The Effect of Social Media Attachment on Subjective Well-being in a College Student Population

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Abstract

With the increasing penetration of daily use of social media, people's emotional level of social media has become more affluent, and academics have introduced psychological attachment theory into social media use to explain the complex relationship with social media.In this study, college students who are in emerging adulthood and are "highly active users" of social media were selected as the subjects. Through questionnaire surveys and empirical analyses, we explored the working model of social media attachment and its impact on college students' subjective well-being. The results show that a certain degree of social media attachment positively impacts college students' subjective well-being. Our interpretation is that social media attachment provides a stable attachment object for college students, who are in flux and infinite possibilities, that can be relied on stably (While being an attachment object in its own right, it is a collection of multiple attachment relationships such as parents and partners.), that can give a sense of meaning (gained through self-presentation and self-esteem), and that can provide help (access to information, experiential support). Secure and stable social media attachment can improve college students' subjective well-being, allowing them to explore the world better and create more possibilities for the future.

Keywords: Social Media Attachment; Subjective Well-being; Emerging Adulthood

1. Introduction

As a recent newborn research field, social media attachment extends from psychological attachment theory. It combines it with recent social situations to provide a new explanatory framework for the relationship between individuals and social media.

With the deepening penetration of social media into the daily lives of individuals, social media has gradually become the main mode of daily information exchange with its unrivalled advantages of information acquisition and instant interaction, and college students are the "main force" of its users. Some scholars believe that the "invasive" use of social media has made people "sick" of over-dependence on media and has brought many negative effects on college students, such as sleep disorders and procrastination.(Li and Du, 2016; Liu et al., 2023; Xing, 2016) However, some scholars agree that using social media meets the needs of college students social integration and personal integration.(Yang, 2014) The relationship between social media use and individuals is a mixed bag, but in terms of the volume of relevant research papers, the majority of them are "worrying". While we should be "wary" and "cautious" of social media, we should not ignore its positive effects on college students' spiritual construction.

Regarding the impact of social media use on individuals, academic research has focused chiefly on teenagers,

with little attention paid to college students. As representatives of the young generation, college students symbolise vitality and creativity and are the main force behind the use of social media. They also shape the group cognition, cultural expression, and linguistic interaction system of the community by creating a tribal community of ordinary consciousness in social media, which in turn influences the character and tone of the entire social media. At the same time, the life of college students has the characteristics of an "ivory tower", living alone in space and with a certain degree of closure. However, at the same time, we believe that college students are in a unique stage of life, which makes them have their characteristics in psychology.

College students in emerging adulthood are the leading group of social media users; social media brings them not only connection, knowledge and information but also emotional support and spiritual companionship on this basis, which brings a sense of security and belonging to college students and then generates a deeper and more complex emotional structure. College students have a certain degree of self-control. At the same time, they have more affluent emotional needs, and their continuous, long-lasting, high-frequency, and in-depth use of social media should not be limited to the definition of "dependence". In this study, the impact of social media attachment is more inclined to the positive indicators of psychological research, using subjective well-being to undertake and explain the impact of social media attachment and focusing more on the emotional constructs of social media use for individuals rather than a single model at the functional level.

Social media attachment has a deeper meaning and a more profound role for college students in emerging adulthood. Attachment theory better explains the affective factors of college students' social media use and provides a new perspective on the relationship between social media use and individuals. This paper aims to explore the intrinsic affective construction of social media attachment and its impact on the subjective well-being of the college student population from the attachment theory perspective.

2. Review of relevant studies and formulation of research hypotheses

2.1 Expansion of Attachment Theory and Social Media Attachment

Originating in mother-infant relationships, "attachment" refers to a strong emotional bond that develops between an individual and a specific object. Bowly believes that attachment is a basic human need throughout life, and intense emotions will be generated in the process of attachment formation, retention, removal and renewal.(Bowlby, 1979) Attachment theory developed as an essential explanatory framework based on relational emotions in the maternal and child domains, and as it matured, it continued to expand into new areas. For example, adult attachment research in the interpersonal domain has argued that romantic love between adults can also be viewed as an attachment process, with bonding mechanisms that share similarities with mother-infant attachment.(Hazan and Shaver, 1987) The scope of its research object has also gradually expanded from interpersonal to between people and entities. For example, brand attachment is seen as a multidimensional structure consisting of self-connection, importance and emotion, and this close connection leads to a series of behaviours such as purchasing, recommending and defending the brand.(Japutra et al., 2014) Also receiving attention is place attachment, commonly defined as the emotional connection between a person and a particular place, expressed as the tendency and desire to remain in that place.(Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001) The extensive expansion of attachment theory demonstrates the inclusiveness of its theoretical explanations. Nowadays, the number of social media users based on the "Internet of Everything" has been increasing, and its close relationship with people has been attracting much attention. Some scholars have noticed the special connection between social media and human beings and used attachment theory to explain certain phenomena in social media. However, the volume of research is generally small. As social media facilitates consumers' interactions with other attachment targets, individuals may develop attachments to social media as a conduit.(Vanmeter et al., 2015) In other words, social media seems to have become a "gathering point" for various attachment objects, connecting relatives, friends, brands, celebrities, and others. At the same time, it also carries the role of being attached to. Gradually, some scholars take social media as an attachment object to study. Some scholars define social media attachment (ASM) simply as the strength of the connection between a person and social media. In their research, they treat social media as a whole, focus on treating it as a substantial area in marketing, and explore more about the contribution of social media attachment to the marketing field.(Vanmeter et al., 2015) Domestic scholars define social media attachment (SMA) as "social media attachment is the combination and extension of place attachment and brand attachment, is based on the Internet environment, in the virtual space of an individual's attitude towards social media, is an individual and social media with cognitive, emotional and intentional characteristics of the psychological bond."(Lei and Wang, 2022) Some scholars also understand social media attachment as a psychological bond that can bring benefits to individuals in terms of emotional aspects and functional aspects because of the characteristics of social media, such as being able to express and communicate, and index social media attachment into a total of eight dimensions: Socialising/connecting,

keeping up-to-date, dependence, the dysfunctional use of social media, expressing emotions, Self-presentation, self-esteem, and Seeking knowledge.(Baboo et al., 2022) Social media attachment is based on the expansion of attachment theory in psychology and provides a new perspective to explain the relationship between social media use and individuals.

2.2 The relationship between social media and subjective well-being

Before this study, more research focused on the relationship between social media and subjective well-being. One study explored the role of life satisfaction in reducing broad Internet addiction and social media addiction. The results showed that life satisfaction was negatively related to social media addiction, and to some extent, social media was used as a substitute for happiness.(Longstreet and Brooks, 2017) Some scholars believe whether social networking sites increase or decrease subjective well-being depends on how individuals use them. Social networking sites may either improve subjective well-being by increasing social capital and a sense of connection or cause suffering due to social comparison and jealousy triggered by passive use.(Verduyn et al., 2017) Based on different perspectives, the relationship between social media use and happiness has different impacts, explaining the complexity of the relationship between the two to a certain extent.

In this study, university students were selected as the target group, as this age group is in emerging adulthood, which is a crucial period for the psychological development of individuals. The keywords of this period are "exploration" and "change", exploring different possibilities in the direction of love, work, and worldview. At the same time, college students in emerging adulthood also go through the process of leaving home, entering a new living environment and welcoming new social relations.(Arnett, 2000) This stage is accompanied by the removal and renewal of college students' attachments and the formation of new ones, which is more significant. At the same time, college students are also highly active social media users and have a close relationship with social media.

The authors argued that a healthy attachment relationship should bring a sense of shelter to the attached person, improving the subjective well-being of the college student population. Therefore, Hypothesis H1 is proposed: Social media attachment positively affects the subjective well-being of the college population.

From the perspective of the constituent dimensions of social media attachment, social media dependence significantly manifests a negative impact on subjective well-being. Previous studies have found that social media dependence can significantly negatively impact interpersonal interactions, bringing about a lack of offline interpersonal interactions and thus enhancing loneliness.(Qu and Yao, 2017) It is also believed that social media dependence can bring about an inflated sense of self, blind self-confidence, self-conceit, complacency and arrogance, and once a little frustration in reality, it will be resentful and full of negative emotions.(Yuan and Liu, 2015) The authors believe that in addition to the above two points, social media dependence will also bring misinformation anxiety, and therefore propose hypothesis H2: Social media dependence has a negative impact on college students' subjective well-being.

It has been shown that individuals' self-presentation behaviours on social media platforms can help regulate their emotions, and positive self-presentation can keep them happy. Authentic self-presentation can help individuals increase positive emotional experiences.(Jiang et al., 2008) It has also been shown that users with disabilities tend to use social media to satisfy their needs and improve their self-esteem due to the inconveniences in the real space.(Li et al., 2023) Increased self-esteem has a significant negative impact on negative emotions such as depression and anxiety.(Yang and Chu, 2023) Moreover, it increases subjective social status, psychological capital, and a sense of meaning in life. Research has shown that adolescents' self-esteem levels are strongly linked to online social support. Social media use increases adolescents' access to social relationships and social capital, boosting self-esteem and increasing life satisfaction.(Zhou et al., 2017) The authors believe "social media use has a strong relationship with online social support" and "social capital". The authors believe that the existence of the "information cocoon" allows users to be exposed to information that is of interest to them and in line with their views, and therefore, may also bring about an increase in social support and subjective social status, and therefore proposes the hypothesis H3: social media self-presentation, self-esteem, and access to information have a positive impact on the subjective well-being of college students.

Some scholars point out that social media carries people's expectations of expanding their relationship networks, and by influencing self-presentation and information acquisition, social media connections can bring people emotional support, resources, and information and help in social interactions.(Peng, 2019) Academics classify social media into strong-connection and weak-connection social media based on factors such as the proximity of social relationships and the degree of emotional exchange, strongly connected social media such as QQ and

WeChat, and weakly connected ones such as Weibo, Xiaohongshu, Douyin. Some studies have shown that different social connection strengths play different roles in information exchange behaviour.(Granovetter, 2018) People are more likely to get new information from weak than strong connections.(Park et al., 2018) It has also been suggested that weak connections positively increase individual happiness and decrease negative emotions.(Hutcherson et al., 2008) Weak connections in social media have the function of emotional compensation.(Zhang and Han, 2022) There is a consensus in the academic community that the state of people is more relaxed and authentic due to the strong anonymity of weakly connected social media and the invisibility of class and economic status among users.(Yang and Zhang, 2023) Therefore, hypothesis H4 is proposed: Social media connection, as the basis of the internal working model of social media attachment, exerts indirect effects on college students' subjective well-being by influencing self-presentation, information acquisition and self-esteem on social media.
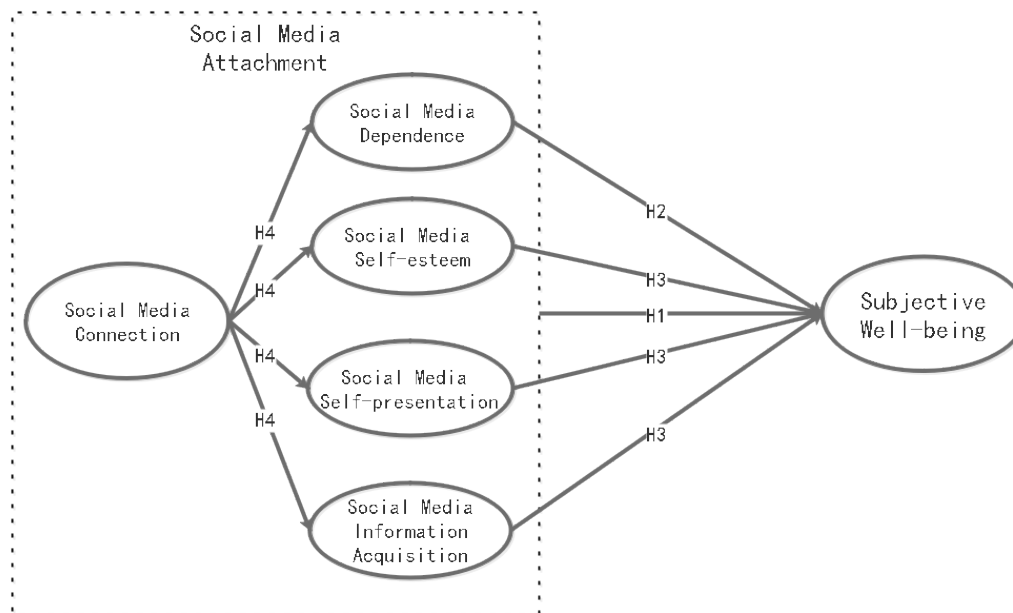

Figure 1 Research model of the effect of social media attachment on subjective well-being

Based on the literature review and the formulation of hypotheses, the research model of this paper is shown in Figure 1. The model takes complete account of the internal working model of social media attachment, Namely, the affective construction of attachment theory and the characteristics of social media itself.

3. Objects and Methods

3.1 Objects

This study adopts the method of random sampling. In the sample selection process, different types of students are considered, and different backgrounds of schools are comprehensively considered. Attention was paid to gender balance in the data collection process, trying to keep the overall male-to-female ratio about 1:1. A total of two questionnaire surveys were conducted. The first questionnaire survey for the test scale reliability and validity of the pre-experiment, the total number of samples was 160, after the recovery and deletion of invalid questionnaires 9, a total of 151 valid samples, data analysis; the second questionnaire survey for the pre-experiment after the better reliability and validity of the scale test, to get the total number of samples is 500, the recovery of deletion of invalid questionnaires 68, the valid samples totalled 432, the data analysis of the experimental report was derived after the data analysis.

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Social Media Attachment Scale

This study combed through the relevant literature and referred to papers such as "Research on Social Media Dependence and Media Needs - Taking College Students' Weibo Dependence as an Example", "The Relationship between Self-Presentation and Self-Esteem in Social Networking Sites", "Questionnaire Preparation and Characteristics of College Students' Social Media Dependence on Mobile Phones", and combined with Baboo et al.'s eight-dimensional conceptualisation of social media attachment. Dimensional conceptualisation(Baboo et al., 2022), on a pre-experimental basis, the dimensionality was downgraded, the eight dimensions were changed to five dimensions, and the Social Media Attachment Scale was compiled, with a total of 43 question items. A five-point Likert scale was used (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was 0.848, more significant than 0.7, with good reliability; the KMO value was more significant than 0.804, and the validity was good with Bartletts' spherical test p=0<0.05. In the design of the questionnaire to facilitate the subjects to fill in the questionnaire with better reference to their own experience, the social media were defined as the six platforms of WeChat, QQ, Weibo, Zhihu, Xiaohongshu, and Bilibili that university students more commonly use.

3.2.2 Subjective well-being scale

The subjective well-being scale was adopted from the Positive Affect, Negative Affect Scale revised by Qiu Lin, Zheng Xue, and Wang Yanfei (2008), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985), which includes a total of 23 question items. In this case, the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale uses a five-point scale, and the Life Satisfaction Scale uses a seven-point scale. In the specific score statistics, positive scoring is used, and the final subjective well-being scoring is according to the formula: subjective well-being = life satisfaction + positive emotion - negative emotion. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is 0.845, more significant than 0.7, good reliability; KMO value is 0.874, more significant than 0.5; Bartletts' test of spherical significance is 0.00, less than 0.05, validity is good.

4. Data results and discussion

4.1 Analysis of common method biases

4.1.1 Analysis of Common Method Bias in the Social Media Attachment Scale

The first exploratory factor analysis of the 34 items of the Social Media Attachment Scale was conducted using Harman's single-factor test, with a total of 10 factors having a characteristic root greater than one and the first factor explaining 18.990% of the variance, which is less than the critical criterion of 40%. Therefore, there is no significant common method bias problem in this study.

4.1.2 Analysis of common method biases in the Subjective Well-being Scale

An exploratory factor analysis of the 23 items of the Social Media Attachment Scale using Harman's single-factor test on the Subjective Well-Being Scale showed that a total of four factors had a characteristic root greater than 1, and the first factor explained 28.872% of the variance, which is less than the critical criterion of 40%. Therefore, there is no obvious common method bias problem in this study.

4.2 Regression analysis of demographic variables and subjective well-being

Gender, school background, age, and subjective well-being were analysed by multiple regression. The results showed that gender, school, and age were insignificant, indicating that gender, school, and age do not significantly affect subjective well-being in the college student population.

4.3 Regression analysis of demographic variables and social media attachment

The five dimensions of gender, school background, age, and social media attachment were subjected to separate multiple regression analyses, which yielded the following results: (i) age negatively predicted social media connection, p1=0<0.05, β1=-0.161; (ii) age positively predicted social media dependence, p=0.04<0.05, β=0.105. (iii) age positively predicted social media, p=0.03<0.05, β=0.109; (ⅳ)Gender significantly predicts

social media connections and social media information acquisition, p1=0<0.05, β 1=-0.145; p2=0.03<0.05, β 2=-0.106.

4.4 Correlation analysis between social media attachment and subjective well-being

The correlation analysis shows that social media attachment and subjective well-being of college students are significantly and positively correlated at the 0.01 level, Sig=0<0.01, and the correlation coefficient r=0.214, as shown in Table 1

Table 1 Correlation analysis between social media attachment and subjective well-being

	subjective well-being	Social Media Attachment
subjective well-being	1	
Social Media Attachment	0.214**	1

Note: *P<0.05; **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

4.5 Regression analysis of five dimensions of social media attachment and subjective well-being

Gender, school, and age were used as control variables to study the effects of the five dimensions of social media attachment (social media connection, dependence, self-presentation, self-esteem, and information acquisition) on subjective well-being. It was concluded that (i) among the five dimensions of social media attachment, the effects of social media dependence, social media self-presentation, social media self-esteem, and social media information acquisition on subjective well-being were significant: p1=0<0.05, β 1=-0.178; p2=0<0.01, β 2=0.144; p3=0<0.05, β 3=0.215; p4=0<0.05, β 4=0.176; (ii) while social media connection had a non-significant effect on subjective well-being, p=0.549>0.05.

4.6 Multiple regression analysis of five dimensions of social media attachment and three dimensions of subjective well-being

In order to study the specific influence path of social media attachment on subjective well-being in the model. We conducted regression analysis with total social media attachment score as the independent variable and total subjective well-being score as the dependent variable, and the results showed that there was a significant positive linear relationship between the two, p=0<0.01, R2=0.045.

Table 2 Overall regression analysis of social media attachment and subjective well-being

pathway relationship	regression coefficient	Standardised coefficient	t-value	significant level	reach a verdict
Social media attachment → subjective well-being	0.046	0.214	5.562	p=0<0.01	adjuvant

In order to explore the specific effects of the five dimensions of social media attachment on subjective well-being, we conducted multiple regression analyses with each of the five dimensions of social media attachment as an independent variable, and each of the three dimensions of subjective well-being as a dependent variable, and the results showed that the linear regression curves of the five dimensions of social media attachment and the three dimensions of subjective well-being fitted significantly:

Table 3 Results of hypothesis testing for structural equation modelling

pathway relationship	regression coefficient	Standardised coefficient	t-value	significant level	reach a verdict
Social Media Connection → Positive Emotions	0.272	0.182	3.041	p=0<0.01	adjuvant
Social media information acquisition → positive emotions	-0.026	-0.017	-0.262	p=794>0.05	unsupported
Social media information acquisition → negative emotions	-0.078	-0.056	-1.242	p=0.215>0.05	unsupported
Social media self-esteem → negative emotions	-0.344	-0.222	-5.449	p=0.01	adjuvant
Social media self-presentation → positive emotions	0.204	0.117	2.359	p=0.019<0.05	adjuvant
Social media self-presentation → negative emotions	0.106	0.068	1.916	P=0.049<0.05	adjuvant
Social media dependence → negative emotions	0.091	0.056	2.258	P=0.024<0.05	adjuvant

As can be seen in Table 3:

(i) There is a significant linear regression relationship between the five dimensions of social media and positive emotions, $p=0<0.05$, $R2=0.043$, where social media connection has a significant positive effect on positive emotions, $p1=0<0.05$, $β1=0.272$. Social media self-presentation significantly positively affects positive emotions, $p3=0.01<0.05$, $β3=0.204$. There is no significant linear relationship between social media dependence, social media self-esteem, information acquisition and positive emotions, $p2=0.4>0.05$, $p4=0.6>0.05$, $p5=0.7>0.05$.

(ii) There is a significant linear regression relationship between the five dimensions of social media attachment and life satisfaction, $p=0<0.05$, $R2=0.147$, in which there is a non-significant effect of social media attachment on life satisfaction, $p1=0.6>0.05$, there is a significant negative effect of social media dependence on life satisfaction between $p2=0.01<0.05$, $β2=-0.195$, there is a significant positive effect of social media self-presentation, social media self-esteem, social media information acquisition on life satisfaction, $p3=0<0.05$, $β3=0.471$, $p4=0<0.05$, $β4=0.352$, $p5=0<0.05$, $β5=0.397$, which is basically in line with the results of the pre-experiment.

(iii) There is a significant linear regression relationship between the five dimensions of social media and negative emotions, $p=0<0.05$, $R2=0.065$, in which social media connection, social media information acquisition have a non-significant effect on negative emotions $p1=0.6>0.05$, $p5=0.2>0.05$; social media dependence, social media self-presentation have a significant positive effect on negative emotions, $p2=0.02<0.05$, $β2=0.091$, $p3=0.04<0.05$, $β3=0.106$; there is a significant negative effect of social media self-esteem on negative emotions, $p4=0<0.05$, $β4=-0.344$.

4.7 Social Media Connection and the Indirect Path to Life Satisfaction

In our previous data analyses, we found that social media connections could not directly impact subjective well-being overall, the positive emotion dimension of subjective well-being, or the negative emotion dimension. In order to explore the influence paths of other variables, we focused on the indirect influence paths of social media connection on life satisfaction. Specifically, we analysed the relationship between other variables, which showed that by analysing social media connection as a dependent variable: (i) there is a significant linear relationship between social media connection and social media self-presentation, $p=0<0.01$, β $=-0.158$ (ii)There is a significant linear relationship between social media connection and social media information acquisition, $p=0<0.01$, β $=0.243$. Therefore, we can conclude that social media connection can indirectly affect the life satisfaction dimension of subjective well-being by influencing social media self-presentation and social media information acquisition.

Table 4 Path regression analysis of social media connection and indirect effects on life satisfaction

pathway relationship	regression coefficient	Standardised coefficient	t-value	significant level	reach a verdict
Social media connection → social media self-presentation	-0.135	-0.158	-3.385	P=0.001<0.01	adjuvant
Social media self-presentation → life satisfaction	0.471	0.204	4.372	P=0<0.01	adjuvant
Social media connection → social media information acquisition	0.232	0.243	7.316	P=0<0.01	adjuvant
Social media information acquisition → life satisfaction	0.397	0.193	3.151	P=0.002<0.01	adjuvant
Social media self-esteem → life satisfaction	0.352	0.154	2.784	P=0<0.1	adjuvant

4.8 Discussion

According to the results obtained from the demographic data and the five-dimensional regression analysis of social media attachment, the age and gender of college students have different degrees of influence on their level of social media attachment, which in turn affects their own subjective well-being experience.

Subsequently, age and gender were used as control variables, and regression analyses were conducted on the five dimensions of social media attachment and subjective well-being. (i) Through the correlation analysis, it can be seen that college students' social media attachment and subjective well-being are significantly positively correlated at the 0.01 level, Sig=0<0.01, and the correlation coefficient is r=0.214, and the regression analysis results show that there is a significant positive linear relationship between the two, $p=0.003<0.01$, $R2=0.045$. Therefore, hypothesis H1, social media attachment positively influences the subjective well-being of college students' group, is established. The attachment has a positive effect on the subjective well-being of college student groups, is established. (ii) There is a significant negative impact of social media dependence on life satisfaction, $p=0.01<0.05$, β $=-0.195$, and there is a significant positive impact on negative emotions, $p=0.02<0.05$, β $=0.091$. There is no significant impact on positive emotions. Therefore, hypothesis H2, "social media dependence has a negative effect on the subjective well-being of college students," is partially true. (iii) Hypothesis H3, "Social media self-presentation, self-esteem, and information acquisition all have a positive

effect on college students' subjective well-being," is partially true. Among them, social media self-presentation has a significant positive effect on positive emotions, p=0.01<0.05, β=0.204. Social media self-presentation, self-esteem, and information acquisition significantly positively affect life satisfaction, p1=0<0.05, β1=0.471, p2=0<0.05, β2=0.352, p3=0<0.05, β3=0.397. Social media self-presentation had a significant positive effect on negative emotions, p=0.04<0.05, β=0.106, and social media self-esteem had a significant adverse effect on negative emotions, p=0<0.05, β=-0.344. (ⅳ) Hypothesis H4 holds: Social media connection does not have a direct effect on subjective well-being but rather serves as the basis for the internal working model of social media attachment, which indirectly affects college students' subjective well-being by influencing social media self-presentation, social media information acquisition, and social media self-esteem. Among them, there is a significant linear relationship between social media connection and social media self-presentation, social media information acquisition, p1=0<0.01, β1=-0.158, p2=0<0.01, β2=0.243, and there is a significant effect between social media self-presentation, information acquisition and college students' subjective well-being.

5. Research conclusions

5.1 Social media connection underpins the internal working model of social media attachment.

Bowlby believes that biological roots need intimacy, and this need is often based on "connection".(Bowlby, 1979) Social media attachment is also built on the basis of social media connection, whether it is QQ, WeChat's acquaintances' "strong connection", or Xiaohongshu, Bilibili and other social media users' "weak connection", social media-rich interactive experience for the user to provide a "Multi-directional connection space". Some studies have argued that social media assumes people's social imagination of intimacy by transforming the "I-You relationship" between people into an "I-It connection". In the network community constructed by social media, each individual becomes an instrumental "it" with only performance differences. This node can easily establish and disconnect connections through which people fulfil their personal needs.(Tian, 2021) Social media has also been shown to be a "mobile home", a link to emotional value. People continue their real-world attachments through social media connections, which provide timely feedback, mental companionship, and emotional support.(Hu, 2024) Social media integrates the attachment relationship of college students, making the intimate relationship "within reach". In this sense of immersion, social media is not only a "friend" that can entertain but also a "teacher" that can seek knowledge. Based on connecting people, social media "also a teacher and a friend" connects UGC social media information, culture, and exciting groups, making it a place where college students can share their positive emotions and "go crazy" with their negative emotions, It has become an object of attachment to which university students can share their positive emotions, "go crazy" with their negative emotions, and seek answers to their questions.

The results of the data analyses show that social media connections positively impact college students' positive emotions and that social media connections indirectly impact college students' life satisfaction by influencing social media self-presentation and information acquisition. Social media attachment has an intrinsic affective model, and social media fulfils college students' need for social and social connections. We believe that it is based on the connection that self-esteem and self-presentation are sought and that access to information is possible. In sum, social media connections are the basis for the internal working model of social media attachment.

5.2 Social media attachment has a positive impact on the subjective well-being of the college population.

The attachment and exploration systems are considered the two most central behavioural control systems in attachment theory. (Rothbaum et al., 2000)The attachment system exists to keep the infant and the caregiver close together and thus better protect the infant. The Exploratory System allows the infant to enter the world and learn about the environment to grow better.(Elliot and Reis, 2003) We believe that the object of this study is in emerging adulthood and, at the same time, in the attachment and exploration system. College students at this stage neither have the responsibility after the year nor get rid of the dependence of adolescence, and are more independent to experience a variety of possibilities in work, life, love and other aspects.(Arnett, 2000) In this stage, college students' psychological state and life state are undergoing significant reshaping, with the change in life environment brought by entering the college campus, the alienation of kinship and the reconstruction of social relationships; in the change, social media provides a stable attachment relationship for the attachment and brings positive influence for college students. The results showed a significant positive effect of social media self-presentation on positive emotions and a significant positive effect of self-presentation and self-esteem on life satisfaction. In a new environment, college students often want to construct their ideal image in social media

such as Qzone and WeChat. In UGC social media, college students also focus on creating their own "persona" in their self-media identity. This persona is often their ideal, satisfactory appearance; in the presentation process and feedback, students receive social media nodes for their ideal state of feedback so that college students get a sense of "self-compatibility", in which the positive feedback and self-esteem of the self-presentation, so that college students get a sense of self-accomplishment and a sense of significance, and enhance personal life satisfaction.

The results show that social media information acquisition has a significant positive impact on life satisfaction. College students look for "Bilibili University" for learning resources, "Xiaohongshu Search Engine" for questions about life and study, and Weibo for hot counselling and "madness". Social media provide college students with timely information, making college students more relaxed about missing out and keeping up with the times. For example, QQ and WeChat, social media communication platforms, provide college students with various information sources and satisfy their psychological needs. In the rich information provided by social media, college students' problems are "solved in everything", and the demands of the attached people are responded to in time, which positively affects the enhancement of life satisfaction.

According to Bowlby, attachment provides a haven to retreat to for exploration(Bowlby, 2008); social media is such an object of attachment: like a listener and a sharer, it promotes the positive emotions of the attachment and like a soft cushion to catch the negative emotions of the attachment, bringing the stability of attachment and a sense of belonging to college students, which in turn improves subjective well-being.

6. Summaries

Academics have been paying close attention to the relationship between social media use and individuals, and existing research on social media has primarily focused on the adverse effects of overuse, such as social media dependence and social media addiction. As a new framework for explaining the relationship between people and social media, social media attachment is still in its infancy, and there are fewer studies on the positive effects of social media attachment.

The authors attempt to discover the relationship between attachment between people and social media and explore its impact on the subjective well-being of the college student population through the study, thus providing new perspectives and references for the development of a healthier and more favourable relationship between individuals and social media. This paper innovatively explores the impact of social media attachment on subjective well-being, focusing on the care of individual psychological emotions. This paper draws a positive attitude towards using social media based on attachment theory. The results show that social media attachment positively affects the subjective well-being of college students. Firstly, we believe that social media attachment provides a stable attachment relationship for college students who are in a period of exploration and change and that this attachment object is "inseparable" from college students and can provide timely feedback on the "stickiness" of college students' attachments. While providing a stable emotional connection, it is also a collection of existing attachment relationships (e.g., between parents and partners).; Secondly, self-expression and self-esteem in social media make college students feel more meaningful, and through social media, college students can also get timely information and help. The multidimensional impact of social media and the emotional attachment of college students "run in both directions", which can provide a certain degree of spiritual comfort and support for college students' exploration.

7. Limitations and perspectives

However, this paper also has its limitations; firstly, this paper selected six social media only the role of concept identification in the process of questionnaire filling, in the process of the study, still considered social media as a whole and did not explore the differences in the degree of attachment between different social media, as well as their different impacts on subjective well-being to explore, which can be further researched in the future, which in turn can put forward a more specific and personalised social media operation suggestions and more detailed care for individuals. Secondly, at present, there is no unified standard for the conceptualization indicators of social media attachment in the academic community, and the indicators studied by scholars are different from each other. If a unified standard can be established in future studies, it will be more conducive to standardizing the subsequent studies on social media attachment. Meanwhile, this paper speculates and explains the possibility of the conclusion based on the high tolerance and explanation of attachment theory. The internal working structure of social media attachment still needs further study.

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