

## Facebook Usage of Sri Lankan Consumers: Consumption Perspective of Social Media

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### Abstract

Social media has become pervasive, impacting the social and cultural fabric of our society and changing the nature of social relationships. Facebook, being the second most visited website in the world and No: 01 in Sri Lanka, could be identified as a special kind of addiction today where an average user browses Facebook at least for 30 minutes a day from computers or smart devices and gets exposed to diverse content on Facebook as a habit. Marlatt, Baer, Donovan, and Kivlahan, defined addictive behavior as "a repetitive habit pattern that increases the risk of disease and/or associated personal and social problems" or "the behavior continues to occur despite volitional attempts to abstain or moderate use". Compulsive, excessive, impulsive, uncontrolled, and indulgent were also listed instead of the term "addictive". In this study, the researcher has attempted to investigate the relationship of compulsive consumption behavior on Facebook has with the demographic factors of individuals.

**Keywords:** Social media; Compulsive consumption; Facebook addiction

### Introduction

The web has rapidly enhanced the capacity for people to interact with one another without the boundaries of their location. More specifically, social media has become one of the major platforms, which enable people to interact with each other across geographical boundaries. Though, there are numerous social network sites, Facebook is considered to be the most popular social media platform. Facebook, being the second most visited website in the world and number one in Sri Lanka, could be identified as a special kind of addiction today where an average user browses Facebook at least for 30 minutes a day from computers or smart devices and gets exposed to diverse content on Facebook as a habit. Since the literature suggests that individuals deal with social media content in three ways; consumption, participation and production, it could be suspected that excessive usage of Facebook could lead to addictive consumption which may derive numerous social issues. It is an accepted fact that an addiction is known to destroy human beings and their relationships and Facebook addiction is no exception to this. Further, it is evident that there has been a significant lack of empirical research in this regard from social marketing perspective despite the fact that it has been examined in psychological viewpoint [1-5].

### Objectives

Concerning the need of a study to examine the Facebook addiction from a social marketing perspective, this study aimed to examine the level of addictive consumption of Facebook among Sri Lankan consumers. Further, it attempted to examine variations of Facebook addiction among various demographical characteristics of consumers.

### Methods

The main purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between demographic factors of individuals and compulsive consumption behavior on Facebook with special reference to Sri Lankan Facebook users. As per previous literature, Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale (BFAS) has identified many factors that might have been symptoms of Facebook addiction [2]. As the above research gap explains, there is a need of use salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict and relapse dimensions to examine the Facebook addiction. The study is descriptive in nature and survey was carried out to test the association between compulsive consumption behavior on gender of individuals. The research was single cross-sectional as data was collected from the sample at a single point time. The unit of analysis was at individual level consumers. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample and the sample size was 254. The survey method was used to collect data and sample data was collected using self-administered questionnaire which was distributed among respondents. Descriptive statistics were generated with the aid of SPSS version 23.

### Analysis and Results

In this section the researcher validates objectives by testing hypothesis developed for each objective by using analysis techniques as appropriate. The first objective is to examine the degree of Facebook addiction among Facebook users in Sri Lanka.

According to Objective 1, the Degree of Facebook addiction is tested by comparing whether the Mean ( $\mu$ ) of Facebook addiction variable (according to Table 1, Mean of Facebook addiction is 2.84) is significantly less than the test value (3); in the present case. Researcher decided to use 3 as test value because it is neutral score of the scale and to test whether the mean value of Facebook addiction is significantly towards the positive side of the value scale that used to measure all the

items in the Facebook addiction variable. (Scale: 1-2.5=Normal users, 2.5-3.5=Lightly Addicted, 3.5- 5=Seriously Addicted).

	N statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation statistic	Skewness statistic	Kurtosis statistic
Facebook Addiction	254	2.8451	0.84203	0.28	0.89
Valid N (listwise)	254				

**Table 1:** Mean values of scale variables.

According to the Methodology, test appropriate for this measure is one sample t-test.

Test Value=3						
	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
Facebook Addiction	-2.932	253	0.004	-0.15492	-0.259	-0.0509

**Table 2:** One sample Test for Degree of Facebook Advertising.

According to the one sample t-test, the significant value is 0.004 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the researcher concluded that mean value of Facebook addiction is not equal to 3 among Facebook users in Sri Lanka (Table 2).

### Gender and Facebook addiction

Second objective is to examine significant difference between males and females in terms of Facebook addiction. Independent sample t-test

was carried out to see if there are any significant differences in the means of two groups in the variables interest (Table 3).

According to the result of Independent sample t-test, the significant value is 0.000 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05, the mean value of Facebook addiction of Males is significantly different to mean value of Facebook addiction of Females. Therefore, the researcher concluded that Facebook addiction vary according to the Gender.

	Levene's Test for Equality of variances		t	df	t-test for Equality of Means			Lower	Upper
	F	F Sign.			Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. difference Error		
FBA Equal variances assumed	2.363	0.12551	4.014	252	0.000	0.41423	0.10319	0.21101	0.61745
Equal variances not assumed			4.062	249.949	0.000	0.41423	0.10197	0.21339	0.61506

**Table 3:** Independent Samples Test.

According to the Table 4, 76 of respondents were Normal users, 88 of respondents were lightly addicted and rest of 90 respondents were seriously addicted to Facebook. Out of 88 of lightly addicted respondents, 21.4% of respondents are male and 40.4% of respondents

are female. Further, out of 90 of seriously Facebook addicted respondents, 53.6% of respondents are male and 13.2% of respondents are female. Therefore researcher concluded that males are lightly or seriously addicted to Facebook rather than females.

	Facebook Addiction Categories			Total
	Lightly Addicted	Moderately Addicted	Highly Addicted	
Male count	30	35	74	140
% within Gender	21.40%	25%	53.60%	100%

Female Count	46	53	15	114
% within Gender	40.40%	46.50%	13.20%	100%
Total Count	76	88	90	254

**Table 4:** Gender Facebook addiction categories cross tabulation.

The results revealed that 70% of the respondents demonstrate addictive consumption of Facebook whereas 20% of respondents are seriously addicted. Further, it was evident that males are more addicted to use Facebook than females. Moreover, income and level of education seemed to have an impact on addictive consumption of Facebook.

### Education level and Facebook addiction

This section examine whether the education level of the Facebook users has an influence on Facebook addiction, the researcher tests whether the Mean Values of Facebook addiction distributions between social class categories significantly differs to each other. According to Sekaran, Analysis of variance (ANOVA) helps to examine the

significant mean differences among more than two groups on an interval or ratio-scaled dependent variable [6,7]. Therefore, appropriate test for this requirement is one way ANOVA test. The variables under interest satisfy the pre-requisites to run the independent sample t-test. (Dependent Variable is a ratio scale, Independent variable has independent Five (05) categories, and Dependent variable is normally distributed under the Five (05) categories.

Skewness and Kurtosis values between (-2) and (+2), data is normally distributed. Therefore, distribution of Facebook addiction between levels of education is normal.

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
4.984	4	249	0.001

**Table 5:** Test of homogeneity of variances Facebook addiction.

	Statistic <sup>a</sup>	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	1.297	4	51.947	0.283

<sup>a</sup>Asymptotically F distributed.

**Table 6:** Robust tests of equality of means.

According to Table 5 Levene test statistic (0.001), it is less than  $\alpha$  (0.05), which suggests that variances are not equal. Hence, the statistic for ANOVA test is extracted from Welch sig value from the Table 6.

P value (0.283) is greater than  $\alpha$  (0.05), therefore, the researcher concluded that Facebook addiction does not significantly vary according to the levels of education of the Facebook users in Sri Lanka.

### Discussion/Conclusion

Findings of the study shed lights on social as well as policy implications. Policy makers in education sector could consider the possibility of students to be addictive in social media usage and educate students about negative consequences of such an addictive behaviour. Further, consultation and mentoring programmes could address the issue of addictive social media consumption and improve individuals' self-control in social media usage. Moreover, effectively designed awareness campaigns may be useful in controlling addictive social media consumption.

Among sample Facebook users, 55.1% of respondents are Male while 44.9% of respondents are Female which indicated that there is no much difference between number of users in gender aspect. Although in previous literature mentioned that Females are more in Facebook, current statistics suggest that Males (Mean: 3.0310) have been used

Facebook more than Females (Mean: 2.6168) in Sri Lankan context. As per Socialbakers.com, (which compiles social media statistics globally) higher number of Facebook users in Sri Lanka are males. So, this evidence is further validated by the sample's gender composition. Therefore, researcher can conclude marketing activities on Facebook should consider posting content that are favourable to men than women on Facebook, due to the fact that Male are dominant on Facebook in Sri Lanka. Majority of users (77.2%) are belong to age 18-27 which means that young generation in Sri Lanka is much engaged in Facebook. This finding is mainly consistent with the findings of Thompson. In Thompson's study, gender differences were examined and according to the findings, females were more likely than males to report spending more time on Facebook. There are many success stories about Facebook usage but at the same time, it also has some negative impacts because of addictive behavior on Facebook. Facebook addiction, excessive use of the Internet or, compulsive consumption behaviour on Facebook has been discussed. The amount of time spent on Facebook, checking social media frequently, spend entire nights on the site, daydreaming about the status updates and comment that have been received are the emerging evidences for negative impact of Facebook addiction. It is essential to understand the level of addiction predict the other factors, because the reality of addictive behavior on Facebook is a growing problem for many users.

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