate students from the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT), School of Health Professions, Old Westbury, NY, campus were recruited to participate in the survey in order to examine their daily routines, lifestyle habits, perceptions of purpose in life, and daily routine goals. Inclusion criteria was undergraduate or graduate students at least 18 years of age. Exclusion criteria was any individuals unable to provide informed consent. Through the support of department chairs and faculty, the participants were recruited for the study via face-to-face informational sessions. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample. Most of the participants were women, aged 18 to 24 years, White, and single, and only a small proportion of the sample were parents. Ninety-five (57.9%) of the participants were in the graduate physician assistant program, 35 (21.3%) were in the doctor of physical therapy program, 25 (15.2%) were in the undergraduate health sciences programs, and 9 (5.5%) were student athletes on the women's volleyball team.

Table 1
Demographics

		N	%
Gender	Women	117	71.8
	Men	47	28.2
Age	18-24	94	57.7
	25-29	51	31.3
	30-39	15	9.2
	40-49	3	1.8
Marital Status	Single	140	87.0
	Married	21	13.0
Parents		5	3.0

Procedures

Data were collected in April and May of 2016. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study in person and the surveys were administered in classes prior to or after a session. The participants voluntarily completed the consent forms and surveys and received a small gift for their participation, such as a daily planner, pen or pencil, computer screen wipes, or a t-shirt. The New York Institute of Technology (NYIT) Institutional Review Board approved this study in March, 2016.

Measures

The survey questions were self-developed as part of a larger survey and used for this study. The survey questions were developed based on relevant literature and guiding documents addressed in the study, including from the CDC and AOTA. Future studies will need to examine the psychometric properties of these questions. In addition to various demographic questions (gender, age, marital, and parental status), the participants were asked to answer questions about social media use, healthy

living habits, and satisfaction with their daily routines.

Social media use. The participants were asked to select the option that best described their social media use (none, 1 to 2 days a week, 3 to 5 days a week, or 6 to 7 days a week). For the purposes of this study, a high level of social media use was defined as using social media 6 to 7 days a week.

Healthy living habits. Using the same response choices as for the social media question above, the participants were asked the extent to which they engaged in the following activities related to healthy living: fitness and exercise, healthy eating, relaxation, personal self-development, participation in leisure activities, and social participation with family and friends. In this study, high levels of participation on each of these activities were defined as doing the activity at least 3 days a week (i.e., 3 to 5 days or 6 to 7 days).

Satisfaction with daily routine. The participants were asked about their overall satisfaction with their daily routines (*satisfied*, *needs improvement*, *not satisfied*); from this variable, a dummy variable was generated (*satisfied* vs. *other*) and used for the current study. In addition, the participants were given a list of 12 adjectives or descriptive phrases and were asked to check off the ones that they felt described their daily routines. Six of the options were positive and six were negative. The six positive adjectives were: (a) meaningful, (b) exciting, (c) fulfilling, (d) productive, (e) enjoyable, and (f) relaxing. The six negative adjectives and descriptive phrases were: (a) dreary, (b) just routine, (c) boring, (d) not

enough time to do what I want, (e) stressful, and (f) exhausting.

Data Analysis

The frequencies of the study variables were examined and reported. In addition, Chi-Square tests were carried out to examine the associations between the high versus low levels of social media use and (a) healthy living habits and (b) whether the individuals were satisfied with their daily routines and the words they used to describe them. SAS 9.4 was used for the statistical analyses.

Results

Social Media Use

For the participants’ social media use, 116 (70.7%) used social media 6 to 7 days a week, and the remaining 48 (29.3%) used it less frequently: 23 (14.0%) used it 3 to 5 days a week, 22 (13.4%) used

it 1 to 2 days a week, and three (1.8%) did not use it at all.

Healthy Living Habits

Table 2 presents the tabulations of the healthy living habit variables. High levels (i.e., participation that was at least 3 days a week) of fitness and exercise were observed in just under a half of the sample, and high levels of healthy eating in about three quarters of the sample. Of the sample, 28.7% and 23.1% indicated that they performed activities related to relaxation and personal self-development at least 3 days a week, respectively. Finally, 41.1% indicated that they had high levels of participation in leisure activities and hobbies, and 63.4% stated that they had high levels of social participation (spending time with family or friends).

Table 2
Healthy Living Habits

	Low (2 Days/Week or Fewer)		High (3-7 Days/Week)	
	N	%	N	%
Fitness and Exercise	83	51.2	79	48.8
Healthy Eating	42	25.6	122	74.4
Relaxation	117	71.3	47	28.7
Self-Development	123	76.9	37	23.1
Participation in Leisure Activities	96	58.9	67	41.1
Social Participation (Family/Friends)	60	36.6	104	63.4

Satisfaction with Daily Routine

The responses relating to satisfaction with daily routine revealed that 59 (36.2%) of the participants stated that they were satisfied with the way they spend their days, whereas 104 (63.8%) selected other response options: specifically, 92 (56.4%) indicated that it needs improvement, and

12 (7.4%) stated that they were not satisfied. When asked to select positive adjectives to describe their daily routine, 90 (55.2%) selected productive, 63 (38.7%) selected meaningful, 48 (29.5%) selected enjoyable, 43 (26.4%) selected fulfilling, 25 (15.3%) selected exciting, and 17 (10.4%) selected relaxing. When asked to select negative adjectives

and descriptive phrases, 94 (57.7%) selected stressful, 82 (50.3%) selected not enough time to do what I want, 65 (39.9%) selected exhausting, 56 (34.4%) selected just routine, 13 (8.0%) selected dreary, and 12 (7.4%) selected boring.

Relationship Between Social Media Use, Healthy Living Habits, and Daily Routine

Table 3 shows the associations between social media use, healthy living habits, and satisfaction with daily routine. Individuals who use social media at least 6 days a week reported having

significantly higher rates of relaxation, leisure/hobby activities, and social participation. More individuals with greater social media use reported being satisfied with their daily routines. In addition, a higher percentage of those who use social media at least 6 days a week described their routines as productive, enjoyable, and fulfilling, and a lower percentage described them as dreary. Social media use was not significantly associated with the participants' academic program or any of the demographic variables, including age.

Table 3

Associations between Social Media Use and Healthy Living Habits and Daily Routine

	Social Media Use				χ^2 (df = 1)	P-Value
	Fewer than 6 Days/Week (N = 48)		6-7 Days/Week (N = 116)			
	N	%	N	%		
Healthy Living Habits (3+ Days)						
Fitness and Exercise	19	40.43	60	52.17	1.84	0.17
Healthy Eating	32	66.67	90	77.59	2.12	0.14
Relaxation	5	10.42	42	36.21	11.05	<.001
Self-Development	11	23.4	26	23.01	0.00	0.96
Leisure Activities	10	20.83	57	49.57	11.55	<.001
Social Participation with Family/Friends	17	35.42	87	75	22.93	<.0001
Satisfied with Daily Routine	12	25	47	40.87	3.69	0.05
Descriptions of Daily Routine						
Positive						
Productive	17	35.42	73	63.48	10.78	0.00
Meaningful	16	33.33	47	40.87	0.81	0.37
Enjoyable	5	10.42	43	37.39	11.86	0.00
Fulfilling	5	10.42	38	33.04	8.93	0.00
Exciting	8	16.67	17	14.78	0.09	0.76
Relaxing	4	8.33	13	11.3	0.32	0.57
Negative						
Stressful	29	60.42	65	56.52	0.21	0.65
Not enough time	23	47.92	59	51.3	0.16	0.69
Exhausting	22	45.83	43	37.39	1.01	0.32
Just routine	17	35.42	39	33.91	0.03	0.85
Dreary	7	14.58	6	5.22	4.05	0.04
Boring	6	12.5	6	5.22	2.63	0.10

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the association between social media use and undergraduate and graduate students' daily lifestyle habits and satisfaction with their daily routines.

This study is based on theoretical concepts that recognize the relationship between daily routines, life satisfaction, and emotional and physical well-being for undergraduate and graduate students. The findings of this study align with prior research that provides important data on both positive and negative associations. The results revealed that a large percentage of undergraduate and graduate students engage in social media use. This finding is consistent with other data indicating that 90% of students aged 18 to 29 years use social media (Perrin, 2015). In addition, the findings of this study indicate that undergraduate and graduate students use social media almost every day of the week. This finding concurs with the results from Callejo (2013), which demonstrate that for young adults aged 16 to 24 years, age and education may impact social media use.

The results of this study revealed that social media use as part of the daily routine of undergraduate and graduate students is substantially related to relaxation, leisure, and social participation activities, as well as to satisfaction with daily routine. Findings reveal that 28.7% of the students surveyed performed a high level of relaxation activities, 41.1% indicated high levels of participation in leisure activities, and 63.4% had high levels of social participation. Relaxation, leisure, and social participation, as part of one's daily routine, are as important as academic

coursework, self-care, and sleep activities for emotional and physical health. Occupations (activities) that are relaxing are also restorative in nature. Leisure activities are self-motivated and enjoyable. Healthy social interaction provides undergraduate and graduate students with opportunities to engage with their friends, peers, family, and community. The notion that college students are intrinsically motivated to engage in their choice of relaxation, leisure, and social participation activities suggests that they may seek balance in their daily routine for overall well-being. Undergraduate and graduate students spend a vast amount of time working on their academic and professional career goals as part of their daily routine. The positive associations found between relaxation, leisure, and social participation with social media use may be because social media use is less pressuring and demanding on the mind and body than structured time required for academic course work, and may constitute a relaxing, leisurely, and social activity (Lehenbauer et al., 2013; Leung, 2001). However, frequent and heavy social media use may indicate that undergraduate and graduate students may be using social media in their free time in place of off-line leisurely and social activities, such as hobbies, sports, or face-to-face interactions with friends and family. It may also be that social media is used as a calming activity and in place of healthier restorative relaxation activities, such as breathing, mindfulness, and quiet me-time. These reflections indicate that greater exploration, insight, awareness, and evaluation may be warranted for prevention and the long-term health of undergraduate and graduate

students. It is extremely important to examine further the specific uses of social media, as some uses may promote health, whereas others have been shown to lead to emotional problems, such as low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression (Panek, 2014).

The current study found that social media use was not significantly associated with some other healthy habits, such as fitness and healthy eating.

The results indicated that nearly half of the students surveyed reported that they engage in physical activity most days of the week, and three quarters (74%) of the students reported healthy eating habits most days of the week. Social media use is generally a sedentary activity commonly not associated with fitness and healthy eating.

Spending a large amount of time on social media may decrease the time available for health habits, such as fitness and healthy eating. Prior studies revealed that although adults aged 18 to 25 years find the Internet to be an effective tool for obtaining health information, social media use leading to poor health habits can result in emotional and physical health problems (Vaterlaus, Patten, Roche, & Young, 2015). The benefits and adverse effects of social media use may effectively balance each other out.

There was also no substantial correlation between social media use and personal self-development activities. The findings of this study revealed that approximately one quarter of the students surveyed engage in personal self-development activities most days of the week. The performance of activities geared toward improving aspects of the self are essential for a healthy degree of the inner self-reflection needed to progress in the

academic and professional world and in life. It may be that as social media use acts as a tool primarily for social engagement, undergraduate and graduate students may be unaware of the importance of devoting time to exploring their personal and professional areas for growth. Engaging in self-development activities has been shown to be beneficial for increasing self-esteem (Yang & Brown, 2016). In addition, Argyris and Xu (2016) point out that social media can be used as a tool for improving the self-efficacy of college students. Overall, self-development is essential not only for career success, but for healthy and meaningful success in life for undergraduate and graduate students.

The way a person chooses and performs daily occupations (activities) determines how fulfilling and satisfying his or her daily routines are and ultimately contributes to his or her emotional and physical health. This study revealed significant associations between feelings of satisfaction with daily routine and social media use for undergraduate and graduate students. The findings demonstrate that 36.2% of the students stated that they were satisfied with the way they spend their days. Positive descriptions of daily routines significantly associated with greater social media use were “productive”, “enjoyable”, and “fulfilling”. It is likely that experiencing productivity, enjoyment, and fulfillment aids in feelings of satisfaction with daily routine, and it may be that students who spend large amounts of time each day engaging in social media have instituted social media use in the structure of their daily routines. Integrating social media use as part

of their structured daily routine may make them feel as though they are learning more, engaging more with others, or performing their daily activities in the most proficient manner. This may be because time allocated to social media use focuses their attention, fills in any gaps in time, and therefore provides a sense of productivity, enjoyment, and fulfillment of daily routines. The results of this study also revealed that the students who used social media more were less likely to describe their daily routines as “dreary.” This may be due to greater exposure to social interactions and leisurely and relaxing activities.

Significance

Gaps in the literature exist for identifying specific aspects related to the daily lifestyle habits and routines for undergraduate and graduate students and its association with social media use. Prior research focuses mainly on various interventions and outcomes of social media use for this population. This study addresses these gaps by providing important data on the types and frequency of daily lifestyle habits and routines that undergraduate and graduate students engage in and its association with social media use. This study is also significant in addressing daily lifestyle habits and satisfaction with daily routines of undergraduate and graduate students as an essential aspect of health and behavioral health not commonly addressed by health providers. Examining these areas may be beneficial for improving health and preventing chronic disease and mental health concerns for undergraduate and graduate students. Prior research revealed that having a sense of fulfillment in life appeared to

greatly protect individuals against mortality risk and chronic disease across their adult years (Hill & Turiano, 2014). This current study also contributes to a greater awareness and identification of daily occupations (activities) and routines for undergraduate and graduate students.

Limitations

Several limitations were identified in this study. One limitation is that the survey was developed for this study and therefore reliability and validity has not been determined. Another limitation is that the survey did not include questions about specific types of activities performed while engaging in social media, such as posting. This study did not identify which social media platforms undergraduate and graduate students use, their strategies for use, or how many contacts they have on social media. Also, this sample is not necessarily representative of all undergraduate and graduate students. In addition, the study did not account for the possibility that students can multi-task. For instance, students could be engaging in social media while exercising, eating, or performing other daily occupations (activities), all of which would affect the study findings. Finally, this is a correlational study, and causal relationships linking greater social media use to healthy habits and greater satisfaction with daily routines should not be assumed.

Implications for Practice

The goal of occupational therapy is to promote health, improve functional performance, and enhance quality of life through engagement in meaningful, purposeful, daily (occupations) activities. This study focused on undergraduate and

graduate students, an emerging population at risk for chronic health conditions like obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease (CDC, 2016) with the aim of identifying daily routines and healthy lifestyle habits necessary for promoting health and wellness, a domain area identified in the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process* (AOTA, 2014). Occupational therapy practitioners are in a unique position to contribute to current evidence on this timely topic, which addresses public health objectives contributing to meeting the larger society health needs. This study raises awareness for all stakeholders and seeks to merge multidisciplinary approaches of clinicians and community providers for health promotion and prevention for undergraduate and graduate students. In addition, this study can assist academic leaders in developing student-centered programs, policies, and resources for improving daily habits and routines, which foster healthy lifestyle behaviors and provide healthy, safe, and effective environments for learning about and using and engaging with social media resources.

Social media use may not be harmful and can inform occupational therapy practice in prevention and health promotion. Occupational therapy practitioners can provide evidence-based evaluations and interventions that emphasize the benefits and supports of social media use while addressing any barriers, challenges, and negative effects of social media use for undergraduate and graduate students. Specific interventions can focus on identifying personal and professional needs, interests, and goals; examining current daily

routines and gaining in-depth information regarding patterns and time use, strategies for monitoring use, setting limits, and incorporating breaks; emphasizing the importance of balance and off-line meaningful activities; teaching mindfulness techniques; and providing essential information and education on the importance and health benefits of including physical activity and healthy eating habits in daily routines. In addition, occupational therapy practitioners can assist undergraduate and graduate students with gaining greater insight and awareness of their emotional state, interpersonal skills, and areas for growth necessary for self-development and meaningful career success, all of which will serve to promote overall health, well-being, and improved quality of life.

Future Research

In view of prior research, coupled with a compilation of the findings and limitations of this study, future studies should focus on enhancing interprofessional approaches for identifying undergraduate and graduate students' daily activity choices, eliciting more detailed data on performance of daily lifestyle habits, and identifying perceptions of why undergraduate and graduate students engage or do not engage in social media use and choose to perform certain daily activities. In addition, future studies should focus more specifically on the contextual factors related to social media use. These include external and internal resources and barriers, such as emotional state, motivations, behavior patterns, and environments that may support and/or inhibit performance of daily occupations (activities) and routines, daily life satisfaction and health for undergraduate and

graduate students. A very important initiative for addressing these areas through evaluation and practice would be to develop a valid and reliable instrument to measure social media use. The extensive rate of social media use for these students points to an important call for educators and clinicians to identify strategies that are innovative and that expand to meet the current needs of today's undergraduate and graduate student population (Wong, Merchant, & Moreno, 2014).

Melanie Austin-McCain, DOT, MPA, OTR/L is an Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy at New York Institute of Technology. Melanie is passionate about meeting the diverse health needs of youth, adults, and underserved populations through interdisciplinary collaborations and student learning. Melanie enjoys serving the greater community by providing community-based workshops focused on empowerment, wellness, and life skills for youth and women. Melanie earned a Post Professional Doctorate in Occupational Therapy at Temple University, a Master of Public Administration degree at Baruch College, CUNY, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Occupational Therapy at New York Institute of Technology.

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