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**HAS SOCIAL MEDIA MADE PEOPLE MORE OR LESS CONNECTED?**

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## ABSTRACT

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Smart phones are owned by nearly half of the world population, with which the access to social media on daily basis follows. With the rapid growth of technology, the popularity of social media skyrocketed as well, with almost everyone owning a smart phones using it. Due to the rise of this communication platform, the concern of how social media affects the connectedness between people arises. For this matter, the author sought to understand how social media affects its users' connection. A sample size of 70 participants completed a quantitative survey regarding social media use, users' well-being of emotion and connection including a mixing of multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions. The survey was distributed to the students of Oulu University of Applied Sciences via email and gathered the responses for two week. The result revealed the participants had aware of how to use social media beneficially for their connection and although the increase in time of using social media comes with the decrease in quality of time spending with friends and families, social media is still believed to support users' connection.

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Keywords: social media, emotion, connection.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Globally, there are more than 3 billion people, or about 42.78% of world population, owning a smartphone (Holst, 2019), on top of more than 5 billion people, or about 66.53 percent of world population, who own mobile devices (Silver, 2019). One research in Finland has shown that seventy-seven percent of Finnish has personal smart phone for their personal purpose usage (StatisticsFinland, 2017). With the rise of the popular of mobile devices, social media use become ubiquitous (Katzman, 2016), with Facebook taking the lead having more than 2 billion users in 2019 (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019) and more than 1.5 billion daily active users calculated at the second quarter of 2019 (Clement, 2019). Another research has shown that 91 percent of smartphone owners use social media at least once every day (Silver & Huang, 2019).

As social media become prevalent in human's lives, it helps people being more connected regardless of distance, for various purposes such as job seeking, exchanging advices, free advertising and so on (Express News Service ,2015). A long research started in 1938 in social science called Harvard Study of Adult Development, headed by Robert Waldinger, summarized that one of the most important factors for people's health and happiness is social connections (Waldinger, 2016). However, being connected in today's digital era is much more complicated than before social media's time (Kjellstrom, 2013). In her 20-minute TED talk video about social media and people feeling connected, Sherry stated that the more the people seek to be connected, the more isolated they will become (Turkle, 2012). She elaborated from her talk: "We slip into thinking that always being connected is going to make us feel less alone. But we're at risk, because actually it's the opposite that's true. If we're not able to be alone, we're going to be lonelier".

The way people communicate with each other was changed drastically due to the exponential growth and changes of social media all through the past decade (Edwards, 2015). Being the most popular social media platform with one-third of the world population using it (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019), Facebook was proven to have negative impact on the user's emotion and life satisfaction with prolonged use (Kross et al., 2013). The research shows that the more the participants use Facebook at one time point, the worse they felt the next time they are contacted. According to Amie (2013), "being connected meant sharing ourselves, raw and unedited, with the people closest to us—without the need to document, retouch, upload, broadcast, or archive our relationships".

Conforming to Amie's definition, the purpose of this paper is to determine if social media make human connection more or less connected?

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This part of the thesis will review the obtained knowledge surrounding social media and connectedness. The first sub chapter explains briefly about what social media is and why are they used, while sub chapter 2.2 shows the benefits of social media. Sub chapter 2.3 is about the definition of connectedness in today digital era. Sub chapter 2.4 and 2.5 shows how social media can harm its users if not used correctly, and sub chapter 2.6 show the research question and hypothesis of the author.

### **2.1 What is social media and why people use it?**

To have a clearer insight of what social media is, the term can be broken down into two smaller parts: “Social” and “media” (Nations, 2019). According to Daniel, “social” can be referred as exchanging information, by which creating the interaction between people; and “media” can be understood as the Internet, a communication tool, from which the interaction happens (Nations, 2019). With the understanding of each individual term, “social media” was defined as web-based communication tools, through which people can share and receive information “quickly, efficiently and in real-time” (Hudson, 2019; Nations, 2019; Rouse, 2019). There are many types of social media, including websites and applications that are used for social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, microblogging, forums and wikis (Rouse, 2019). Summarized from Statista and The Next Web by Ortiz-Ospina (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019), at the end of 2018, The top five social media platform that has over a billion of users in descending order are Facebook (over 2 billion), YouTube (almost 2 billion), WhatsApp (nearly 1.5 billion) and Instagram/WeChat (around 1 billion).

To know why so many people choose to use social media, “uses and gratifications theory” (UGT) was used by Anita and David to better comprehend the rise of this tool of communication (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Using the UGT, a qualitative research was conducted by Anita and David, and their findings show ten uses and gratifications for using social media, which are social interaction, information seeking, pass time, entertainment, relaxation, communicatory utility, convenience utility, expression of opinions, information sharing, and surveillance and watching of others (Whiting & Williams, 2013). This theory originated from Elihu Katz and his partners Jay Blumler and Michael

Gurevitch in 1973 whose purpose was to find out the reasons and the ways people seek out certain media to satisfy their needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974).

## **2.2 What are the benefits of social media?**

With more and more people using social media on a daily basis, there is no doubt social media bring various benefits ranging through aspects of life. In term of human connection, students for specifics, teenagers can instantly connect with their family, friends and even strangers further beyond face-to-face distance, and share with them their lives through photos, video clips or even text status posts(Anderson & Jiang, 2018). These kinds of connections can bring various benefits, from asking and sharing advice, seeking new job to locating assistance, making free advertisement and so on(Express News Service, 2015).

Daegen (Asfaha, 2018) also mentioned this in her article, with two in five advantages that social media brings. According to her, social media help us make new friends, finding job and other opportunities much easier, especially for the ones who have trouble interacting face-to-face with people. Another benefit of social media from her article is that it helps people with connecting with friends and family that they lost contact with and share their memories together no matter how far they are apart.

## **2.3 What it means to be connected in digital era?**

This question was answered by Amie, that connectedness in this ever-growing era of digital technology means sharing oneself with the closest to them in the most raw and unedited way, without the needs of uploading, broadcasting, retouching or archiving their relationships (Kjellstrom, 2013). Michelle Obama once said in her interview with Stephen Colbert (Wharton, 2019), “We have to get off the phone and knock on doors and talk to each other face to face. We can’t rely on the internet to tell us about the world”. Despite the promise of worldwide connection for its users(Express News Service, 2015), social media had the former First Lady worried about the connectedness between people when the number of its users are becoming greater every year(Wharton, 2019).



Michelle Obama's concern about the effect of social media on people's connection is reasonable. In Jessica's article about how the young are being more careful when using social media (Matlin, 2017), she mentioned that many celebrities are "unplugging" to be able to focus more on their work and relationships, including Justin Bieber, Kim Kardashian West, Selena Gomez, Kendall Jenner and Miley Cyrus. Most of the time, while a group of friends is hanging out together, almost, if not all, of them are caught up in their smartphones checking for new posts or tweets instead of interacting with each other (Hallab, 2016). Social media was meant to aid interpersonal communication as its very definition, but people are making space for this so-called "tools of communication" by sacrificing the interpersonal communication itself (Beniwal, 2018).

## **2.4 Fear of missing out (FOMO) and Anxiety**

Fear of missing out (FOMO) was added to the dictionary, along with about 1400 other words (Duca, 2016). According to the Oxford dictionary, the words FOMO describe the feeling of worry that there are interesting events happening somewhere else, but not including them. What usually happens with people with this fear is that they have the urge of constantly staying connected with what other people are doing on social media (Edmonds, n.d.). According to a study from Nottingham Trent University about social media addiction (Pontes, 2018), Dr Halley Pontes said that when individuals experience FOMO, they start to have addicted behavior toward social media. This fear usually happens when the person go through posts, pictures and tweets in social media platforms and see other people having fun in fancy places or traveling somewhere interesting, and feel they cannot have or compare all the positive things of others (Handel, 2018). From Steven's (2018) and Rhys's (n.d.) articles, individuals, using social media and experiencing FOMO because of it, usually suffer from anxiety, depression and loneliness.

With the FOMO in mind, a research was conducted on college students by Cheever, Rosen, Carrier and Chavez (2014) to find out how anxiety affects those students' lives when they are separated from their smart phones. Various activities were involved in why using social media, which, in order from most to least time spent, are: texting, listening to music, visiting websites, talking on the phone, using email, watching TV/movies, playing games, and reading books. For each activity, the amount of time was calculated on average together, which were categorized into three different groups: Low daily use (up to 7 hours), moderate daily use (from 7 to 16.5 hours) and highly daily use (from 17 to 65.5 hours). The study points out that the more excessive the person use their phone, the

more anxious they are when separating from them. The symptom of fear when not with ones' own phone is called nomophobia, and this is proved to be correlated to social media by Hatice (2018).

## **2.5 Depression and Loneliness**

Other than FOMO and anxiety, depression is also a mental health problem caused by social media (Lee, 2016). According to one study (AP, 2010), compare to the young that was studied during the Great Depression era, number of high school and college students, who are dealing with anxiety and depression, are five times higher. As to what is the source of these problems, research was conducted (Tandoc, Ferrucci, & Duffy, 2015) and showed that Facebook and Instagram may be the contributors. In their study, their findings show that the more the participants use Facebook, the higher level of envy they experienced and the more symptoms of depression they felt. One of the ten uses and gratifications in Anita and David's research (2013) also appeared in this study, that is surveillance and watching of others. Tandoc's group found that heavy Facebook users engaged in surveillance, which is almost similar to lurking, and this behavior is the result of envy (2015).

Loneliness is also linked to one of the negative effects experienced by users of social media (G. Walton, 2019). A group of researchers (Primack et al., 2019) confirmed this with their study on the positive and negative experiences on social media use that, for every ten percent increase in negative experience in social media, there is thirteen percent rise in loneliness. Another study (Savci & Aysan, 2015) further points out that the longer ones use social media, the lonelier they feel. A survey on twenty thousands of young Americans, sponsored by Cigna Health Insurance Company, showed forty-six of the attendants responded sometimes or always feel lonely (Cigna, 2018). This survey explained that even though social media offer constant connection for every user, the experiences are varied depending on how this communication tool is used. While connecting with friends and forging an off-line connection is beneficial to the people lives, using social media as a replacement for real connection would make the user lonelier (Cigna, 2018).

## **2.6 Research questions/Hypothesis**

This thesis is conducted under the research question of whether social media make students more or less connected, and the target group will be students of Oulu University of Applied Sciences.

With the knowledge gained from literature review in mind, the hypothesis of this thesis is the longer students use social media, the worse it affects their connections.

### **3 SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONNECTEDNESS**

In this chapter, the author shows the method used for conducting the research and the findings. The first chapter, 3.1, shows the sample size of the survey and the reasons of question chosen for the questionnaire. The second chapter, 3.2, shows the results of the survey and explains what the results mean.

#### **3.1 Method**

The questionnaire for this thesis was designed as quantitative research, includes ten questions, four of which are Likert-scale questions. The sample for this study included social media users in the group of Exchange, International Business and Business Information Technology students studying in Oulu University of Applied Sciences. The survey was built in Webropol, distributed through email from November 21 to December 6, 2019, and the response rate was 29.79 percent, which are 70 participants who completed the survey, in total of 235 receivers. The questionnaire's purposes are to analyze the participants into different groups, find out what social media platforms they are using, how long those platforms are being used and how they affected the participants' relationship between them and their friends.

Due to being taken placed in Finland, the first question is to figure out whether the participants are Finnish or foreigners, also to figure out whether the results from young Finnish are the same with foreigners. The second question was made due to the different behaviors toward social media each gender has (Atanasova, 2016). Only five social media platforms that have most users, calculated until the end of 2018, are listed in question number three (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019), in addition to which, participants are able to write other platforms they are using as well. The fourth question was created as to find out how long the participant spend their time on social media approximately, as the longer the time the worsen the feelings of loneliness and inadequacy (Cigna, 2018). Ten of the options in question five are ten uses and gratifications which was found out that they are the reasons why people use social media (Whiting & Williams, 2013), which also have the same purpose in this thesis paper, in addition to which, participants can write their own reasons in "others" option. The next question, number six, asks participants how often they hang out with their friends, as in an article, friendship must be maintained by regular interacting as "grabbing coffee, or at least having

some type of back-and-forth conversation” (Chesak, 2018). The question number seven asking about the active level of participants when using social media, which is based on a research showing that, passively using social media leads to negative effects for the users (Burnell, George, Vollet, Ehrenreich, & Underwood, 2019). The next question is to figure out if it is truth that young people tend to use their phones rather than talking to the people next to them, as shown in Erika and Maggie’s article (Edwards & Fox, 2018) and Mariel’s article (Loveland, 2018). In an article on how social media is ruining users’ friendship, one of the reason mentioned is ignoring the one next to them while using social media (Glantz, 2018), which is the base for the ninth question. The last question was asked to get the participants’ opinions about how they think social media is affecting their relationships after responding to the previous nine questions, as to confirm the hypothesis that was raised in this thesis paper.

### 3.2 Results

The sample size for this study was 70, among which 23 (32.86%) participants are Finnish and 47 (67.14%) other participants are foreigners. There were 25 (35.71%) male participants with 44 (62.86%) female participants and 1 (1.43%) who preferred not to identify with a gender. Among 5 social media (SM) platforms that was listed, Facebook was used by 62 (89.86%) participants, Instagram was used by 58 (84.06%), YouTube was used by 62 (89.86%), WeChat was used by 7 (10.14%) and WhatsApp was used by 58 (84.06%). There were other platforms listed by the participants, as Twitter used by 5 (7.14%), Snapchat used by 6 (8.57%), Reddit used by 3 (4.29%), Discord used by 2 (2.86%), LinkedIn used by 3 (4.29%) with Weibo, Jodel, 4chan and VK all have 1 (1.43%) user each.

On daily basis, 7 (10%) participants used SM less than 1 hour, 16 (22.86%) used SM from 1 to 2 hours, 23 (32.86%) used SM from 2 to 3 hours, 11 (15.71%) used from 3 to 4 hours and 13 (18.57%) used more than 4 hours. When asked why did they use SM, 44 (63.77%) participants said to socialize and interact with others, 49 (71.01%) said to seek out information or self-educate, 48 (69.57%) said to occupy time and relieve boredom, 52 (75.36%) said to provide entertainment and enjoyment, 37 (53.62%) said to relax and escape from real world, 20 (28.99%) said to express thoughts and opinions, 12 (17.39%) said to help finding things to talk about with friends, 17 (24.64%) said that because SM is convenient, 21 (30.43%) said to share information, 36 (52.17%) said to watch other people or things, 2 (2.86%) said to watch memes, 2 (2.86%) said to be up to date with friends and families' life events, 2 (2.86%) said to assist for work (business promotion/trend finding), 1 (1.43%) said to find people with common interests and 1 (1.43%) said to keep in touch with friends abroad. There are 66 responses when asked how often the participants hang out with their friends, with 28 (42.42%) said 1 to 2 times per week, 11 (16.67%) said 3 to 4 times per week, 5 (7.58%) said almost every day, 7 (10.61%) said almost never, 1 (1.52%) said 10 hours a week, 1 (1.52%) said 4 hours per month, 6 (9.09%) said 2 to 3 times per month, 1 (1.52%) said 4 times per month, 1 (1.52%) said 5 times per month, 1 (1.52%) said 2 to 3 times per year and last 4 responses were unclear.

Out of 70 responses asking how active the participants while using SM (posting, reacting, commenting, sharing and so on), 3 (4.29%) said they were extremely active, 10 (14.29%) said they were very active, 25 (35.71%) said they were somewhat active, 26 (37.14%) said they were not so active and 6 (8.57%) said they were never active on SM. When asked how often the participants

used SM while hanging out with their friends, out of 69 responses, no one said they used extremely often, 7 (10.15%) said they used very often, 21 (30.43%) said they used somewhat often, 32 (46.38%) said they used not so often and 9 (13.04%) said they never used SM when hanging out with their friends. Out of 70 responses when asked how the participants felt when they hanged out with their friends, 46 (65.72%) said they felt very comfortable, 18 (25.71%) said they felt somewhat comfortable, 4 (5.71%) said they felt neither comfortable nor uncomfortable, 1 (1.43%) said they felt somewhat uncomfortable and 1 (1.43%) said they felt very uncomfortable. And lastly, when asked about how SM was affecting their friendship, out of 70 responses, 2 (2.86%) said it affected very positively, 24 (34.28%) said it affected somewhat positively, 36 (51.43%) said they had neutral opinion or undecided, 6 (8.57%) said it affected somewhat negatively and 2 (2.86%) said it affected very negatively.

For the research question, responses are divided into 3 group. Facebook and Instagram are group 1 (Text-and-picture group) with 67 participants, because they both contain picture and text content. YouTube is group 2 with 62 participants, as it only contains videos. WeChat and WhatsApp are group 3 with 58 participants, as they only contain text. In all groups, most of the responses (44, 41 and 42 respectively, Table 1) show that they feel very comfortable when hanging out with their friends and families and not using social media often while doing so (30, 29 and 27 respectively, Table 2), which means they spend more time talking face-to-face with their friends and families. Although using social media not so actively (26, 24 and 23 respectively, Table 3), most of all 3 groups responded that social media neither affect their relationships positively nor negatively or undecided about its effect (36, 33 and 29 respectively, Table 4), while the second largest group of all 3 groups said social media even affect their relationships somewhat positively (23, 22 and 22 respectively, Table 4). The results concluded the research question, that for most participants, social media make students more connected.

TABLE 1.

	Text-and-picture		Video-only		Text-Only	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Very comfortable	44	65.67%	41	66.13%	42	72.41%
Somewhat comfortable	18	26.87%	17	27.42%	13	22.42%
Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	4	5.97%	4	6.45%	3	5.17%
Somewhat uncomfortable	1	1.49%	0	0%	0	0%

Very uncomfortable	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>		<b>62</b>		<b>58</b>	

Table 1 shows the response rate of the participants when asked about how they feel when hanging out with their friends and families. The base for dividing responses into 3 groups, the question which asked participants about which social media platforms they were currently using, allowed them to choose multiple answers, which means the total of each group is calculated separately out of total 70 responses, for example, the first group has 67 out of 70 responses, which means 67 of 70 participants use both Facebook and Instagram), the second group has 62 out of 70 responses, which also means 62 of 70 total participants use YouTube. Each user can be in different groups at the same time, and this also applies to the Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4. Most of the responses are leaning toward feeling somewhat comfortable and very comfortable, meaning most of them have little to no issue, no matter which social media platform they are using.

TABLE 2.

	Text-and-picture		Video-only		Text-Only	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Extremely often	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Very often	7	10.61%	6	9.84%	5	8.77%
Somewhat often	21	31.82%	18	29.51%	18	31.58%
Not so often	30	45.45%	29	47.54%	27	47.37%
Not at all	8	12.12%	8	13.11%	7	12.28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>		<b>61</b>		<b>57</b>	

Table 2 shows the responses of the participants when asking about the frequency of using social media when hanging out with their friends and families. Most of the participants reported to not using it too often while being with their friends and family.

TABLE 3.

	Text-and-picture		Video-only		Text-Only	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Extremely active	3	4.48%	3	4.84%	3	5.17%
Very active	10	14.92%	9	14.52%	7	12.07%
Somewhat active	23	34.33%	22	35.48%	21	36.21%



Not so active	26	38.81%	24	38.71%	23	39.65%
Not active at all	5	7.46%	4	6.45%	4	6.90%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>		<b>62</b>		<b>58</b>	

Table 3 shows the responses of the participants when asked how active they are using social media. Most of the responses, in all 3 groups, reported that they only use social media somewhat active, or even not active at all. This means most of the participants sometimes interact with others in social media, or some even only scrolling through posts.

TABLE 4.

	Text-and-picture		Video-only		Text-Only	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Very positively	2	2.99%	2	3.23%	2	3.45%
Somewhat positively	23	34.33%	22	35.48%	22	37.93%
Neutral/Undecided	36	53.73%	33	53.23%	29	50%
Somewhat negatively	5	7.46%	5	8.06%	5	8.62%
Very negatively	1	1.49%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>		<b>62</b>		<b>58</b>	

Similar to 3 previous table, when asked about how the participants think social media currently affecting their relationship, their responses are shown in Table 4. Most of the participants think social media affects their relationship only somewhat positively, or even undecided/neither positively nor negatively.

For the hypothesis, the responses are again divided into 2 groups. Group 1 contains the participants using social media less than 3 hours per day (46 responses), while group 2 contains the participants using it more than 3 hours per day (24 responses). There are more participants using social media less than 3 hours feel very comfortable and somewhat comfortable (67.39% and 26.09% respectively, Table 5) than the ones using social media more than 3 hours (62.5% and 25% respectively, Table 5) when hanging out with their friends and families. However, there are more participants in group 2 think social media affects their relationships very positively and somewhat positively (8.33% and 37.5% respectively, Table 6) than the ones of group 1 (0% and 32.61% respectively, Table 6). From this, the hypothesis is partially supported by the results.

TABLE 5.

	Less than 3 hours		More than 3 hours	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
Very comfortable	31	67.39%	15	62.50%
Somewhat comfortable	12	26.09%	6	25%
Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	2	4.35%	2	8.33%
Somewhat uncomfortable	0	0%	1	4.17%
Very uncomfortable	1	2.17%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>		<b>24</b>	

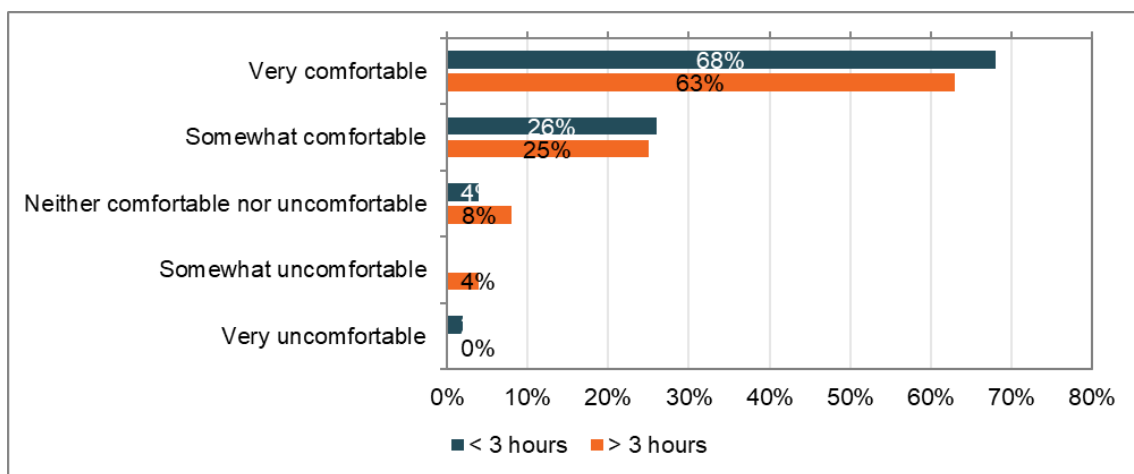


Figure 1.

Table 5 (Figure 1) shows the results for the question of how the participants feel when hanging out with their friends and families. Different from the first 4 table, the base for dividing responses into another 2 group, the question asking participants about the period of time they use social media per day approximately, only allowed the participants to choose one answer. Hence, each participant can only be in one group at a time, and the total members of both group together is the total participants that completed the survey, and this also applies to Table 6. There is a slight difference between two groups, as in Table 5, the rate of feeling comfortable when hanging out with friends and families of the participants that use social media less per day is higher than the ones who use it more.

TABLE 6.

	Less than 3 hours	More than 3 hours
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	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Very positively	0	0%	2	8.33%
Somewhat positively	15	32.61%	9	37.50%
Neutral /Undecided	26	56.52%	10	41.67%
Somewhat negatively	4	8.70%	2	8.33%
Very negatively	1	2.17%	1	4.17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>		<b>24</b>	

Table 6 shows the responses of the participants when asked about how they think social media affects their relationship. The result is similar to Table 4, which is most of the participants think social media has positive to neutral impact toward their relationship. However, there is also a slight difference between two group. The rate of participants, who are using social media more and think positively of the effect social media has upon their relationship, is higher than the ones using it less.

## 4 DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was to find out whether social media make people more or less connected. A quantitative-method survey was distributed through email and a sample size of 70 participants, who were students of Oulu University of Applied Sciences, completed the survey. The results were analyzed by dividing into two categories. The first category was the group of social media that the participants was using, including text-and-picture, video-only and text-only types. All 3 groups had the similar results, which showed that social media make the participants more connected, as they spend less time on social media while being with their friends and families and feel comfortable while doing so. The second category was the duration of using social media per day, which is less than 3 hours and more than 3 hours. Although spending less time on social media each day make the participants feel more comfortable while being with their friends and families, the group that use social media more than 3 hours per day still have higher rate of responding that social media positively affects their relationship.

This study had got these results maybe because people in Finland are more aware of what social media can provide them with, and how to use it properly to reduce the disadvantages that can be brought such as depression, loneliness, anxiety and so on. There were many evidences of the negative effects the users could receive while using social media, but when people have the control over this communication platform, there are so many benefits which can be gained from it. Another reason of these results maybe because the study using in literature review are outdated as people in different times has different experience with social media.

## 5 CONCLUSION

This study has dealt with how the use of social media affects the connectedness of students of OAMK. It is natural for human being to have the desire of connection and social media has certainly made it easier. As shown in this study, when the users have the control of how they use this communication tool properly, more benefits can be gained from social media. The results do not represent the whole people in Finland as the sample size is small and only from OAMK students. Larger sample size should be examined to have the results more reliable, such as having big age range, distributing the survey to more places or modifying the questions to have better results.

The author learned from this study that social media have various effects on different people, but the students of Oulu University of Applied Sciences mostly had awareness of what good and bad social media can have upon the users, and know how to get the most benefits out of this communication platform. Future research should find out what are the other effects excessive use of social media can have, or what is the ideal time spent on it. Is there an appropriate time one should spend on social media, or where is the limits of using it that can be finalized as addiction? There maybe limitation of this study, as the number of participants is small and hence the difference of the data between different groups of participants is not significant. Different age groups may provide different results, as well as difference in regions, that is why this study can neither represent to the students of other cities or countries nor people of other age-groups. Hence, more throughout research should be made in order to have bigger picture of the matter.

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