

# Effects of Social Media Withdrawal on College Students

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## Overview

This study focuses on college students and the effects of social media withdrawal through the use of journal entries for 40 days.

- Students created a corpus of over 3000 daily diary entries from 2016-2017
- We identified 28 emergent codes using grounded theory (an inductive method) to examine a subset of the diaries.
- Internet addiction can be described as “an individual’s inability to control their Internet use, which in turn leads to feelings of distress and functional impairment of daily activities” <sup>1</sup>
- Some scholars claimed instead of looking at Internet addiction, researchers should focus on activities on the Internet that might be addictive because people do not become addicted to the medium, but to the behavior they engage in online. <sup>2</sup>

## Conceptual Framework

In research similar to this, several theories have been explored through social media and their users.

- **Social Power** is the idea that people receive reward, coercive, legitimate, and expertise power through social interactions.
- **Personal context** involves user intention and behavior and is an important variable to examine intentions with social media usage.

This research furthers our understanding of how users behave when social media access is withdrawn from them and demonstrates how users reflect on their individual experiences and their relationship with others in a social media vacuum. <sup>3</sup>

### References

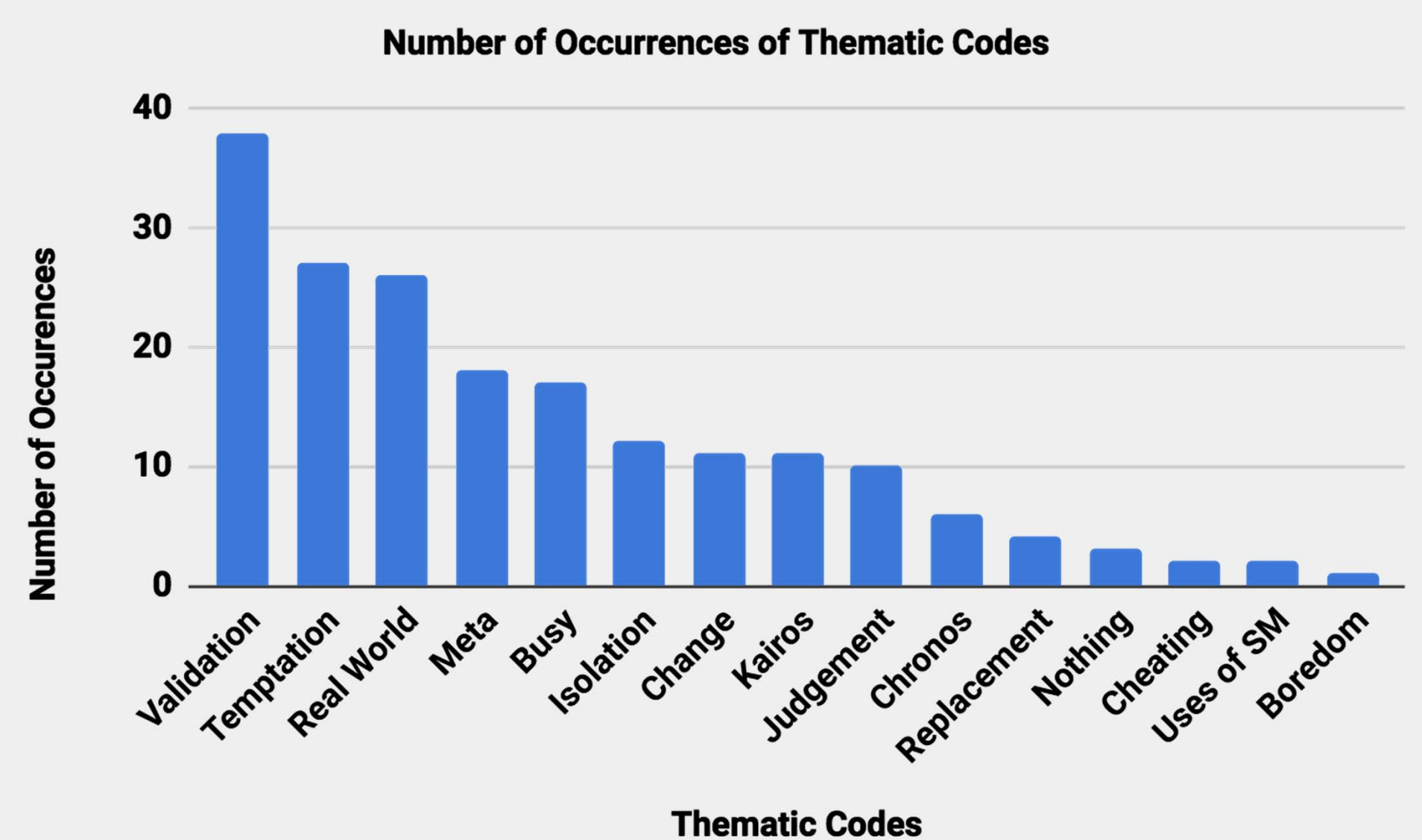
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## Acknowledgements

Ashley Terry would like to thank to Dr. Robinson and Dr. Lanisus for their mentorship and guidance. Funding was provided by the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

## Key Findings

- About ½ of the data is coded: the top three themes have been ‘**Validation**’, ‘**Temptation**’, and ‘**Real World**’.



Common words used in the journal entries were ‘**media**’, ‘**social**’, ‘**phone**’, ‘**friends**’, and ‘**Facebook**’.

## Conclusions

- Study participants diaries wrote the most about **validation** in reference to their actions, feelings, and thoughts during the period.
- **Social media** (of all forms) was never far from the minds of our writers, with over hundreds of mentions.
- Out of the original 28 thematic codes, we consolidated the codebook down to a more manageable 15 codes.
- Due to poor interrater reliability (54%), the next step is to further refine the codebook further or code the remaining diaries as a panel.