

The Relationship between New Media Literacy and Social Media Addiction Among University Personnel

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the relationship between new media literacy and social media addiction among university personnel. Designed as a quantitative study using correlational survey and causal-comparative designs, it included 237 academic and administrative staff members at Istanbul Gelisim University. Data were collected with the New Media Literacy Scale and the Social Media Addiction Scale and analyzed using Mann–Whitney U, Kruskal–Wallis H, and Spearman rank-order correlation. Findings show that participants had high new media literacy levels, while social media addiction scores clustered toward the upper end of the scale range. Significant differences emerged in functional consumption by gender, in selected dimensions by age and education level, and in most new media literacy dimensions by the most frequently used platform. The most notable result was a strong positive relationship between total new media literacy and total social media addiction scores ($r = .806$; $p < .001$). These findings suggest that digital competence does not automatically ensure controlled use.

KEYWORDS: digital literacy, higher education, new media literacy, social media addiction, university personnel.

INTRODUCTION

With digitalization, the media environment has evolved from a unidirectional flow of content into an interactive, participatory, and network-based structure. This transformation requires individuals not only to consume media content but also to produce, share, comment on, and critically evaluate it. Therefore, under new media conditions, the concept of media literacy has moved beyond technical usage skills into a more comprehensive framework encompassing the dimensions of access, analysis, evaluation, and production (İnceoğlu, 2016, p. 19); see also (Aytaş & Kaplan, 2017; Binark, 2007; Buckingham, 2003).

The new media ecosystem operates on a platform logic that does not leave the user merely in the position of a recipient but transforms them into a subject who produces data, struggles for visibility, and constantly receives feedback. Algorithmic sorting, personalized content streams, and instant interaction loops reshape the relationship individuals establish with the media along the axes of continuity, speed, and measurability. Therefore, new media literacy should be evaluated not just as tool-use proficiency, but as the capacity to comprehend the selection, prioritization, and orientation logic of platforms (Buckingham, 2007; Heiss, Nanz, & Matthes, 2023).

Current studies demonstrate that this framework also includes dimensions such as navigation, curation, evaluation, comprehension, production, and interaction within the context of social media (Heiss et al., 2023). This expansion requires viewing media literacy not merely as a protective filter, but as a critical competence that questions the production logic and impact of the media message (İnceoğlu, 2016, p. 20). Indeed, one of the foundational approaches in the field explains media literacy through the dimensions of representation, language, production, and audience/user (Buckingham, 2007, p. 48).

Hence, literacy in the context of new media is not limited solely to the competence of analyzing content; it also encompasses the capacity to question the reliability of the source, evaluate the way content enters circulation, and debate the potential social consequences of user participation. In other words, digital literacy must be addressed as a reasoning process that includes verification, selectivity, and responsible sharing dimensions beyond access and use (Buckingham, 2003, 2007; Heiss et al., 2023; İnceoğlu, 2016).

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THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

New media literacy is a multi-layered competence area that cannot be reduced merely to the ability to use digital tools. Within the theoretical framework, this area is treated as the entirety of the processes of accessing, analyzing, evaluating, and reproducing media messages. Consequently, what is expected of a new-media-literate individual is not only to access content but also to be able to question for what purposes that content was produced, within what relationships of value and interest it was put into circulation, and how it positions the user (Karaduman, 2019, p. 687).

This framework gains even greater significance when the structural characteristics of new media environments are taken into account. This is because new media diverges from traditional media in terms of interactivity, multimedia structure, asynchronous communication, and its simultaneous positioning of the user as both consumer and producer. While such an environment offers individuals opportunities to access information rapidly, gain visibility, and participate in public debates, it concurrently brings along risks such as information overload, manipulation, the erosion of privacy, and the pressure to remain constantly connected. For this reason, new media literacy must be considered alongside critical selectivity and self-regulation capacity (Binark, 2007, pp. 5, 21); see also (Heiss et al., 2023).

In this regard, new media literacy can also be interpreted as a capacity that places the user in a more reflexive position against the operation of the platform economy. Reflexivity here does not merely mean knowing technical functions; it also includes questioning the conditions of information production and circulation, recognizing how the desire for visibility and interaction shapes user behavior, and taking ethical consequences into account when participating in content circulation (Buckingham, 2007; Karaduman, 2019).

The increase in time spent on new media channels and these channels becoming an ordinary part of daily communication render new media literacy not only a pedagogical but also a social necessity (Göksel, 2018, p. 40). Social media platforms, in particular, combine the functions of receiving news, communicating, producing content, and participating in public debates within a single digital ecosystem, thereby placing the user into a multi-layered network of interaction (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2019, p. 175).

Social media, which is one of the most visible components of new media environments, offers users the opportunity to receive news, communicate, produce content, and participate in public debates. Today, these platforms are no longer just areas for spending leisure time, but have become digital environments that simultaneously fulfill functions such as generating professional visibility, networking, and identity presentation (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2019, p. 175). Nevertheless, dynamics such as being continuously online, instant feedback, and the search for visibility and social approval can intensify social media use, thereby fueling usage patterns that may lead to impairment in functionality (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2019, p. 176).

Longitudinal network analysis studies conducted on adult samples also reveal that problematic social media use is related to symptoms of anxiety, stress, and depression, yet can exhibit a structure conceptually distinct from them (Tullett-Prado, Doley, Zarate, Gomez, & Stavropoulos, 2023). At this point, social media addiction should be evaluated not solely by the high duration of use, but alongside loss of control, impairment in daily functionality, and over-reliance on online interaction (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2019, p. 176).

In other words, being more competent, more visible, and more productive in the digital environment does not always translate to a more balanced use. Therefore, it should be emphasized that the relationship between new media literacy and social media addiction is non-linear. While a higher level of literacy may, on one hand, strengthen critical awareness, verification skills, and self-regulation capacity, it may, on the other hand, be accompanied by an individual establishing more intense contact with platforms, producing content more frequently, and engaging further in digital interaction networks. Thus, the relationship in question needs to be addressed within the mutual interaction between platform logic and user practices, rather than through unidirectional assumptions such as a lack of skills or protective competence (Doğan, Yıldırım Şen, & Şahin, 2025; Tullett-Prado et al., 2023).

Consequently, when explaining the relationship between new media literacy and social media addiction, focusing solely on the individual competence level is insufficient. The tension between the structure of platforms that continuously generates stimulation, their promises of visibility and interaction, and the user's self-regulation capacity provides a ground where digital competence can, in some cases, increase alongside more intense platform participation (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2019; Doğan et al., 2025; Tullett-Prado et al., 2023).

University personnel constitute a particularly suitable sample for examining this relationship, as they utilize digital technologies intensively for both professional and personal purposes. Academic staff use new media for teaching, research, publication

circulation, and visibility, while administrative staff use it for institutional communication, coordination, and organizational operations. This situation indicates that social media use is not merely a leisure practice, but a daily activity intersecting with work life. Therefore, this sample allows the relationship between new media literacy and social media addiction to be evaluated within the context of institutional digitalization as well.

Although both constructs have been studied extensively, the existing literature has concentrated predominantly on students and adolescents, and empirical work examining new media literacy and social media addiction together among university staff remains limited. This gap is notable because this population combines high educational attainment with digital practice that is embedded in professional routines — a combination under which the assumed protective function of literacy has rarely been tested.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the new media literacy and social media addiction levels of university personnel?
2. Do these levels differ according to gender, age, job type, education level, daily duration of use, purpose of use, and the most frequently used social media platform?
3. What is the direction and strength of the relationship between new media literacy and social media addiction?

By addressing the two variables together within the same sample, the study aims to provide a more holistic and contextual evaluation regarding the digital practices of university personnel.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design and sample

The research is based on relational survey and causal-comparative designs within the framework of the quantitative research approach. The population of the study consists of academic and administrative staff working within Istanbul Gelisim University. Participants were included in the face-to-face data collection process on a voluntary basis; the study sample consisted of 237 individuals. The basic demographic distributions of the participant profile are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants

Variable	Group	n	%
Gender	Female	136	57.4
	Male	101	42.6
Age	24–30	53	22.4
	31–37	59	24.9
	38–44	32	13.5
	45–51	22	9.3
	52 and above	71	30.0
Job	Administrative staff	71	30.0
	Academic staff	166	70.0
Education level	Associate degree	17	7.2
	Bachelor's degree	74	31.2
	Master's degree	60	25.3
	Doctorate	86	36.3
Daily social media usage duration	1-2 hours	96	40.5
	3-4 hours	50	21.1
	5-6 hours	44	18.6
	7 hours and above	47	19.8
Purpose of social media use	Entertainment	40	16.9
	Communication	59	24.9
	Following the agenda	138	58.2

Most frequently used social media platform	Instagram	88	37.1
	X	55	23.2
	Facebook	37	15.6
	YouTube	32	13.5
	Other	25	10.5

Data collection tools

In the study, the 35-item New Media Literacy Scale was used to measure new media literacy (Koc & Barut, 2016). The scale consists of four sub-dimensions: functional consumption, critical consumption, functional production, and critical production. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was calculated as .945.

To evaluate the level of social media addiction, the 7-item "impairment in functionality" subscale of the Internet Addiction Scale developed by Güneç (2009) was used. The items were adapted to the social media context by Çömlekçi and Başol (2019), who replaced references to internet use with references to social media use and confirmed the unidimensional structure of the adapted form through confirmatory factor analysis ($\chi^2/df = 3.88$; RMSEA = .078; CFI = .96; GFI = .95). Items are scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = never, 5 = always). It should be noted that this instrument measures problematic social media use along a single axis of functional impairment and is not a diagnostic tool; it therefore positions participants on a continuum rather than classifying them as addicted or non-addicted. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was .896. The structural characteristics, reliability, and distribution indicators of the measurement instruments are presented collectively in Table 2.

Table 2. Structural, reliability and distribution characteristics of the measurement tools

Scale	Structure/Dimension	Item	α	Skewness	Kurtosis
New Media Literacy Scale	Total (4 dimensions)	35	.945	-0.697	1.744
	Functional consumption	—	—	-2.785	1.929
	Critical consumption	—	—	-1.730	1.520
	Functional production	—	—	-0.911	1.553
	Critical production	—	—	-0.296	0.220
Social Media Addiction Scale	Total (single dimension)	7	.896	-1.657	0.842

Note. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were compiled for total scale scores, while skewness and kurtosis values were compiled for total scores and sub-dimensions of new media literacy from this study's dataset.

Data analysis

Data analysis was carried out using the IBM SPSS 25.0 program. Prior to analysis, the dataset was reviewed; the demographic characteristics of the participants and scale scores were summarized through descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The distribution characteristics of the scale scores were evaluated via skewness and kurtosis values; furthermore, taking into account the Likert-type structure of the measurements along with the distribution patterns in sub-groups, the use of non-parametric tests in inter-group comparisons was deemed appropriate.

Accordingly, the Mann–Whitney U test was applied for variables containing two independent groups, and the Kruskal–Wallis H test was applied for variables containing three or more groups. Where the Kruskal–Wallis test yielded a significant result, pairwise Mann–Whitney U tests were conducted to identify which groups differed. As no correction for multiple comparisons was applied at this stage, these pairwise results are reported as exploratory and should be interpreted with caution; the omnibus Kruskal–Wallis results constitute the primary basis for the group comparisons. The Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between new media literacy and social media addiction. In all analyses, the statistical significance level was accepted as $p < .05$. Effect sizes were calculated for all group comparisons: $r = |Z|/\sqrt{N}$ for Mann–Whitney U tests and $\epsilon^2 = H/(N-1)$ for Kruskal–Wallis tests. These are interpreted using conventional benchmarks ($r = .10, .30$, and $.50$; $\epsilon^2 = .01, .06$, and $.14$ for small, medium, and large effects, respectively).

RESULTS

Descriptive findings

Descriptive statistics regarding the scales are reported in Table 3. Accordingly, the participants' total new media literacy score was 4.08, with the highest mean observed in the functional consumption dimension and the lowest mean in the critical production dimension. The total social media addiction score was 26.12 (SD = 5.34), corresponding to an item mean of 3.73 on the five-point scale; as the scale does not provide an established cut-off value, this score is reported descriptively rather than as an indication of diagnostic status. These findings suggest that participants are strong in accessing and using digital content, yet the critical production dimension remains relatively more limited.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics regarding the scales

Scale/Dimension	n	Min–Max	Mean $\pm$ SD
Functional consumption	237	2.00–5.00	4.27 $\pm$ 0.53
Critical consumption	237	2.09–5.00	4.16 $\pm$ 0.55
Functional production	237	1.57–5.00	4.03 $\pm$ 0.69
Critical production	237	2.20–5.00	3.88 $\pm$ 0.57
New media literacy total	237	2.14–5.00	4.08 $\pm$ 0.50
Social media addiction total	237	7.00–35.00	26.12 $\pm$ 5.34

Note. New media literacy scores are reported as item means (1–5), whereas the social media addiction score is reported as a total score (range 7–35; item mean = 3.73).

Inter-group comparisons

According to gender, a significant difference was found only in the functional consumption dimension ($U = 5650.00$; $p = .019$; $r = .15$). The functional consumption scores of male participants are higher than those of female participants. No significant difference was detected according to gender in critical consumption, functional production, critical production, total new media literacy, and total social media addiction scores ($p > .05$).

According to the age variable, there is a significant difference in the functional production dimension ($\chi^2(4) = 11.403$; $p = .022$; $\epsilon^2 = .048$) and in the total social media addiction score ($\chi^2(4) = 12.610$; $p = .013$; $\epsilon^2 = .053$). It is observed that the difference stems from the differentiation between the 24–30 age group and the 52 and above age group in functional production, and between the 24–30 age group and the 38–44 age group in social media addiction. This finding suggests that younger participants possess higher values in both functional production and social media addiction scores.

In contrast, a statistically significant differentiation was identified according to education level in functional consumption, critical consumption, critical production, total new media literacy, and total social media addiction scores ($p < .05$; $\epsilon^2 = .033$ –.041). When the mean ranks are examined, the associate degree group has the highest mean ranks for both total new media literacy (152.09) and total social media addiction (161.56), followed by the doctorate group (129.03 and 124.50, respectively). The lowest mean ranks were observed in the master's degree group (108.16 and 106.01, respectively), with the bachelor's degree group at a comparable level for total new media literacy (108.53). In the pairwise comparisons, the only statistically significant contrast was between the associate degree and master's degree groups. The elevated mean ranks observed in the doctorate group are therefore reported descriptively and were not confirmed as a significant contrast; nevertheless, the overall pattern suggests that the association between educational level and new media literacy is not linear.

There is no significant difference in new media literacy and social media addiction scores in terms of daily social media usage duration and purpose of use variables ($p > .05$). On the other hand, the most frequently used social media platform variable produced a significant difference in functional consumption ($\chi^2(4) = 14.474$; $p = .006$; $\epsilon^2 = .061$), critical consumption ($\chi^2(4) = 19.932$; $p = .001$; $\epsilon^2 = .084$), critical production ($\chi^2(4) = 10.345$; $p = .035$; $\epsilon^2 = .044$), and total new media literacy score ($\chi^2(4) = 15.617$; $p = .004$; $\epsilon^2 = .066$). This difference is explained particularly by the differentiation between Instagram and X (formerly Twitter) users and YouTube users.

The main results regarding group comparisons have been aggregated in Table 4 to increase readability. The detailed test statistics and non-significant results upon which the summary table is based are presented in Appendix Tables E1–E3.

Table 4. Summary of group comparisons according to demographic variables

Variable	Significant results	Direction of the difference	Effect Size
Gender	Functional consumption ($U = 5650.00$; $p = .019$)	Male > Female	$r = .15$
Age	Functional production ($\chi^2 = 11.403$; $p = .022$); social media addiction total ($\chi^2 = 12.610$; $p = .013$)	24–30 > 52 and above; 24–30 > 38–44	$\epsilon^2 = .048$; .053
Job type	There is no significant difference in any dimensions and total scores ($p > .05$)	—	—
Education level	Functional consumption ($\chi^2 = 8.945$; $p = .030$); critical consumption ($\chi^2 = 7.716$; $p = .042$); critical production ($\chi^2 = 9.019$; $p = .029$); new media literacy total ($\chi^2 = 9.033$; $p = .029$); social media addiction total ($\chi^2 = 9.792$; $p = .020$)	Associate degree > Master's degree	$\epsilon^2 = .033$ –.041
Daily usage duration	There is no significant difference in any dimensions and total scores ($p > .05$)	—	—
Purpose of use	There is no significant difference in any dimensions and total scores ($p > .05$)	—	—
Most frequently used platform	Functional consumption ($\chi^2 = 14.474$; $p = .006$); critical consumption ($\chi^2 = 19.932$; $p = .001$); critical production ($\chi^2 = 10.345$; $p = .035$); new media literacy total ($\chi^2 = 15.617$; $p = .004$)	Instagram > YouTube; X > YouTube	$\epsilon^2 = .044$ –.084

Note. The summary table was prepared by bringing together the primary findings related to group comparisons. Effect sizes are reported as r for Mann–Whitney U tests and ϵ^2 for Kruskal–Wallis tests. Dashes indicate no significant difference.

Correlation analysis

Spearman correlation coefficients regarding the relationship between new media literacy and social media addiction are reported in Table 5. Accordingly, the sub-dimensions of new media literacy show positive correlations among themselves. There is a moderate positive relationship between the total social media addiction score and the dimensions of functional consumption, critical consumption, functional production, and critical production, whereas a high level of positive relationship exists with the total new media literacy score.

Table 5. Spearman correlations between new media literacy dimensions and social media addiction

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Functional consumption	—					
2. Critical consumption	.694***	—				
3. Functional production	.549***	.692***	—			
4. Critical production	.491***	.631***	.638***	—		
5. New media literacy total	.770***	.886***	.845***	.831***	—	
6. Social media addiction total	.596***	.634***	.691***	.598***	.806***	—

Note. Spearman rank-order correlation coefficients are reported in the table. *** $p < .001$.

DISCUSSION

The first important finding of this study is that the new media literacy level of university personnel is high. Especially the high means observed in the functional consumption and critical consumption dimensions show that participants' skills in accessing, using,



and evaluating digital content are strong. This result is consistent with studies reporting high levels of new media literacy across various adult samples (Barkuş, 2020; Kara et al., 2018), and is further supported by recent work addressing social media literacy as a multidimensional structure and indicating that higher literacy can reduce information overload (Heiss et al., 2023). Nonetheless, the critical production dimension remaining lower compared to other dimensions suggests that users need to develop their critical intervention capacity in digital content production as much as their technical proficiency.

The fact that gender produced a significant difference only in the functional consumption dimension points out that male and female personnel have largely converged in terms of new media use. While this interpretation appears compatible with studies that did not detect strong gender-based differentiations in new media literacy (Barkuş, 2020), it partially diverges from findings reporting a difference in favor of males in social media addiction (Özşahin, 2019). Regarding the age variable, the prominence of the younger group especially in functional production and social media addiction scores can be explained by the effect of earlier and more intense exposure to digital platforms. Conversely, the lack of a significant difference by job type shows that academic and administrative staff developed similar usage practices within the institutional digital ecosystem.

When the differences obtained according to education level are examined, the highest mean ranks for both new media literacy and social media addiction are observed in the associate degree group, followed by the doctorate group, while the lowest mean ranks belong to the master's degree group. Although the pairwise comparisons confirmed only the contrast between the associate degree and master's degree groups, this distribution pattern suggests that educational attainment and new media literacy are not linearly related. A plausible reading is that the professional and critical competence of doctoral-level academic staff and the intensive everyday digital practices of associate-degree administrative staff — the latter possibly linked to age and generational factors — operate through different mechanisms yet produce similarly elevated scores. This interpretation should be treated as a hypothesis to be tested in future studies rather than as an established finding. On the other hand, the lack of a significant difference for the daily usage duration and purpose of use variables suggests that social media has become a normalized, homogeneous practice within working life and daily life. The fact that the primary motivation of 58.2% of the participants is 'following the agenda' indicates that university personnel exhibit a steady participation in digital environments due to institutional and professional requirements. This result does not completely overlap with previous findings reporting a positive relationship between duration of use and certain usage purposes with addiction (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2019). This situation indicates that rather than quantitative screen time, the quality of the relationship that users establish with platform mechanisms could also be important in explaining addiction.

It should be noted that although several group differences reached statistical significance, their effect sizes were small to moderate ($r = .15$; $\epsilon^2 = .033-.084$), indicating that demographic characteristics account for a limited portion of the variance in new media literacy and social media addiction. The relationship between the two constructs, examined below, is considerably more substantial. The most striking result of the research is the high level of positive relationship found between the total new media literacy score and the total social media addiction score ($r = .806$; $p < .001$). While traditional media literacy serves as a protective shield for the individual, new media literacy increases the individual's participation, content production, and networking skills (functional and critical production) in the platform ecosystem. Considering the structure of platform capitalism and algorithm logic, which are designed to keep the user constantly inside, generate stimulation, and reward interaction; it can be said that university personnel who are more proficient in using digital tools exhibit more intense participation in these cycles, and this, in turn, feeds addiction symptoms. Indeed, recent studies also demonstrate that when technical skill is evaluated together with platform usage and addiction levels, it does not always function protectively, and under certain conditions, it may even increase openness to online risks (Doğan et al., 2025). This finding suggests that competence does not automatically generate controlled and limited use. In other words, an individual being more competent in new media can make them as open to more intense participation as it can make them more critical toward social media environments. This finding shows that addressing new media literacy solely at the level of technical skills or critical analysis is insufficient; it needs to be considered along with components of self-regulation, time management, and digital well-being. Indeed, current findings show that digital self-control and subjective digital literacy positively predict digital well-being; hence, media literacy trainings should address technical and critical skills together with behavior regulation strategies (Mayiwar, Asutay, Tinghög, Västfjäll, & Barrafreem, 2025).

The magnitude of this association warrants caution. A shared variance of approximately 65% between two conceptually distinct constructs is considerably higher than typically reported in the literature, and several methodological factors may have contributed to it. Both instruments were administered within a single questionnaire, in the same session, using an identical five-point Likert



format, which creates conditions favourable to common method variance. Both scales also produced negatively skewed distributions, with skewness reaching -2.785 in the functional consumption dimension, suggesting ceiling effects and a possible acquiescence bias in which participants responded consistently toward the upper end of the scales. In addition, data were collected face-to-face, which may have introduced social desirability pressures, particularly for items concerning functional impairment. No statistical test of common method bias was conducted in this study. Accordingly, the strength of the observed association should be regarded as an upper-bound estimate, and the relationship requires replication using temporally or procedurally separated measurements before its magnitude can be treated as established.

The study includes certain limitations. First, the data were obtained from a single university through voluntary participation and self-report measures; the sample should therefore be regarded as a convenience sample rather than a probability sample, and the generalizability of the findings is limited. Second, the research is cross-sectional in nature; hence, it is not possible to reach a definitive judgment regarding the causal direction of the relationship between the variables. Third, the relatively low number of participants in some demographic sub-groups requires caution when interpreting sub-group comparisons, and because the pairwise comparisons were conducted without adjustment for multiple testing, the specific group contrasts reported here require replication before being treated as established differences. Fourth, social media addiction was assessed through a single-dimension subscale focused on functional impairment rather than a comprehensive multidimensional instrument, which constrains the scope of what can be inferred about problematic use. Finally, the data were collected in 2022, and the platform environment has changed substantially since then: TikTok was not included among the response options, and Twitter has since been rebranded as X. The platform-specific findings in particular should therefore be read as reflecting the digital environment of the period in which the data were gathered. In future research, it is recommended to work with multi-center samples from different universities, prefer longitudinal designs, include currently dominant platforms, and examine new media literacy together with variables such as digital well-being, burnout, and the attention economy. In this respect, recent meta-analyses showing that problematic social media use is systematically related to psychosocial variables such as social anxiety, perceived social support, and online social support suggest that future models would benefit from being tested with a broader set of psychosocial variables (Huang, Zeng, & Wen, 2026; Wu, Huang, & Yang, 2024).

At the implementation level, it is important that new media literacy trainings in universities focus not only on imparting technical skills but also on developing the self-control and critical awareness skills that will balance social media use. The finding that active participation is associated with learning outcomes in experimentally designed social media literacy interventions further suggests that such trainings should be structured to include applied activities rather than content delivery alone (Zou, Drake, Masur, Whitlock, & Bazarova, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between new media literacy and social media addiction among university personnel. The findings show that digital skills do not always play a role that limits social media use; in some cases, they can develop together with more intense and sustained platform participation. Demographic characteristics accounted for a limited portion of the variance, while the association between the two constructs was substantial, though its magnitude requires replication under conditions that reduce common method bias. These results suggest that new media literacy training should address self-regulation alongside technical and critical competence.

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APPENDIX

This section presents the detailed test statistics for the group comparisons summarised in the main text.

Table E1

Detailed group comparisons by gender, age, and job type

Grouping variable	Dimension / Score	Test statistic	p	Effect size
Gender	Functional consumption	U = 5650.00	.019	r = .15
	Critical consumption	U = 6820.00	.927	r = .01
	Functional production	U = 6638.00	.659	r = .03
	Critical production	U = 6778.00	.863	r = .01
	New media literacy total	U = 6484.00	.462	r = .05
	Social media addiction total	U = 6863.50	.993	r = .00
Age	Functional consumption	$\chi^2(4) = 4.436$	.350	$\epsilon^2 = .019$
	Critical consumption	$\chi^2(4) = 8.993$	.061	$\epsilon^2 = .038$
	Functional production	$\chi^2(4) = 11.403$	.022	$\epsilon^2 = .048$
	Critical production	$\chi^2(4) = 1.860$	.761	$\epsilon^2 = .008$
	New media literacy total	$\chi^2(4) = 5.281$	.260	$\epsilon^2 = .022$
	Social media addiction total	$\chi^2(4) = 12.610$	.013	$\epsilon^2 = .053$
Job type	Functional consumption	U = 5863.50	.951	r = .00
	Critical consumption	U = 5688.50	.672	r = .03
	Functional production	U = 5406.50	.314	r = .07
	Critical production	U = 5678.50	.657	r = .03
	New media literacy total	U = 5878.50	.976	r = .00
	Social media addiction total	U = 5838.50	.910	r = .01

Note. The Mann–Whitney U test was used for two-group comparisons and the Kruskal–Wallis H test for multi-group comparisons. Effect sizes are reported as $r = |Z|/\sqrt{N}$ for Mann–Whitney U tests and $\epsilon^2 = H/(N - 1)$ for Kruskal–Wallis tests. Significant differences: functional consumption by gender (male > female); functional production by age (24–30 > 52 and above); social media addiction total by age (24–30 > 38–44).

Table E2

Detailed group comparisons by education level, daily usage duration, and purpose of use

Grouping variable	Dimension / Score	Test statistic	p	Effect size
Education level	Functional consumption	$\chi^2(3) = 8.945$	.030	$\epsilon^2 = .038$
	Critical consumption	$\chi^2(3) = 7.716$	.042	$\epsilon^2 = .033$
	Functional production	$\chi^2(3) = 6.731$	.081	$\epsilon^2 = .029$
	Critical production	$\chi^2(3) = 9.019$	.029	$\epsilon^2 = .038$
	New media literacy total	$\chi^2(3) = 9.033$	.029	$\epsilon^2 = .038$

	Social media addiction total	$\chi^2(3) = 9.792$	.020	$\epsilon^2 = .041$
Daily usage duration	Functional consumption	$\chi^2(3) = 1.936$	.586	$\epsilon^2 = .008$
	Critical consumption	$\chi^2(3) = 2.225$	.527	$\epsilon^2 = .009$
	Functional production	$\chi^2(3) = 0.799$	.850	$\epsilon^2 = .003$
	Critical production	$\chi^2(3) = 5.726$	.126	$\epsilon^2 = .024$
	New media literacy total	$\chi^2(3) = 1.953$	.582	$\epsilon^2 = .008$
Purpose of use	Social media addiction total	$\chi^2(3) = 2.742$	.433	$\epsilon^2 = .012$
	Functional consumption	$\chi^2(2) = 1.145$	.564	$\epsilon^2 = .005$
	Critical consumption	$\chi^2(2) = 1.239$	.538	$\epsilon^2 = .005$
	Functional production	$\chi^2(2) = 0.276$	.871	$\epsilon^2 = .001$
	Critical production	$\chi^2(2) = 0.299$	.861	$\epsilon^2 = .001$
	New media literacy total	$\chi^2(2) = 0.129$	.937	$\epsilon^2 = .001$
	Social media addiction total	$\chi^2(2) = 0.304$	.859	$\epsilon^2 = .001$

Note. Effect sizes are reported as $\epsilon^2 = H/(N - 1)$. In the pairwise comparisons, the only significant contrast for education level was between the associate degree and master's degree groups (associate degree > master's degree) across functional consumption, critical consumption, critical production, new media literacy total, and social media addiction total. Because these pairwise tests were not adjusted for multiple comparisons, they should be interpreted as exploratory.

Table E3

Detailed group comparisons by most frequently used platform

Grouping variable	Dimension / Score	Test statistic	p	Effect size
Platform type	Functional consumption	$\chi^2(4) = 14.474$	.006	$\epsilon^2 = .061$
	Critical consumption	$\chi^2(4) = 19.932$	.001	$\epsilon^2 = .084$
	Functional production	$\chi^2(4) = 6.723$	.151	$\epsilon^2 = .028$
	Critical production	$\chi^2(4) = 10.345$	.035	$\epsilon^2 = .044$
	New media literacy total	$\chi^2(4) = 15.617$	.004	$\epsilon^2 = .066$
	Social media addiction total	$\chi^2(4) = 6.081$	.193	$\epsilon^2 = .026$

Note. Effect sizes are reported as $\epsilon^2 = H/(N - 1)$. All significant contrasts for platform type were observed between the Instagram–YouTube and Twitter (now X)–YouTube pairs, with Instagram and Twitter (now X) users scoring higher than YouTube users.