DESIRES AND DISCLOSURES: UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRE TO POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA

by

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ABSTRACT

While the uptake and integration of social media into our daily lives has been well-documented, little is known about the desire to post on social media even though that it presumably a critical first step preceding use, as indicated by the model of goal-directed behavior. This dissertation sought to develop and validate a measure of the desire to post on social media among Canadian and American social media users. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses revealed four key dimensions of the desire to post on social media: desire to post due to negative events in one's life, desire to post due to positive events, frequent desire to post, and desire to publicly post in ways that depict oneself in a favorable light. No gender or age differences were observed.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, people have relied more heavily on social media than ever before to maintain social connections while remaining physically distant. Consequently, people may desire to use these sites more than they did before the pandemic based on uses and gratification theory and the instrumentality principle. Changes in desiring to post on social media before (Fall 2019) and during the pandemic (June 2020) were assessed using a large cross-sectional sample of Canadian and American social media users. Overall scores on the desire to post tool did not differ between these two time periods; however, the desire to post when experiencing positive events and the frequency with which people desired to post decreased during COVID-19.

Correlation comparisons revealed the correlation between the desire to post when experiencing negative events and the desire to publicly and positively self-present had become stronger during COVID-19, as did the correlation between this negative events scale and the frequency with which people desired to post. These findings highlight how

desiring to post on social media changes in response to extraneous circumstances (e.g., not being able to socialize in person).

These findings have implications for researchers studying online posting behaviors, including self-disclosure of private information and uptake of new technologies, as well as for clinicians working with clients experiencing distress, social isolation, or problematic social media use.

DEDICATION

To all of those who wish to be defined by their accomplishments rather than their marital status.

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CHAPTER I

General Introduction

Social media is a general term used to refer to websites and web applications in which users are able to create an online community and socialize with other users (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Social media users are defined as individuals who have signed up for a profile on a social media platform. On sites for which they have a profile, users often are able to create, share, and react to content (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). This content may include short or long blocks of text, pictures, videos, or audio clips. Although non-users may be able to view some content, many of the features and functions on social media require individuals to create a profile in which they provide some information about themselves (boyd & Ellison, 2008). Once individuals have created a profile, they can create a list of other users with whom they have a connection or who have created or shared content that the user wishes to access (i.e., a friends list; boyd & Ellison, 2008). Social media users are able to engage in four types of activities: posting content, viewing content from others, interacting with others' content (e.g., share, comment, retweet, favorite, upvote, like, pin), and sending private messages. Social media sites differ in the terminology assigned to these behaviors, but these four activities can be found on any social media site, making them the keystones of modern social media use.

Social media use has become nearly ubiquitous in North America (Gruzd, Jacobson, Mai, & Dubois, 2018; Perrin, 2015; Smith & Anderson, 2018). Prevalence rates put social media use above 75% in the United States and Canada (Gruzd et al., 2018; Perrin, 2015), with many individuals using multiple social media platforms (Smith & Anderson, 2018). The public nature of much of social media use engender judgements

about the individuals' behaviors, past times, values, and ultimately their worth by potential employers (Harrison & Budworth, 2015) and romantic partners (Cravens, Leckie, & Whiting, 2013; Helsper & Whitty, 2010; McDaniel, Drouin, & Cravens, 2017). There has been considerable discourse about the privacy of information posted on social media and in particular the risks that such exposure of personal information entails (Hoffmann, Lutz, & Ranzini, 2016; Jia & Xu, 2016; Utz & Krämer, 2009; Walrave, Vanwesenbeeck, & Heirman, 2012). Having concerns, however, does not lead inevitably to efforts to protect one's information (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Hallam & Zanella, 2017; Hoffmann et al., 2016). Other factors likely override an individuals' decision to post personal information on social media despite concerns about the loss of privacy. No measure captures desire to post on social media, nor specifically the desire to post about oneself. As a result, little is known about how this desire relates to social media use, self-disclosure on social media, and concerns about privacy. These omissions represent important gaps in the literature because studying the desire to post on social media can help us to 1) describe the desire and its structure, 2) predict how and when it occurs, 3) identify individuals with problematic relationships with social media, and 4) control and change the intensity of this desire.

The current project sought to address these gaps over three stages. Stages one and two assessed and validated the factor structure of a scale measuring the desire to post on social media. This tool was designed to incorporate a scale addressing the desire to self-disclose on social media. When validating the construct (stage two), desire to post was compared to related concepts, including problematic social media use and privacy concerns. Phase three was originally framed by uses and gratification theory to guide an

experiment to test the effect of anticipated consequences of social media use on the desire to post. Uses and gratification theory posits that individuals receive rewards when using media that satisfy their needs and that identifying both rewards and needs is critical for understanding the maintenance of a given behavior (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974; Kircaburun, Alhabash, Tosuntaş, & Griffiths, 2018; Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009; Phua, Jin, & Kim, 2017). In line with this view, proponents of this theory argue that continued use of the media is dependent on the individual receiving the rewards that were sought (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1979; Rubin, 2008). Originally, participants' anticipated consequences (rewards) associated with social media use were going to be experimentally manipulated to satisfy or frustrate these social psychological needs.

However, because of logistical and ethical issues arising from the pandemic, the final phase of this dissertation was altered to permit comparison of pre-pandemic levels of desire to post to levels of desire to post on social media during the pandemic. Uses and gratification theory was adopted once again as the leading theory. The need to connect has been utilized with uses and gratification theory to understand the rewards people seek when using social media in previous works (e.g., Chen, 2011) and was chosen to guide my dissertation research as well. Finally, the instrumentality principle (Finkel & Eastwick, 2015) was used to account for why social media would be the outlet people turned to during COVID-19 to meet their need to connect. This principle posits that situational factors, such as goal importance, are key determinants in the decisions we make (Finkel & Eastwick, 2015).

Social Media Use Behaviors

Social media in its current form dates back to 1997 when the first social networking site – SixDegrees – was released (boyd & Ellison, 2008). SixDegrees differed from sites that were developed before it, such as Classmates, which served as a directory of individuals, or AIM, which facilitated private, personal communication between friends. When using SixDegrees, users could create a profile, build a friends list, and view other users' friends lists (boyd & Ellison, 2008). This format became a staple feature in the format and functionality of future social networking sites (e.g., Friendster, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter). Many advances have occurred in social media sites since 1997. Social media no longer consists solely of social networking sites; using social media, people are able to review businesses (e.g., Yelp; King, 2016), plan vacations (e.g., TripAdvisor; King, 2016), and live broadcast moments or events of one's life (e.g., Periscope; Friedländer, 2017). The following review of the literature will provide insight into the rates of social media use, reasons for using social media, consequences of social media use, and theories used to explain social media use behaviors.

Rates of Use

Internet use in general has pervaded society since the late 1990s. In 2018, only 11% of U.S. adults did not use the internet (Anderson, Perrin, & Jiang, 2018). Access to the internet became increasingly easy with the invention of smartphones and tablets, which provide individuals with mobile access to the web from the palm of their hand (Anderson, 2015). With this rise in internet access came a wave of social media applications that could only be used from a smart device (e.g., Snapchat, WhatsApp, Periscope).

In line with the rapid uptake of internet usage, social media use also has grown dramatically in popularity since its inception (Perrin, 2015). The majority of Canadian (94%; Gruzd et al., 2018) and U.S. (76%; Perrin, 2015) adult internet users have a profile on at least one social networking site. The median U.S. adult in 2018 used three different social media sites (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Social media use among young adults was highly prevalent with an 88% rate among those 18 to 29 years old and a 78% rate for those 30-49 years old (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Even though social media use rates are lower in older demographic groups, two-thirds (64%) of individuals in their fifties and early sixties (50-64) and a third (37%) of individuals 65 and older use social media (Smith & Anderson, 2018).

Posts on Social Media

Social media websites offer users significant freedom regarding the content that they can post on their own profiles. People can share personal information, opinions, news stories, jokes, advertisements, tips, and false information. The marketing research firm RadiumOne (2015) found that photos were commonly shared by Australian men (80%) and women (89%) online. Many individuals also posted content of emotional importance (37% men and 55% women), to ask for advice (27% and 22%), and to express themselves (16% and 23%). These findings draw attention to how common posting personal content is. This research was conducted with a marketing research lens. This perspective resulted in the research only addressing questions that would help companies understand how to better market themselves to consumers. As such, the research does not give a full picture of the types of content individuals post on social media or the extent to which they post about their personal lives.

Self-presentation on social media. Regardless of the exact nature of the posts, people use social media to self-present (e.g., Lee-Won, Shim, Joo, & Park, 2014; Pounders, Kowalczyk, & Stowers, 2016; Salimkhan, Manago, & Greenfield, 2010; Seidman, 2013, 2014). Self-presentation is the act of shaping or controlling how others view the self (i.e., people creating a representation of themselves for others to see). Despite the reputation for false or misleading self-presentations on the internet in general (Drouin, Miller, Wehle, & Hernandez, 2016), self-presentations on social media have been found to be representative of who an individual is offline (Back et al., 2010), and social media sites have been found to be the forum where people are most honest (Drouin et al., 2016). Social media sites lack the anonymity that many other sites (e.g., chatrooms, dating websites, sexual encounter websites) offer, as such individuals likely feel obligated to be more honest and expect others to be more honest as well when using social media (Drouin et al., 2016).

Although representative of who the person is, an individual's self-presentation on social media typically is crafted carefully to present a particular image that the individual wants to portray (i.e., being selective in what they decide to post online; Lowe-Calverley & Grieve, 2018; Peluchette & Karl, 2009). In a qualitative survey of 203 Australian adults, participants were asked which factors they considered before posting on social media (Lowe-Calverley & Grieve, 2018). Thematic coding revealed ten meta-themes, including audience (how would the post be perceived), attractiveness (desire to look physically good), response (how would people react to this post/would they react in the desired way), privacy (who would be able to see this post), and humor (whether others would find the post funny). These findings highlight how cognizant both men and women

are about how they structure their self-presentations on social media. Each of these factors can help individuals to structure their online self-presentations in a very particular manner.

Self-disclosure on social media. Although self-presentations can include disclosure of personal information, self-disclosure is a distinct concept that does not occur in all self-presentations. Self-disclosure is the voluntary divulgence of personal information to others and is of particular interest in the current research. In a study of German social media users, amount of self-presentation was unrelated to self-disclosure on social media when analyzed via a confirmatory factor analysis (Krasnova, Spiekermann, Koroleva, & Hildebrand, 2010). Self-disclosure occurs at higher rates online than in face-to-face conversations, making social media a prime context for individuals to self-disclose (Nguyen, Bin, & Campbell, 2012). A review of research on computer-mediated and face-to-face self-disclosure found that people disclosed more online than in person, which may reflect online disinhibition, greater perceived intimacy, overcompensating for lack of visual cues, or a perceived norm for self-disclosure online (Nguyen et al., 2012).

Self-disclosure on social media is closely related to the drive to build or maintain relationships (Bazarova & Choi, 2014; Krasnova et al., 2010; Posey, Lowry, Roberts, & Ellis, 2010). When analyzing the content of 81 U.S. college students' Facebook profiles (N = 1295 posts/messages) and their open-ended explanations for the goal of each post, Bazarova and Choi (2014) found that roughly one-third (35.7%) of all self-disclosure posts and messages had the intent of relationship maintenance or building. However, the most common reason for their self-disclosure in status updates was social validation, with

more than half (51.6%) of all status updates seeking approval or validation from their friends list.

Privacy concerns on social media. As posts on social media can be visible to small or large audiences, concerns have been raised regarding privacy online (Hallam & Zanella, 2017; Hoffmann et al., 2016; Jia & Xu, 2016; Utz & Krämer, 2009; Walrave et al., 2012). Approximately one-third (29.9%-36.1%) of individuals listed as friends on adults' Facebook profiles are people who the individual has never met in person (Kezer et al., 2016). Choi and Bazarova (2015) assessed whether self-disclosure differed based on the privacy of a social media profile and the size of the audience for the posts. On average, participants (N = 164; ages 18-23) had approximately one thousand people in their Facebook network (M = 1048.6, SD = 485.5, median: 978.0), whereas they had around a hundred people in their Twitter network (M = 142.7, SD = 265.0, median: 76.5; Choi & Bazarova, 2015). Network size was positively correlated with the intimacy of their self-disclosures (Choi & Bazarova, 2015). Based on Kezer et al.'s (2016) findings, the average Facebook user in Choi and Bazarova's (2015) study would have somewhere between 300 to 360 "friends" who they have not personally met. With so many strangers on people's Facebook accounts, there is cause for concern regarding the personal information being disclosed there; however, privacy concerns were unrelated to protecting private information for both Facebook and Twitter (Choi & Bazarova, 2015).

There is considerable variability in users' concerns about their personal information being seen online (Steijn, Schouten, & Vedder, 2016). This concern does not always align with behaviors that keep their information private (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Hoffmann et al., 2016). Participants disclosed more intimate information on Facebook

than on Twitter, regardless of the privacy setting on Twitter (i.e., a public or private account), and participants had the most privacy concerns about their Facebook account, followed by their public Twitter account, then their protected (private) Twitter account (*N* = 1629 posts; Choi & Bazarova, 2015). When looking at the interaction between account type and network size on the intimacy of individuals' self-disclosures, larger network sizes for Facebook were associated with disclosures being more intimate. For protected Twitter accounts, larger networks were associated with less intimate disclosures, and for public Twitter accounts, the intimacy level of self-disclosures did not change based on network size (Choi & Bazarova, 2015). Heirman et al. (2016) also found that adolescents (*N* = 1564; ages 12-18) self-disclosed more when they had more Facebook friends and when their privacy settings were less restrictive. Although Facebook has clearer boundaries regarding who can see the content than Twitter, the audience for these posts tend to be quite large (Choi & Bazarova, 2015) and often consists of people who the individual does not know (Kezer et al., 2016).

Having greater privacy concerns has not been found to increase protection of one's private information (e.g., not posting one's email, cell phone number, home address; Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Hallam & Zanella, 2017; Hoffmann et al., 2016). Acquisti and Gross (2006) suggested that this finding may reflect misconceptions about how privacy works on Facebook or lack of knowledge about how to change privacy settings (30% of their sample did not know if they could change their privacy settings and 22% did not know what their privacy settings were). In more recent years, Steijn et al. (2016) have suggested that people's definitions of privacy may have changed. In their study of social media users versus non-users (*N* = 1714), a path analysis revealed that

younger social media users saw more benefits (and less risks) to social media use and had weaker conceptions of privacy; all of which led to fewer concerns about privacy and sharing personal information online (Steijn et al., 2016).

Reasons for Social Media Use

Despite concerns of privacy, individuals have many reasons for using social media. Uses and gratifications theory, one of the most widely-adopted theories for research on the reasons for using social media, proposes that people receive rewards (or gratifications) which satisfy needs (e.g., social, leisure, or informational needs) when they use media (Katz et al., 1974; Kircaburun et al., 2018; Park et al., 2009; Phua et al., 2017). Social media use is linked to a wide variety of gratifications, such as social, intrinsic, and career gratifications (Friedländer, 2017; Fu et al., 2017; Kezer et al., 2016; Krasnova et al., 2017; Lin et al., 2017; Whiting & Williams, 2013). Consistent use of a media source is dependent on the individual receiving the rewards that were sought (Rubin, 2008; Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1979). As such, people can be selective about the media they choose to use (Rubin, 1986, 2008).

Beyond entertainment value (Kezer, Sevi, Cemalcilar, & Baruh, 2016; Krasnova, Veltri, Eling, & Buxmann, 2017), a primary appeal of social media is its ability to help people stay connected with others (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2010; Fu, Wu, & Cho, 2017; Walrave et al., 2012). Social media allows people to connect easily with others regardless of distance or time constraints (Ruppel et al., 2017). Social ties are the driving force behind many of the reasons that individuals report using social media (Friedländer, 2017; Fu et al., 2017; Whiting & Williams, 2013). Some research suggests that social media vary in the social reasons underlying use of the platform (Lin, Lee, Jin, &

Gilbraeth, 2017). In a survey of U.S. adults, Facebook use was more strongly associated with social reasons than was Pinterest use (Lin et al., 2017). Although technically a social media platform, Pinterest represents a repository of instructional guides and inspiration more than a site to connect socially. Pinterest was used to find ideas, inspiration, and information on projects, products, or services more than Facebook was (Lin et al., 2017). Similarly, reasons for using YouTube are often not social in nature, as YouTube is primarily used to view videos, especially for informational, entertainment, and mood management purposes (Shao, 2008). YouTube is a video streaming social media site, so the main draw is likely the video content, not necessarily the social features.

Social media use can feel highly rewarding, as social interaction on these sites can act as social reinforcement (Centola, 2010). In an experiment conducted by Centola (2010), participants ($N = 1528$) joined a new social networking site to which only study participants had access. They then were able to join a second social networking site focused on health, again for participants only. Centola (2010) found that when social ties were clustered (i.e., shared connections between one's own social ties and these individuals' social ties), social reinforcement from these ties encouraged quicker adoption of the second social networking site throughout the network of individuals. In a more applied approach, Ha, Han, Lee, and Kim (2017) assessed how people responded to being tagged in a Facebook comment. Of the 418,580 comments analyzed, people responded to being tagged 77.8% on the time, typically by commenting (33.6% of tags) and/or liking the post or (sub)comment (44.2% of the tags). Tagged individuals preferred to respond to the tagger directly by liking (98.6% of like responses) and/or commenting (90.1% of comment responses) on the tagger's (sub)comment. These results suggest that

individuals may have been socially reinforcing each other's social media use by furthering the social interaction.

Social media use also has been found to be rewarding on a neurological level (Tamir & Mitchell, 2012; RadiumOne, 2015; RhythmOne, 2017). For example, Tamir and Mitchell (2012) reported that more dopamine is released in the brain when individuals share information about themselves with others compared to when they reported facts or information about others. Based on this distinction, the researchers concluded that self-disclosure is intrinsically rewarding (Tamir & Mitchell, 2012). In fact, Tamir and Mitchell (2012) also found that there was greater dopamine release when participants believed that they were sharing this self-disclosure with another person than when it was merely introspective. These findings suggest that social media – a place where people can post about themselves for others to see – could be a quintessential source for individuals to self-disclose to a perceived audience and experience an increase of dopamine, which creates a rewarding or pleasurable sensation. People may develop loyalty to sources that consistently trigger dopamine release (e.g., a particular website or brand), and this loyalty can lead to further use and interaction with the source (RhythmOne, 2017). These rewards also might contribute ultimately to problematic social media use (RadiumOne, 2015).

As social media use is linked to a wide variety of gratifications (Friedländer, 2017; Fu et al., 2017; Kezer et al., 2016; Krasnova et al., 2017; Lin et al., 2017; Whiting & Williams, 2013), the desire to post may be associated with these gratifications as well. Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) proposed that social media use was a product of two key needs: the need to belong and the need for self-presentation. The need to belong is the

psychological need for social acceptance and socialization. The need for self-presentation is the process of managing how others perceive oneself. Based on a review of prior literature, Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) found that operationalized measures of these needs were repeatedly found to be associated with greater use of social media. Similarly, the need for social approval may play a role in use of social media as well. Frequent social media users score higher on the need for social approval than less frequent users do (Lo Coco et al., 2018). Need for social approval is associated with greater social conformity (Horton, Marlowe, & Crowne, 1963; Strickland & Crowne, 1962), more intimate (and verbose) public self-disclosures (Cravens, 1975), and greater fear of missing out (Lai, Altavilla, Ronconi, & Aceto, 2016). The need for social approval is beneficial in understanding the desire to post about oneself on social media as it has a direct association with self-disclosure. Experimental research is needed to assess the direct association between social gratifications and desire to self-disclose before causal claims can be made, which was one of the original goals of this dissertation.

Many studies have found that individuals use social media for intrinsic gratifications, such as self-expression (Bazarova & Choi, 2014; Fu et al., 2017; Seidman, 2014). Self-expression often is given as a reason for use (Bazarova & Choi, 2014; Dindar & Yaman, 2018; Whiting & Williams, 2013) and can predict social media use intention (Cao et al., 2013). Social media use can feel good, from the pleasurable feelings of self-disclosure (Seidman, 2014) to hedonic reactions to social media cues (van Koningsbruggen, Hartmann, Eden, & Veling, 2017). In a series of implicit measures studies (total $N = 200$; ages 19-67), frequent social media users experienced more pleasurable responses after exposure to social media logos than to control cues and

compared to less frequent social media users (van Koningsbruggen et al., 2017). Experiencing hedonic reactions to these social media cues was associated with participants experiencing a greater craving to use social media (e.g., "I would love if it was possible to use Facebook right now" or "I will use Facebook immediately after I finished this survey;" van Koningsbruggen et al., 2017). These findings strongly suggest that intrinsic gratifications may predict the desire to post on social media.

Career-based gratifications are another reason for individuals to use social media (i.e., utilitarian reasons). Individuals can use social media to pursue job opportunities (Harrison & Budworth, 2015; Peterson & Dover, 2014), build network connections (McCorkle & McCorkle, 2012; Peterson & Dover, 2014), and self-market themselves (Manai & Holmlund, 2015). LinkedIn is a social networking site devoted entirely to helping individuals build their career (Florenthal, 2015; McCorkle & McCorkle, 2012; Peterson & Dover, 2014). As such, career-based gratifications may play a role in some individuals' desire to post on social media. Based on the findings of past research, this dissertation had intended to use a variety of possible gratifications to manipulate perceived consequences of social media use, before plans had to be changed.

Consequences of Social Media Use

Self-disclosing on social media is linked to a range of positive dimensions on psychological wellbeing (Grieve & Watkinson, 2016; Petko et al., 2015). In a survey of 164 adult Facebook users, higher degrees of authenticity on Facebook were associated with greater social connectedness and lower stress (Grieve & Watkinson, 2016). A review of 16 studies on self-disclosure via blogging found that self-disclosure was associated with beneficial, self-initiated coping mechanisms, such as venting frustrations

to engage in emotion-focused coping or posting about one's problems to receive support and empathy from others (Petko et al., 2015). Over half (58.8%) of the studies found that emotion-focused coping was a common strategy employed via blogging, and a little over half (52.9%) of the studies found that the comments section of the blog provided a sense of communal empathy and support.

Even negative feedback for online self-disclosure is linked to improved self-esteem (Vossen, Koutamanis, & Walther, 2017). An experiment using feedback type from a confederate (positive or negative) and communication type (online or face-to-face) involved randomly assigning 149 young adult (ages 18-30) to one of the four conditions (Vossen et al., 2017). When participants received negative feedback from the confederate after self-disclosing, individuals who were communicating online were harsher in feedback to the confederate than were those who received negative feedback in person. When engaging in this negative reciprocal feedback, individuals in the online condition reported greater self-esteem than those in the in-person condition. The researchers suggested that the disinhibition that comes from being online may allow participants to feel more comfortable retaliating and subsequently feeling good about being assertive. Another possibility could be that the online condition allowed participants to dismiss the negative comments more easily than when the negative feedback was given in person.

Although being one's genuine self on social media can have positive consequences (Grieve & Watkinson, 2016; Petko et al., 2015), frequent social media use has been found to have negative consequences on individuals' wellbeing. Social media use is linked to decreased body satisfaction (Hendrickse, Arpan, Clayton, & Ridgway,

2017; Kleemans, Daalmans, Carbaat, & Anschütz, 2016), decreased mood (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015), increased self-objectification (Fardouly, Willburger, & Vartanian, 2017), increased compulsive exercise (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016), and increased unhealthy eating patterns (Holland & Tiggemann, 2016). Social media use also has been found to be associated with harmful social comparisons in general (Feinstein et al., 2013; Vogel, Rose, Roberts, & Eckles, 2014). In a series of studies (total sample size $N = 273$), greater use of Facebook was associated with making more social comparisons (Vogel et al., 2014), and a greater number of social comparisons made on Facebook was associated with lower self-esteem (Vogel et al., 2014). A survey of 268 U.S. college students found that a greater number of social comparisons on Facebook predicted more rumination and more depressive symptoms (Feinstein et al., 2013).

The content that individuals post about themselves on social media can lead to negative consequences (White, Cutello, Gummerum, & Hanoch, 2017). In a study of 178 British and Italian social media users, greater amount of time spent online predicted posting more risky content on social media, such as self-disclosures of personal information, offensive thoughts and opinions, sexual activity, or drug and alcohol use (White et al., 2017). The content that individuals post online can affect their lives offline, such as their job prospects (Harrison & Budworth, 2015) and romantic relationships (Cravens et al., 2013; Helsper & Whitty, 2010; McDaniel et al., 2017). One study examined Facebook and LinkedIn profiles of 118 Twitter users who were actively seeking a job (Harrison & Budworth, 2015). Three human resource managers were recruited to review each of the job seekers' profiles and to rate how likely they would be

to hire the person for an entry-level position and how much they thought the person should be paid for entry-level work in their field. Having a Facebook account at all was associated with the individual being rated as less hirable and deserving of lower pay as compared to those individuals who did not have a Facebook account, while controlling for education, work experience, and current occupational status.

In addition to negative employment consequences, posts on social media also can have negative consequences for one's romantic relationship. In a study of online infidelity ($N = 6012$), the majority of married couples agreed that self-disclosing personal details (79%), details about their spouse (73%), or relationship difficulties (70%) online could be perceived as inappropriate and, in some case, may be considered infidelity (Helsper & Whitty, 2010). This finding suggests that certain posts on social media could be interpreted as inappropriate by a romantic partner and possibly lead to negative consequences in their relationship (e.g., arguments or relationship dissolution).

In summary, social media use can have both positive and negative consequences depending on the situation. As such, people's desire to use social media may be shaped by the situations they are in and the expected outcomes they think social media may have.

Desire and Social Media Use

Desire to engage in a behavior has been found to be a key component in predicting how often an individual has engaged in that behavior (e.g., Esposito, van Bavel, Baranowski, & Dutch-Brown, 2016; Gabbiadini, Cristini, Scacchi, & Monaci, 2017; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; Perugini & Conner, 2000). The model of goal-directed behavior has repeatedly been found to better predict both behavioral intentions and actual behavior than traditional models (Gabbiadini et al., 2017; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001).

The key difference in these models is in accounting for desire. Despite the absence of desire in traditional models, desire to engage in a behavior (with the belief that one has the ability to engage in that behavior) must exist to catalyze reasons to engage in that behavior into behavioral intentions (Bagozzi, 1992). Although desires and intentions are often treated as synonymous, they represent two distinct concepts (Malle & Knobe, 2001; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2004). A desire is a psychological want whereas an intention is a plan to act (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2004). Specifically, desire can take two forms: appetitive (driven by a craving or urge) and volitive (driven by situational provocation and/or logical reasons; Davis, 1984).

Greater ability to predict posting behavior would aid our understanding of self-disclosures on social media. As we saw earlier, reasons for engaging in social media use have been well studied (e.g., Ellison et al., 2010; Friedländer, 2017; Walrave et al., 2012; Whiting & Williams, 2013). However, little research has explored the role of desire in understanding social media use, and the studies that do look at desire primarily focus on problematic social media use (e.g., Andreassen, Pallesen, & Griffiths, 2017; Andreassen, Torsheim, Brunborg, & Pallesen, 2012; Pontes, Taylor, & Stavropoulos, 2018). Problematic social media use is defined as a behavioral, cognitive, and emotional preoccupation with using social media that results in negative ramifications in other areas of one's life (Andreassen, 2015; Andreassen & Pallesen, 2014; Kuss & Griffiths, 2011, 2017). For example, individuals who experience higher rates of cognitive-emotional preoccupation with using social media (e.g., persistent thoughts about using social media) impulsively use social media more often (Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2017). The studies on problematic use do not assess desire directly; instead, they look at behaviors that are

assumed to be the product of problematic desire (e.g., hiding how long one has been online, choosing to spend time online rather than spending time with friends, becoming agitated if interrupted while online; Pawlikowski, Altstötter-Gleich, & Brand, 2013). As such, little is known about the actual desire to use social media, especially in cases of normal use. In addition, no measures exist to assess the desire to use social media or, specifically, the desire to post on social media. Concerns have been raised regarding the privacy of self-disclosure on social media (Hoffmann et al., 2016; Jia & Xu, 2016; Utz & Krämer, 2009; Walrave et al., 2012), but little has been done to understand the mechanisms behind this behavior (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Hoffmann et al., 2016).

To address these important gaps in the literature, the desire to post on social media could be assessed using similar techniques used to measure sexual desire. In standardized scales assessing sexual desire, actions and reasons for behavior are not assessed (Mark, Toland, Rosenkrantz, Brown, & Hong, 2017; Moyano, Vallejo-Medina, & Sierra, 2017; Spector, Carey, & Steinberg, 1996). Instead, sexual desire scales assess how often the individual previously experienced a desire to engage in sexual behaviors (e.g., "During the last month, how often have you had sexual thoughts involving a partner" or "When you have sexual thoughts, how strong is your desire to engage in sexual behavior with a partner;" Spector et al., 1996). The research assessing sexual desire has strong reliability and validity across diverse groups (Mark et al., 2017; Moyano et al., 2017; Spector et al., 1996). Measuring the desire to post on social media in a similar fashion would allow for the desire to be clearly distinguished from the various reasons for use or actual social media use. Studies using the model of goal-directed behavior typically ask about current desires for the behavior of interest (e.g.,

binge drinking: "I desire, in the next 2 weeks, to drink five/four or more drinks of alcoholic drinks, in one occasion;" Gabbiadini et al., 2017; exercising: "I desire to do physical exercise in the next four weeks in order to decrease my body weight [stay at the same body weight];" Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; gambling: "I would enjoy casino gambling" or "I have an urge to gamble in casinos;" Song, Lee, Norman, & Han, 2012). Similar wording could be used for the desire to post; however, there is no standard format for inquiring about desire.

Current Research

The current research seeks to understand the desire to post on social media as a unique construct. By addressing this gap in the literature, this research will 1) operationalize the desire to post on social media and validate its structure, 2) probe the causal role of anticipated consequences in regard to the intensity of this desire, 3) explore the relationship between the desire to post and problematic social media use, and 4) assess the association between anticipated consequences of use and this desire. These goals were accomplished over three stages: scale development, scale validation, and a cross-sectional comparison of desire before and during the coronavirus outbreak to understand the effect of this historic period on the desire to post.

Study 1: Scale Development and Validation

The first study focused on developing and validating a tool to measure the individuals' desire to post on social media. The participants were randomly split into two groups. Half of the participants' data was used for scale development (stage one); the other half was used for scale validation (stage two). Items for the scale were generated based on existing scales for other types of desires (e.g., sexual desire; see Appendix A).

The scale aimed to have a section that specifically targeted self-disclosure. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted, and the construct's preliminary validity and reliability were assessed.

RQ1: Is the desire to post a unique construct?

RQ2: Is the desire to self-disclose distinct from the general desire to post?

Based on the derived factor structure found for the first half of the data, the second half of the data was used to validate the structure of this construct using a confirmatory factor analysis. The tool's validity and reliability were assessed again. Convergent validity for the scale was assessed by looking at the correlations between the desire to post and measures pertaining to thoughts people may have about using social media (i.e., problematic relationship with social media use, cognitive preoccupation with social media use, privacy concerns regarding social media use). Problematic use is characterized by having a preoccupation with using social media; therefore, a more intense problematic relationship should be associated with a greater degree of desire for all forms of social media use. Similarly, greater cognitive preoccupation with social media use necessitates a greater rate of thoughts pertaining to social media use. Lastly, privacy concerns involve a hesitancy to trust posting personal information on social media, indicating a degree of mental resistance to self-disclosing online. As such, it was hypothesized that:

H1a) There would be a significant positive correlation between the desire to post on social media and problematic social media use.

H1b) There would be a significant positive correlation between the desire to post on social media and cognitive preoccupation with social media use.

H1c) There would be a significant negative correlation between the desire to post on social media and privacy concerns regarding social media use.

Divergent validity for the scale was assessed by looking at the correlation between the desire to post and the desire scales used in the creation of the desire to post questionnaire (i.e., sexual desire and the desire to binge drink). Although the scales for sexual desire (Spector et al., 1996) and desire to binge drink (Gabbiadini et al., 2017) were used as templates for the items in the desire to post questionnaire, there is no theoretical basis for these concepts to be related. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

H2) The desire to post questionnaire should not be correlated with the Sexual Desire Inventory or the desire to binge drink scale.

Study 2: COVID-19 and Desire to Post

In Study 2, data collection for Study 1 was replicated in order to conduct a cross-sectional analysis of desiring to post on social media before and during the pandemic. As many parts of everyday life migrated online due to the pandemic, the internet became an essential tool for many North Americans (Aston, Vipond, Virgin, & Youssouf, 2020; Marowits, 2020; Vogels, Perrin, Rainie, & Anderson, 2020) and became a common way to stay connected with friends and family (Anderson & Vogels, 2020; Vogels, 2020). Based on uses and gratification theory, people may start to desire using social media more than they did before the pandemic due to social media becoming a primary medium for satisfying their social needs. In addition, the instrumentality principle posits that situational factors, such as goal importance, are key determinants in the decisions we make (Finkel & Eastwick, 2015). As social needs are central to most people's well-being,

social media provide highly attractive alternative means of connecting until in-person interactions are viable.

Initial research suggests that people were finding ways to stay connected despite the physical restrictions, as rates of loneliness did not significantly differ before and during the pandemic in the United States (Luchetti et al., 2020; McGinty, Presskreischer, Han, & Barry, 2020; Sutin et al., 2020), and greater social media use during the pandemic was associated with greater emotional and social support (Zhong, Huang, & Liu, 2021). Based on this, I hypothesized that:

H3) Desire to post would be greater during the COVID-19 outbreak as compared to prior to the outbreak, as indicated in the scores on the overall tool and the four scales.

H4a) The positive and negative events scales would be more strongly related to the identity scale during the pandemic as compared to these interrelationships before the pandemic emerged.

H4b) Interrelationships between the frequency of desiring to post and the other three scales capturing desire to post because of positive event, negative events, and the desire to present the best version of oneself online would be stronger compared to the interrelationships assessed before the pandemic.

CHAPTER II

Rationale for Study 1

Uptake of social media has been extreme over the past few decades, with nearly all North Americans reporting recent use of at least one social media site (Gruzd, Jacobson, Mai, & Dubois, 2018; Perrin, 2015; Smith & Anderson, 2018; Vogels, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic has made clear how well-incorporated these digital tools have become in our lives and how reliant we are on them for staying connected with others (Anderson & Vogels, 2020; Vogels, 2020). However, the public nature of much of social media use engender judgements about the individuals' behaviors, past times, values, and ultimately their worth as seen by friends (Forest & Wood, 2012), potential employers (Harrison & Budworth, 2015), and romantic partners (Cravens, Leckie, & Whiting, 2013; Helsper & Whitty, 2010; McDaniel, Drouin, & Cravens, 2017).

There has been considerable discourse about the privacy of information posted on social media and in particular the risks that such exposure of personal information entails (Hoffmann, Lutz, & Ranzini, 2016; Jia & Xu, 2016; Utz & Krämer, 2009; Walrave, Vanwesenbeeck, & Heirman, 2012). Having concerns, however, does not lead inevitably to efforts to protect one's information (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Hallam & Zanella, 2017; Hoffmann et al., 2016). Other factors likely override an individuals' decision to post personal information on social media despite concerns about the loss of privacy, but to date, little research attention has been given to these factors.

As far as we know, none of the existing measures capture the desire to post on social media, nor specifically the desire to post about oneself. As a result, little is known about how this desire relates to social media use, self-disclosure on social media, and

concerns about privacy. These omissions represent important gaps in the literature because studying the desire to post on social media can help us to better understand variations in desire, patterns of use, and risk of problematic use. The research presented here consists of two studies to address these gaps. Phase 1 sought to develop the factor structure of a tool measuring the desire to post on social media and Study 2 was designed to validate this structure. When validating the construct (Phase 2), desire to post was compared to related concepts, including problematic social media use and privacy concerns. These data were collected before the onset of COVID-19 and the resulting closures and social distancing requirements, thus providing a meaningful baseline metric of the desire to post on social media.

The participants were randomly split into two groups using SPSS's random sample of cases feature with the parameter that each group be approximately 50% of the total cases. Half of the participants' data were used for scale development (Phase 1); the other half were used for scale validation (Phase 2). Items for the scale were generated based on existing scales for other types of desires (e.g., sexual desire). The tool was designed with the intention to have a section that specifically targeted self-disclosure. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted, and the scale's preliminary validity and reliability were assessed. This analysis was used to answer two research questions:

RQ1: Is the desire to post a unique construct?

RQ2: Is the desire to post about oneself distinct from the general desire to post?

Based on the derived factor structure found for the first half of the data, the second half of the data was used to validate the construct using a confirmatory factor analysis. The tool's validity and reliability were assessed again. Convergent validity for

the scale was assessed by examining the correlations between the desire to post and measures pertaining to thoughts people may have about using social media (i.e., problematic use, cognitive preoccupation with social media use, privacy concerns regarding social media use). A more intense problematic relationship could be associated with a greater desire for all forms of social media use. Similarly, greater cognitive preoccupation with social media use indicates a greater rate of thoughts pertaining to social media use. Lastly, privacy concerns suggest not wanting to post personal information on social media due to how this information might be used. As such, it was hypothesized that:

H1a: There will be a significant positive correlation between the desire to post on social media and problematic social media use.

H1b: There will be a significant positive correlation between the desire to post on social media and cognitive preoccupation with social media use.

H1c: There will be a significant negative correlation between the desire to post on social media and privacy concerns regarding social media use.

Divergent validity for the scale was assessed by looking at the correlation between the desire to post and the desire scales used in the creation of the desire to post questionnaire (i.e., sexual desire and the desire to binge drink). It was hypothesized that:

H2: The desire to post will have little to no correlation with the sexual desire and the desire to binge drink.

CHAPTER III

Study 1 Method

Participants

Six hundred and ninety-seven ($N = 697$) Canadian and American social media users (ages 19 and older) were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk)®, a crowdsourcing website that allows individuals to choose and complete online tasks for monetary compensation (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). Samples recruited via MTurk® generally are more heterogeneous than community or student samples (Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2013). These samples are generally more representative of the general population (Berinsky, Huber, & Lenz, 2012) and of internet users as compared to student or community samples (Chandler & Shapiro, 2016). In addition, MTurk® users have similar or better rates of attention when completing surveys as compared to participants in other samples (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016). The sample size was based on the recommendations from Tabachnick and Fidell (2014) to use at least 5-10 participants per item and from Sakaluk and Short (2017) who recommended at least 200 to 250 participants for both development and validation. In light of the range of these recommendations, the upper end of these suggestions was chosen, collecting about ten participants per item (for 31 items: ~310 participants). This sample was diverse in age (range: 19-83), with an average age of 40.81 ($SD = 12.20$, for full demographics, see Table 3.1). The sample predominantly self-identified as White (76.2%; 9.7% Black; 6.5% Asian; 3.5% Hispanic) and slightly over half (59.3%) identified as women (39.8% as men).

Table 3.1

Demographics for Phase 1 and Phase 2

	Total	Phase 1	Phase 2
Gender			
Man	39.8	41.7	37.6
Woman	59.3	57.7	61.0
Other (e.g., agender, transman)	1.0	.6	1.4
Age			
Mean age (in years)	40.81	40.84	40.77
SD age	12.20	12.36	12.03
Age range	19-83	21-76	19-83
Race/ethnicity			
White	76.2	79.2	72.9
Black	9.7	7.9	11.9
Asian	6.5	5.7	7.5
Hispanic	3.5	4.2	2.7
Indigenous	.6	.6	.7
Arab	.3	.3	.3
Multi-racial	2.4	1.5	3.4
Other	.6	.6	.7
Education			
Some high school	.8	.6	1.0
High school graduate	7.3	5.7	9.2
Some college	18.2	18.1	18.3
Trade/tech school	3.8	4.2	3.4
Associate degree	10.2	10.9	9.5
Bachelor's degree	41.1	41.1	41.0
Master's degree	14.1	14.2	13.9
Professional degree	1.9	2.7	1.0
Doctorate degree	2.4	2.1	2.7
Employment			
Full-time	69.0	69.8	68.1
Part-time	11.2	9.7	12.9
Seasonal	.5	.3	.7
Self-employed	5.9	6.3	5.4
Out of work and looking for work	2.4	1.8	3.1
Out of work and currently not looking	.2	0	.3
Homemaker	4.5	5.4	3.4
Student	.8	.9	.7
Military	.2	0	.3
Retired	4.0	4.2	3.7
Unable to work	1.3	1.2	1.4

Note. Phases 1 and 2 did not significantly differ on any of these demographics (all *p*s > .47).

Social media were operationally defined as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram. These sites were selected as they are among the most popular social media sites in North America at the time of this research (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Although YouTube is considered the most popular social media site in North America (Smith & Anderson, 2018), it is used primarily for video streaming (Shao, 2008). Similarly, Pinterest, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Twitch, and deviantArt are used for limited purposes (i.e., Pinterest for storing links; WhatsApp for texting; LinkedIn for career-building; Twitch for video game streaming; deviantArt as an art repository). Therefore, they were not assessed as social media in this study. Although Tumblr and Reddit are popular subculture social media websites (Alexa.com, 2018; Anderson & Jiang, 2018), these sites often value anonymity; users are expected not to reveal personal information about themselves or others (Jacob, Evans, & Scourfield, 2017; Primack, Carroll, Shensa, Davis, & Levine, 2016). For example, Reddit's content policy explicitly prohibits posts containing personal information. As a result, these sites were not included in the operational definition of social media for the research reported here.

Measures

The survey consisted of a demographics form, a brief assessment of social media use, the scale under development (Desire to Post Questionnaire), three scales to assess convergent validity (i.e., cognitive preoccupation with social media use, problematic use of social media, and privacy concerns about social media use), and two scales for divergent validity (i.e., sexual desire and the desire to binge drink). The Desire to Post Questionnaire, a measure of social desirability, and the validity scales were presented in a counterbalanced order.

Screening questionnaire. Participants were asked a series of distractor questions (e.g., if they own their computer, how long they have been using the internet) as well as three screening items: age (inclusion criteria: 19+ years old), country of residence (inclusion criteria: US or Canada) and how frequently they have used social media in the last month (inclusion criteria: any value greater than zero).

Demographic information. Individuals reported their gender, age, ethnicity, country of residence, first language, sexual orientation, relationship status, highest educational attainment, and employment status.

Desire to post on social media. The preliminary draft of the Desire to Post Questionnaire consisted of 31 items. The items were designed based on the item structure seen in Spector et al.'s (1996) Sexual Desire Inventory-2 and the desire items used in Gabbiadini et al.'s (2017) study using the model of goal-directed behavior to understand binge drinking. The items were based on researcher-generated content as well as suggestions from scientific experts in the field and social media users.

The desire to post questionnaire uses a 9-point Likert scale for the 31 items. The options for these Likert scales vary depending on the item. For example, items pertaining to frequency range from *not at all* (0) to *many times a day* (8), whereas items pertaining to strength of desire range from *no desire* (0) to *strong desire* (8). Some items address general posting desire (e.g., "During the last month, how often did you think about posting something on social media [even if you didn't post it]?" or "During the last month, how often would you have liked to post on social media [for example, funny thoughts you had, an article you read, or a meme you saw]?"), whereas other items focus on the desire to self-disclose on social media (e.g., "During the last month, how often did

you think about posting something about your life on social media [even if you didn't post it]?" or "During the last month, how often would you have liked to post on social media about your life [for example, how your job is going, an activity you did with friends, a romantic gesture your partner made, or how someone was rude to you]?").

Sexual desire. The Sexual Desire Inventory-2 (Spector et al., 1996) was used in the construction of the Desire to Post Questionnaire. The 14-item scale assesses the degree of sexual desire individuals' experience. All items incorporate an 8- or 9-point Likert scale. Items pertaining to frequency range from *not at all* (0) to *many times a day* (7; an 8-point scale), whereas items pertaining to strength of desire range from *no desire* (0) to *strong desire* (8; a 9-point scale). Some items address desire for dyadic sexual activity (e.g., "When you have sexual thoughts, how strong is your desire to engage in sexual behavior with a partner?"), whereas others address desire for solitary sexual activity [e.g., "During the last month, how often would you have liked to behave sexually by yourself (for example, masturbating, touching your genitals etc.)?"] This scale had good internal constancy with this sample (α = .93), in line with prior research (α = .86-.96; Spector et al., 1996).

Desire to binge drink. Gabbiadini et al.'s (2017) desire to binge drink scale was used in the construction of the Desire to Post Questionnaire. This 3-item scale asks participants to rate their desire to binge drink on a 7-point Likert scale. Two items use a scale of *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7; e.g., "I desire, in the next 2 weeks, to drink five/four or more drinks of alcoholic drinks, in one occasion"); the other item uses a scale of *no desire* (1) to *a very strong desire* (7; i.e., "My desire, to drink five/four or more drinks of alcoholic drinks, in one occasion in the next 2 weeks, could be described

as…"). This scale had strong internal consistency with this sample (α = .96), which is in line with prior research (α = .91; Gabbiadini et al., 2017).

Cognitive preoccupation. A subscale of the Temptation and Restrain Inventory called "cognitive preoccupation with social media scale," developed by Turel and Qahri-Saremi (2017), was as used to assess cognitive preoccupation. The Temptation and Restraint Inventory was originally developed by Collins and Lapp (1992) to assess alcohol consumption, but it has been successfully modified for other behaviors, including social media use (Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2017). This scale has three items: "At times, do you find yourself unable to stop thinking about using social media;" "Is it hard to distract yourself from thinking about using social media;" "Do thoughts about using social media intrude into your daily activities". Items required respondents to rate how often each situation occurs on a 9-point Likert scale of *never* (1) to *always* (9). This scale has good internal constancy in its original form (α = .82; Collins & Lapp, 1992) and when modified for social media use (α = .86; Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2017). The scale also demonstrated good internal consistency in the current study (α = .95).

Problematic use of social media. Problematic use of social media was measured using the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale, which assesses problematic behaviors, cognitions, and emotions associated with unhealthy social media use (Andreassen et al., 2017). Individuals were asked to rate how often in the last year they had experienced 18 different problems (e.g., "Become restless or troubled if you have been prohibited from using social media;" "Used social media so much that it has had a negative impact on your job/studies") on a 5-point Likert scale of *very rarely* (1) to *very often* (5). This scale

has strong psychometric properties (Andreassen et al., 2012, 2017) and had good internal consistency in the current study (α = .95).

Privacy concerns. Vitak's (2015) 11-item privacy concerns scale was used to assess how concerned participants were about 11 different types of privacy breaches (e.g., "Your account information being compromised;" "Your employer viewing content (text or photos) that might negatively impact your job;" "Being tagged in a photo you don't want linked to your account"), using a 5-point Likert scale of *not at all concerned* (1) to *very concerned* (5). This scale has excellent internal consistency for the current study (α = .91); earlier research using versions of this measure also demonstrated good reliability (α = .80-.92; Vitak, 2012, 2015).

Social desirability. The Brief Social Desirability Scale was used to assess social desirability (Haghighat, 2007). This 4-iem scale assesses the tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner by asking participants if they always behave in socially desirable ways (e.g., "Would you ever lie to people?" and "Do you always practice what you preach?"). Similar to the Cronbach alpha of the 10-item Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972), this scale had a moderate level of internal consistency in the current study (α = .60), which is consistent with prior research using this scale (α = .60; Haghighat, 2007).

Procedure

After receiving ethics approval from the University of New Brunswick's Research Ethics Board (REB #2019-082), eligible participants (i.e., Canadian or American social media users who were 19 and older) were recruited via MTurk®. Individuals who use MTurk® can participate in any study on the site for which they meet the participation

criteria. Individuals were asked to complete an anonymous online survey addressing internet habits. Those interested in participating were required to complete the screening questionnaire to provide informed consent. The screening questionnaire was used to identify whether interested individuals were from the United States or Canada (assessed via self-report and verified using their IP address), have used at least one social media account in the last month (i.e., used Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat at least once in the last 30 days), and consent to participate. Individuals who did not meet these criteria were thanked for their interest but were excluded from participating. Qualifying individuals proceeded to the secure, anonymous survey. To ensure the quality of the data, several attention check questions were included in the middle of scales (e.g., "If you are paying attention, please select always"); if participants failed an attention check question, their data were excluded from analysis. Upon completion, participants were directed to a page that provided information about the study as a debriefing. They also were given the survey completion code so they could be compensated. Participants took 11.66 minutes to complete this study on average and were paid $.75 USD for their participation in the study.

Data Analysis

Although there were 940 completed responses, responses were removed when individuals misreported their location (e.g., IP address does not match their self-reported location), failed an attention check or spambot question, or showed signs of patterned responding (e.g., answering all the same value for all items in a scale or series of scales). Application of these criteria resulted in 697 viable responses (74.15%). SPSS's random sample of cases feature was used to randomly divided the data into two groups. SPSS was

given the parameter that each group be approximately 50% of the total cases. The resulting groups were 50.22% (Phase 1: $n = 350$) and 49.78 (Phase 2: $n = 347$).

Scale development. Of the 350 responses randomly assigned to Phase 1, 15 respondents were removed due to missing data on the measure of interest. Preliminary tests assessed univariate and multivariate outliers. Multivariate outliers were dropped ($n = 4$) and no univariate outliers were identified (Iglewicz & Hoaglin, 1993). The final sample was 331 (94.57% of the 350 usable responses).

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to analyze the structure of the construct using the open-source EFA software FACTOR (RQ1 and RQ2; Version 10.10.01; Lorenzo-Seva & Ferrando, 2019). FACTOR was chosen as it is appropriate to conduct an EFA using ordinal data (e.g., Likert scale data; Baglin, 2014). Before conducting the EFA, the Spearman correlations between the items were assessed. Items with a correlation of .8 or higher (indicating a high degree of shared variance) were interpreted as redundant, and one of the highly correlated items was deleted (Field, 2013). Items that were highly correlated with multiple items were retained over the others for parsimony and items that had stronger correlations with the other items were given preference over the more weakly correlated items. A diagonal weighted least squares technique was used when conducting the EFA, as it is the preferable technique when dealing with ordinal data (Li, 2016). Items with low communalities (i.e., less than .2) were deleted, as this indicated that the item did not fit well with the other items (Child, 2006). Kaiser's criterion, Horn's parallel analysis, and Cattell's scree test were used to determine the number of factors to retain. Once the number of factors was determined, items that did not load on any of the factors (i.e., less than .3) were removed (Field,

2013), as factor loadings of .4 or higher are considered stable (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988). Items that cross-loaded on more than one factor were removed as well. Items were removed one at a time, and the number of factors were reassessed with each deletion.

Goodness-of-fit indices were also used to evaluate the quality of these models. Specifically, a combination of root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI or non-normed fit index), and Bayesian information criterion (BIC) were used to judge the model fit of each EFA conducted. For good model fit, RMSEA should be less than .08; however values less than .10 indicate fair model fit (Hopper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008; Kenny, 2020). In the cases of CFI and TLI, values greater than .95 are indication of good model fit, but those greater than .9 are considered adequate (Hopper et al., 2008; Kenny, 2020). Finally, smaller BICs were indicative of a better the model fit (Akaike, 1974; Stone, 1979).

Scale validation. Of the 347 responses for Phase 2, 46 responses were removed due to missing data on the measures of interest. Preliminary tests assessed univariate and multivariate outliers. Multivariate outliers were dropped ($n = 2$) and no univariate outliers were identified (Iglewicz & Hoaglin, 1993). This resulted in a final sample size of 299 (86.17% of the 347 usable responses).

Based on the factor structure developed in Phase 1, the data for Phase 2 were used to replicate and validate the construct's structure via a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). As the Desire to Post Questionnaire uses Likert scale items, a CFA technique that can handle ordinal data was needed (DiStefano & Morgan, 2014; Li, 2016). A diagonal weighted least squares approach was used as it outperforms other techniques when using ordinal data in a CFA (Li, 2016). The lavaan package in R was used to conduct the CFA

(Rosseel, 2012). Similar to Phase 1, RMSEA, CFI, and TLI were used in Study 2 to determine if the CFA model had good model fit. In addition, standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) was used, which indicates good model fit when it is less than .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kenny, 2020).

Once the model was validated, convergent and divergent validity of the overall construct and its four scales were assessed. To establish convergent validity, medium to large Spearman correlation coefficients (i.e., $|r| \geq .3$) were examined between scores on the Desire to Post Questionnaire and the three related measures (i.e., the cognitive preoccupation scale, the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale, and the privacy concerns scale; e.g., Carlson & Herdman, 2012). Non-significant to small correlations (i.e., $|r| < .3$) between the Desire to Post Questionnaire and the other desire measures (i.e., the sexual desire and the desire to binge drink) were used to establish divergent validity. For both the convergent and divergent validity correlations, scores on every scale were assessed for a significant relationship with social desirability, as it is assumed to be one of the main sources of common method variance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Where associated, social desirability would be partialled out of the corresponding validity correlations.

CHAPTER IV

Study 1 Results

Inter-item Correlations

Using the data for Phase 1, the inter-item correlations revealed clear associations between all of the variables (see Table 4.1). Several items had correlations of .8 or higher. In deciding which items to retain, parsimony and relationships with remaining items were considered. Specifically, items that were highly correlated with multiple other items were retained rather than retaining the multiple items it shared a great deal of variance with, and items that had stronger correlations with the other items were given preference over the more weakly correlated items. This round of cuts resulted in a 20-item tool (See Table 4.2). A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test found that the correlation matrix of these 20 items was very good for use in an EFA, KMO test = .93, $\chi^2(190) = 3724.4$, $p < .001$.

Table 4.1

Inter-item Correlations for Scale Development

	Q1	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	Q5	Q6	**Q7**	**Q8**	**Q9**	**Q10**	**Q11**	**Q12**	**Q13**	**Q14**	Q15
Q1	1.00	.647	.694	.635	.520	.509	.409	.292	.408	.451	.480	.303	.286	.551	.477
Q2	.647	1.00	.636	.734	.543	.605	.512	.410	.480	.416	.398	.354	.397	.612	.553
Q3	.694	.636	1.00	.786	.562	.529	.409	.384	.393	.482	.462	.373	.306	.584	.512
Q4	.635	.734	.786	1.00	.542	.635	.519	.413	.494	.468	.456	.361	.359	.603	.551
Q5	.520	.543	.562	.542	1.00	**.875**	.630	.391	.465	.570	.536	.462	.445	**.874**	.695
Q6	.509	.605	.529	.635	**.875**	1.00	.654	.415	.511	.522	.479	.430	.462	**.860**	.716
Q7	.409	.512	.409	.519	.630	.654	1.00	.298	.605	.548	.491	.349	.336	.660	.499
Q8	.292	.410	.384	.413	.391	.415	.298	1.00	.290	.388	.449	.657	.642	.460	.444
Q9	.408	.480	.393	.494	.465	.511	.605	.290	1.00	.575	.474	.388	.297	.544	.480
Q10	.451	.416	.482	.468	.570	.522	.548	.388	.575	1.00	.729	.440	.348	.591	.485
Q11	.480	.398	.462	.456	.536	.479	.491	.449	.474	.729	1.00	.411	.333	.566	.445
Q12	.303	.354	.373	.361	.462	.430	.349	.657	.388	.440	.411	1.00	.562	.498	.442
Q13	.286	.397	.306	.359	.445	.462	.336	.642	.297	.348	.333	.562	1.00	.526	.509
Q14	.551	.612	.584	.603	**.874**	**.860**	.660	.460	.544	.591	.566	.498	.526	1.00	**.802**
Q15	.477	.553	.512	.551	.695	.716	.499	.444	.480	.485	.445	.442	.509	**.802**	1.00
Q16	.321	.441	.323	.358	.530	.556	.377	.375	.420	.346	.333	.376	.469	.607	.728
Q17	.378	.564	.396	.499	.607	.660	.500	.440	.508	.438	.424	.455	.498	.707	.771
Q18	.285	.460	.354	.402	.555	.580	.501	.325	.507	.344	.384	.343	.427	.628	.600
Q19	.501	.533	.505	.516	.748	.736	.563	.424	.479	.519	.524	.442	.479	**.808**	.739
Q20	.473	.568	.492	.560	.728	.777	.559	.434	.482	.463	.462	.434	.493	.798	.728
Q21	.451	.510	.407	.483	.627	.612	.505	.347	.404	.439	.436	.345	.349	.686	.626
Q22	.421	.576	.445	.566	.607	.640	.524	.370	.424	.421	.406	.356	.382	.661	.620
Q23	.662	.574	.655	.600	.566	.532	.408	.346	.413	.514	.472	.299	.329	.616	.595
Q24	.531	.551	.526	.531	.588	.588	.379	.432	.365	.441	.444	.434	.484	.664	.709
Q25	.568	.525	.575	.532	.547	.540	.359	.414	.402	.501	.481	.415	.446	.620	.676
Q26	.583	.556	.601	.529	.573	.552	.400	.417	.402	.529	.497	.403	.440	.629	.634
Q27	.528	.471	.524	.478	.584	.527	.475	.316	.450	.530	.523	.319	.343	.622	.541
Q28	.524	.554	.554	.549	.567	.566	.354	.428	.331	.438	.438	.437	.465	.642	.685
Q29	.573	.565	.579	.560	.570	.578	.381	.394	.377	.490	.468	.419	.439	.630	.665
Q30	.601	.564	.598	.540	.585	.557	.422	.382	.421	.530	.494	.414	.408	.643	.646
Q31	.545	.458	.538	.490	.572	.525	.472	.302	.437	.508	.509	.309	.337	.604	.547

Table 4.1 (continued)

	Q16	**Q17**	**Q18**	Q19	**Q20**	**Q21**	Q22	**Q23**	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	**Q29**	Q30	**Q31**
Q1	.321	.378	.285	.501	.473	.451	.421	.662	.531	.568	.583	.528	.524	.573	.601	.545
Q2	.441	.564	.460	.533	.568	.510	.576	.574	.551	.525	.556	.471	.554	.565	.564	.458
Q3	.323	.396	.354	.505	.492	.407	.445	.655	.526	.575	.601	.524	.554	.579	.598	.538
Q4	.358	.499	.402	.516	.560	.483	.566	.600	.531	.532	.529	.478	.549	.560	.540	.490
Q5	.530	.607	.555	.748	.728	.627	.607	.566	.588	.547	.573	.584	.567	.570	.585	.572
Q6	.556	.660	.580	.736	.777	.612	.640	.532	.588	.540	.552	.527	.566	.578	.557	.525
Q7	.377	.500	.501	.563	.559	.505	.524	.408	.379	.359	.400	.475	.354	.381	.422	.472
Q8	.375	.440	.325	.424	.434	.347	.370	.346	.432	.414	.417	.316	.428	.394	.382	.302
Q9	.420	.508	.507	.479	.482	.404	.424	.413	.365	.402	.402	.450	.331	.377	.421	.437
Q10	.346	.438	.344	.519	.463	.439	.421	.514	.441	.501	.529	.530	.438	.490	.530	.508
Q11	.333	.424	.384	.524	.462	.436	.406	.472	.444	.481	.497	.523	.438	.468	.494	.509
Q12	.376	.455	.343	.442	.434	.345	.356	.299	.434	.415	.403	.319	.437	.419	.414	.309
Q13	.469	.498	.427	.479	.493	.349	.382	.329	.484	.446	.440	.343	.465	.439	.408	.337
Q14	.607	.707	.628	.808	.798	.686	.661	.616	.664	.620	.629	.622	.642	.630	.643	.604
Q15	.728	.771	.600	.739	.728	.626	.620	.595	.709	.676	.634	.541	.685	.665	.646	.547
Q16	1.00	.726	.641	.607	.578	.493	.525	.446	.585	.520	.505	.431	.560	.515	.498	.423
Q17	.726	1.00	.627	.655	.689	.570	.620	.451	.615	.550	.521	.466	.575	.563	.528	.445
Q18	.641	.627	1.00	.553	.555	.435	.480	.334	.466	.404	.413	.411	.421	.380	.398	.394
Q19	.607	.655	.553	1.00	.915	.621	.624	.559	.611	.596	.570	.506	.612	.608	.575	.506
Q20	.578	.689	.555	.915	1.00	.659	.680	.499	.602	.555	.533	.482	.597	.572	.536	.476
Q21	.493	.570	.435	.621	.659	1.00	.899	.556	.530	.499	.488	.498	.540	.508	.499	.458
Q22	.525	.620	.480	.624	.680	.899	1.00	.521	.515	.477	.458	.477	.510	.491	.482	.451
Q23	.446	.451	.334	.559	.499	.556	.521	1.00	.689	.764	.761	.661	.707	.743	.759	.676
Q24	.585	.615	.466	.611	.602	.530	.515	.689	1.00	.879	.778	.540	.926	.860	.778	.562
Q25	.520	.550	.404	.596	.555	.499	.477	.764	.879	1.00	.888	.639	.869	.925	.870	.653
Q26	.505	.521	.413	.570	.533	.488	.458	.761	.778	.888	1.00	.753	.788	.847	.943	.754
Q27	.431	.466	.411	.506	.482	.498	.477	.661	.540	.639	.753	1.00	.550	.617	.745	.922
Q28	.560	.575	.421	.612	.597	.540	.510	.707	.926	.869	.788	.550	1.00	.919	.817	.582
Q29	.515	.563	.380	.608	.572	.508	.491	.743	.860	.925	.847	.617	.919	1.00	.884	.663
Q30	.498	.528	.398	.575	.536	.499	.482	.759	.778	.870	.943	.745	.817	.884	1.00	.788
Q31	.423	.445	.394	.506	.476	.458	.451	.676	.562	.653	.754	.922	.582	.663	.788	1.00

Notes. All correlations were significant at $p < .01$. Bolded items were retained for the EFA. Correlations greater than .800 are highlighted to show where redundancy was occurring.

Table 4.2

Inter-item Correlations with Only the Retained Items

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q20	Q21	Q23	Q29	Q31
Q1	1	.647	.694	.635	.409	.292	.408	.451	.480	.303	.286	.551	.321	.378	.285	.473	.451	.662	.573	.545
Q2	.647	1	.636	.734	.512	.410	.480	.416	.398	.354	.397	.612	.441	.564	.460	.568	.510	.574	.565	.458
Q3	.694	.636	1	.786	.409	.384	.393	.482	.462	.373	.306	.584	.323	.396	.354	.492	.407	.655	.579	.538
Q4	.635	.734	.786	1	.519	.413	.494	.468	.456	.361	.359	.603	.358	.499	.402	.560	.483	.600	.560	.490
Q7	.409	.512	.409	.519	1	.298	.605	.548	.491	.349	.336	.660	.377	.500	.501	.559	.505	.408	.381	.472
Q8	.292	.410	.384	.413	.298	1	.290	.388	.449	.657	.642	.460	.375	.440	.325	.434	.347	.346	.394	.302
Q9	.408	.480	.393	.494	.605	.290	1	.575	.474	.388	.297	.544	.420	.508	.507	.482	.404	.413	.377	.437
Q10	.451	.416	.482	.468	.548	.388	.575	1	.729	.440	.348	.591	.346	.438	.344	.463	.439	.514	.490	.508
Q11	.480	.398	.462	.456	.491	.449	.474	.729	1	.411	.333	.566	.333	.424	.384	.462	.436	.472	.468	.509
Q12	.303	.354	.373	.361	.349	.657	.388	.440	.411	1	.562	.498	.376	.455	.343	.434	.345	.299	.419	.309
Q13	.286	.397	.306	.359	.336	.642	.297	.348	.333	.562	1	.526	.469	.498	.427	.493	.349	.329	.439	.337
Q14	.551	.612	.584	.603	.660	.460	.544	.591	.566	.498	.526	1	.607	.707	.628	.798	.686	.616	.630	.604
Q16	.321	.441	.323	.358	.377	.375	.420	.346	.333	.376	.469	.607	1	.726	.641	.578	.493	.446	.515	.423
Q17	.378	.564	.396	.499	.500	.440	.508	.438	.424	.455	.498	.707	.726	1	.627	.689	.570	.451	.563	.445
Q18	.285	.460	.354	.402	.501	.325	.507	.344	.384	.343	.427	.628	.641	.627	1	.555	.435	.334	.380	.394
Q20	.473	.568	.492	.560	.559	.434	.482	.463	.462	.434	.493	.798	.578	.689	.555	1	.659	.499	.572	.476
Q21	.451	.510	.407	.483	.505	.347	.404	.439	.436	.345	.349	.686	.493	.570	.435	.659	1	.556	.508	.458
Q23	.662	.574	.655	.600	.408	.346	.413	.514	.472	.299	.329	.616	.446	.451	.334	.499	.556	1	.743	.676
Q29	.573	.565	.579	.560	.381	.394	.377	.490	.468	.419	.439	.630	.515	.563	.380	.572	.508	.743	1	.663
Q31	.545	.458	.538	.490	.472	.302	.437	.508	.509	.309	.337	.604	.423	.445	.394	.476	.458	.676	.663	1

Notes. All correlations were significant at $p < .01$.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The communalities were assessed to evaluate the utility of each item. No items were deemed to have a low communality (i.e. < .2), as every item had a value over .35. Cattell's scree test suggested either a one-factor solution or a four-factor solution (depending on where the elbow is considered to occur), whereas Kaiser's criterion suggested four factors. Horn's parallel analysis suggested retaining two factors. The model fit of each of these solutions was assessed using root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). None of these options resulted in a good model fit (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Comparing Model Fit for Different Number of Factors When Using All 20 Items

Factors Retained	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	BIC
1	.120	.971	.967	1209.984
2	.103	.981	.976	1024.591
3	.091	.987	.981	958.486
4	.075	.992	.987	911.094

Note. N = 331.

Using an iterative process, attempts were made to improve the fit by removing items with lower communalities or lower factor loadings as well as trying differing rotations and numbers of factors. A four-factor model using a direct Oblimin rotation was derived, which used 14 of the 20 possible items (see Table 4.4). The six items removed from the analysis did not load well on any of the four factors. The resulting model had good model fit (RMSEA = .068, CFI = .994, TLI = .988, BIC = 509.255) and cogent factor loadings. Oblimin is an oblique rotation that allowed the factors to be correlated. The inter-factor correlations suggest a medium to strong relationship between each of these factors. All factors correlated with each other in the range of .40 to .46, except for

the correlation between Factors one and two, which was higher (r = .60). Similar loading patterns also were found with a Promin rotation, but the direct Oblimin rotation had no cross-loadings in the factor structure (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Direct Oblimin Rotated Factor Loadings for the Desire to Post Questionnaire – 14 Item Model

Item	Factor 1 (Frequency)	Factor 2 (Positive)	Factor 3 (Identity)	Factor 4 (Negative)
During the last month, how often would you have liked to post on social media (for example, funny thoughts you had, an article you read, or a meme you saw)?	**.713**	.130	-.014	-.039
During the last month, how often would you have liked to post on social media about your life (for example, how your job is going, an activity you did with friends, a romantic gesture your partner made, or how someone was rude to you)?	**.696**	-.047	.224	.002
During the last month, how often did you think about posting something on social media (even if you didn't post it)?	**.944**	-.004	-.104	.059
During the last month, how often did you think about posting something about your life on social media (even if you didn't post it)?	**.901**	-.015	.041	-.012
How strong is your desire to post on social media: - When something good happens to you?	.132	**.545**	.264	-.079

How strong is your desire to post on social media: - When something bad happens to you?	.074	.028	-.006	**.798**
How strong is your desire to post on social media: - When you attend an event?	.089	**.557**	.326	-.152
How strong is your desire to post on social media: - When you see or hear something interesting or unusual?	-.007	**.901**	-.058	.067
How strong is your desire to post on social media: - When you see or hear something funny?	.052	**.735**	-.030	.140
How strong is your desire to post on social media: - When you see or hear something upsetting?	.021	.158	.077	**.617**
How strong is your desire to post on social media: - When you are unsure about what to do in real life?	-.017	.010	.281	**.579**
How important to you is: - Having a large following on social media?	-.005	-.050	**.808**	.097
How important to you is: - Keeping your followers up-to-date on your life?	.072	.048	**.730**	.124
How important to you is: - Looking good on social media?	.036	.102	**.746**	-.020

Note. Bolded font is used to highlight on which factor an item loaded.

The four factors did not reveal a factor based on self-disclosure (RQ2) but rather revealed other topic matter groupings. The three items that loaded on Factor 4 related to

negative experiences prompting an increased desire to post. Factor 2 had four items loading on it that related to positive experiences leading to a stronger desire to post. Factor 1 consisted of four items regarding frequency with which individuals experience a desire to post. Lastly, the three items that loaded on Factor 3 centered around the value placed on having a large following and looking good on social media, suggesting this factor represents a desire to self-present in a very public fashion (e.g., the desire to post comes from a place of wanting to been seen in a certain way).

DPQ Descriptive Statistics

Now using the data for Phase 2, the 14-item solution derived in Phase 1 was used to measure the desire to post. The internal reliability for the Desire to Post Questionnaire was very high (α = .91). The Cronbach's alphas for the four scales were also strong: negative events (three items: α = .78), positive events (four items: α = .88), frequency (four items: α = .89), and identity (three items: α = .87). Scores were calculated by taking the average score on the items for the overall tool and for each of the scales. Higher scores indicated greater desire to post.

The average score on the Desire to Post Questionnaire fell approximately at the scale's midpoint of 4, suggesting a moderate desire to post (M = 4.09; SD = 1.62). The frequency scale also fell at about the midpoint (M = 4.17; SD = 2.04), whereas the average scores on negative events scale (M = 2.99; SD = 1.80) and the identity scale (M = 3.17, SD = 2.09) both fell significantly below the midpoint of 4 (both ps < .001). The average score on the positive events scale was significantly higher than the scale's midpoint (M = 5.51; SD = 2.20; p < .001). No gender or age differences were observed in the overall tool or its individual scales.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The factor structure derived in Phase 1 was tested using the diagonal weighted least squares CFA feature of the lavaan package in R. Overall, the model was deemed to have a good model fit by most standard estimates (CFI = .995; TLI = .994; SRMR = .050); however, the RMSEA was outside of the range of good fit, instead falling in the adequate range (RMSEA = .069, $\chi^2(71, N = 299) = 172.76$, $p < .001$). All items significantly loaded on their proposed factor (all betas weights > .91; all *p*s < .001).

Convergent and Divergent Validity

Spearman correlations. Social desirability was unrelated to any of the scales and therefore not used to partial out variance (all *p*s > .12). In terms of convergent validity, the Desire to Post Questionnaire and its four scales all achieved convergent validity with problematic social media use (*r*s = .36-.57; see Table 4.5). In addition, all but the frequency scale (*r* = .26) reached convergent validity with cognitive preoccupation (other *r*s = .35-.50). Convergent validity was not seen with privacy concerns. In fact, the full tool and most of the individual scales had a small, positive correlation with privacy concerns, suggesting higher desire was associated with more privacy concerns. The Desire to Post Questionnaire and its four scales produced a pattern of correlations reflecting divergent validity from the Sexual Desire Index (all *r*s $\leq$ .26) and the desire to binge drink scale (all *r*s < .22; see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5

Validity Testing of the Desire to Post Questionnaire Using Spearman Correlations

	Divergent Validity Scales		Convergent Validity Scales		
	Sexual Desire Index	Desire to Binge Drinking	Problematic Social Media Use	Cognitive Preoccupation	Privacy Concerns
DPQ – Total	.254***	.056	.532***	.445***	.231***
DPQ – Positive	.192***	-.063	.397***	.349***	.216***
DPQ – Negative	.136*	.143*	.488***	.462***	.287***
DPQ – Identity	.203***	.224***	.559***	.485***	.234***
DPQ – Frequency	.197***	-.048	.332***	.237***	.082

Note. N = 299. DPQ = Desire to Post Questionnaire.

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

CHAPTER V

Study 1 Discussion

Phase 1 sought to develop a tool to measure the desire to post on social media. This objective was met successfully, as a construct reflecting a four-factor model using 14 items was derived. The results parsed desire to post into four key components: desiring to post when negative events occur, desiring to post when positive events occur, desiring to be seen as a person who post often, and a general frequency of desiring to post. While this solution did not group all self-disclosure-based items into a single factor (RQ2), self-disclosure seems to play a key role in two of the derived factors (i.e., the desire to post both when an individual faces positive or negative events).

The purpose of Phase 2 was to validate this factor structure and establish both convergent and divergent validity. Based on the CFA, the model derived from the EFA (Phase 1) was confirmed with good model fit on all goodness of fit measures. In addition, most of the hypotheses for this study were supported. In the validation study (Phase 2), the Desire to Post Questionnaire and its four scales successfully achieved divergent validity (H2). Convergent validity was also achieved in that the overall tool and the four scales were clearly related to both problematic social media use and cognitive preoccupation with social media use. Contrary to our expectations, privacy concerns were not inversely related to the desire to post and its scales. Whereas prior work has shown that privacy concerns are not a good predictor of behaviors on social media (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Choi & Bazarova, 2015; Hoffmann et al., 2016), we expected that desire to post may be linked to privacy concerns, which could have helped to clarify privacy concerns' relationship with social media behaviors. This hypothesis did not pan out.

Contrary to expectations, there was a small positive relationship between privacy concerns and the desire to post. Future research should explore if desire to post and privacy concerns interact to predict posting on social media and behaviors to protect personal information.

The two phases presented here sought to develop and validate a measure for the desire to post on social media. This work produced a four-factor model of desire that successfully achieved convergent and divergent validity. The derived scales provide useful and nuanced insight into the components of the desire to post. As such, the current study has created a useful measurement for parsing social media posting behavior and self-disclosure (i.e., the positive/negative event scales) on these sites. Because these data were collected right before the COVID-19 pandemic arose, they provide insights into "typical" desire to post on social media, that is, desire unaffected by imposed isolation. Future research should explore how the special circumstances surrounding the global crisis may have altered this typical pattern of desire.

The derived structure of the desire to post falls in line with previous conceptions of desire more broadly (Bagozzi & Edwards, 1998; Davis, 1984). There are two key types of desire: appetitive and volitive (Davis, 1984). Volitive desire is a want driven by situational provocation and/or logical reasons (Bagozzi & Edwards, 1998; Gabbiadini et al., 2017; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). Wanting to post on social media after experiencing positive or negative events represents a volitive desire as the desire arises from situational factors. Appetitive desire is the craving or urge an individual may experience for a particular behavior (Davis, 1984). This psychological want is represented in the frequency scale; no rationale is given – just pure craving for the behavior. Volitive and

appetitive desire can co-occur; the identity scale is a good example of this. The identity scale represents a desire to publicly post in ways that depict oneself in a favorable light. The desire to post in this case is a votive desire, representing a means to an end – being seen positively. Thus, the underlying desire to been seen in a positive light is the appetitive desire or psychological want.

The scales of the desire to post each have their own potential utility in researching specific types of social media use. The scales about self-disclosure in times of positive or negative events will be of use to researchers studying disclosure of highly personal information online. In addition, these scales provide key insights into how personal events may influence the desire to post on social media. In the case of negative events, this scale could be illuminating for research on social media use in times of personal crisis or hardship. Conversely, the positive events scale could be of use in research on maintaining social connections, how social comparisons affect social media use, and the fear of missing out.

The identity scale had particularly strong correlations with problematic social media use and cognitive preoccupation. As such, this scale may be of use to clinicians who wish to better understand clients struggling with problematic social media use. Similarly, the frequency scale could help clarify that frequent desire is not inherently an indication of problematic use and other factors may be better predictors. As seen in the current study, the other three scales accounted for a greater share of the variance in problematic social media use as compared with the frequency scale. The identity scale (a desire to self-present the best possible version of oneself in a public way) had a much stronger relationship with problematic social media use. Considering the ever-growing

amount of time spent online, this identity scale could also be beneficial in intrapersonal psychology research, as it could be helpful to understand how social media use becomes ingratiated within a person's self-concept. Future research could explore how the scores on the identity scale (an ideal-self) could relate to people's self-image and self-esteem, as well as explore if people with higher scores on the identity scale are more reliant on external validation for self-esteem due to the value they place on others' perceptions of them and their social media use.

The current study had several limitations. As the validated model diverged from the hypothesized structure, other scales may have been more useful in establishing the validity of the scales (such as scales focused on positive and negative affect or experiences, or scales exploring social identity). However, the selected scales generally produced the expected pattern of convergent and divergent validity. Additional psychometric work would be valuable, but our development and confirmation work presented here indicates that this new measure has more than acceptable psychometric properties. This sample was predominantly White and limited to Canadian and American residents. Other demographic characteristics (such as being from an Eastern or collectivistic culture) may be associated with a different structure for the desire to post. Similarly, the current study focused on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat users. These sites were chosen because of their widespread popularity and self-disclosure policies (Jacob et al., 2017; Primack et al., 2016; Smith & Anderson, 2018), but other platforms, such as YouTube, Tumblr, Reddit, and TikTok, may introduce different structures or dynamics associated with desiring to post. Future research should investigate how this desire to post functions on a wider range of social media.

In summary, the desire to post is a unique construct that can be of use to those conducting research on self-disclosure on social media and other posting behaviors. The current study captured a new measure of this construct, validated its properties, and explored its dimensions, revealing four components forming its structure: desire to post because of positive events (positive events), desire to post due to negative events (negative events), frequency of desiring to post (frequency), and a desire to post based on publicly self-presenting being part of their self-concept (identity). This construct and its scales hold considerable potential for informing future research in the area of social media use.

CHAPTER VI

How the COVID-19 Pandemic Changed My Dissertation Plans

The results of Study 1 (Chapter VI) indicate that the desire to post on social media is multidimensional and does not differ by age or gender. However, the question remains regarding how these desires may vary based on contextual factors. Thus, the purpose of Study 2 was to explore factors that may affect the desire to post.

This final study of my dissertation was supposed to focus on the perceived potential consequences of social media use, such as risks to employment or benefits to one's social life. The original proposal included a plan to prime participants with potential consequences and assess how this manipulation affected their desire to post. However, the COVID-19 pandemic in North America during the time of this research in early 2020 necessitated changes to the research program. The pandemic resulted in great upheaval in the labor market (Parker, Minkin, & Bennet, 2020; Pew Research Center, 2020) and much of people's daily life migrated online, from grocery shopping to school and work to socializing (Anderson & Vogels, 2020; Vogels, 2020). This period of significant social upheaval was not a time of "prototypical" social media use with the same scope of consequences as was anticipated at the time of the proposal. Thus, the final study was changed to avoid extraneous variables confounding the manipulation and the new risks associated with manipulating these perceptions, but also to use the pandemic to explore a global set of circumstances in which desire to post might naturally be amplified or attenuated.

A new plan was developed, refined, and approved with the help of the supervisory committee. It involved replicating the data collection that took place prior to the

pandemic and comparing results between the two time points to identify the historical effect of the pandemic on the desire to post on social media. A cross-sectional design was chosen to avoid potential pitfalls of longitudinal research, such as respondents trying to mimic their answers from the original wave of data collection in October and November 2019, and also because the original sample had not consented to be contacted again to participate in additional research.

The new conceptual framework again incorporated uses and gratification theory. This theory has been widely adopted to explain other dimensions of social media use (e.g., Friedländer, 2017; Fu, Wu, & Cho, 2017; Kezer, Sevi, Cemalcilar, & Baruh, 2016; Krasnova, Veltri, Eling, & Buxmann, 2017; Lin, Lee, Jin, & Gilbraeth, 2017; Whiting & Williams, 2013). In addition, the need to connect has been used with uses and gratification theory to understand the rewards people sought when using social media in previous research (e.g., Chen, 2011), thus it was used in the current work to explain the reward people were seeking when using these sites. Lastly, the instrumentality principle (Finkel & Eastwick, 2015) was used to account for why social media would be the outlet people turned to during COVID-19 for this need to connect.

Based on these changes in design and framework, I now hypothesized that:

H3) Desire to post would be greater during the COVID-19 outbreak as compared to prior to the outbreak, as indicated in the scores on the overall tool and the four scales.

H4a) The positive and negative events scales would be more strongly related to the identity scale during the pandemic as compared to these interrelationships before the pandemic emerged.

H4b) Interrelationships between the frequency of desiring to post and the other three scales capturing desire to post because of positive event, negative events, and the desire to present the best version of oneself online would be stronger compared to the interrelationships assessed before the pandemic.

CHAPTER VII

Rationale for Study 2

When COVID-19 hit North America in early Spring 2020, many parts of everyday life migrated online, from school to work to grocery shopping. As a result, the internet became an essential tool for many North Americans (Aston, Vipond, Virgin, & Youssouf, 2020; Marowits, 2020; Vogels, Perrin, Rainie, & Anderson, 2020) and became a common way to stay connected with friends and family in the midst of the pandemic (Anderson & Vogels, 2020; Vogels, 2020). Considering the scale of this crisis and the key role that the internet took in its wake, it is worth exploring social media behaviors, especially in relation to their posting behaviors, which gives us a useful index of their efforts to connect or communicate with others. The current study explored the desire to post on social media in the midst of the pandemic (i.e., early June 2020) as compared to late October into early November 2019.

Why People Use Social Media

Uses and gratifications theory is one of the most widely adopted theories for research on the reasons for using social media. It posits that people receive rewards (or gratifications) when using media that satisfy their needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974; Kircaburun, Alhabash, Tosuntaş, & Griffiths, 2020; Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009; Phua, Jin, & Kim, 2017). Social media use is linked to a wide variety of gratifications, such as social, intrinsic, and career gratifications (Friedländer, 2017; Fu, Wu, & Cho, 2017; Kezer, Sevi, Cemalcilar, & Baruh, 2016; Krasnova, Veltri, Eling, & Buxmann, 2017; Lin, Lee, Jin, & Gilbraeth, 2017; Whiting & Williams, 2013). Consistent use of a media source is dependent on the individual receiving the rewards

that were sought (Rubin, 2008; Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1979). As such, people can be selective about the media they choose to use (Rubin, 1986, 2008).

Beyond entertainment value (Kezer, Sevi, Cemalcilar, & Baruh, 2016; Krasnova, Veltri, Eling, & Buxmann, 2017), a primary appeal of social media is its ability to help people stay connected with others (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2010; Fu et al., 2017; Walrave, Vanwesenbeeck, & Heirman, 2012). Social media allows people to connect easily with others regardless of distance or time constraints (Ruppel et al., 2017). Social ties are the driving force behind many of the reasons that individuals report using social media (Friedländer, 2017; Fu et al., 2017; Whiting & Williams, 2013). Social media use can feel highly rewarding as interacting on these sites constitutes a form of social reinforcement (Centola, 2010). In an experiment conducted by Centola (2010), participants were invited to join a new social networking site to which only study participants had access. The 1528 participants who joined were then able to join a second social networking site focused on health, again for participants only. When social ties were clustered (i.e., shared connections between one's own social ties and these individuals' social ties), social reinforcement from these ties encouraged quicker adoption of the second social networking site throughout the network of individuals. In a more applied approach, 418,580 comments were analyzed to determine the ways people respond to others in their network who try to engage them on social media (Ha et al., 2017). Those people who were tagged in a Facebook comment responded to being tagged 77.8% of the time, typically by commenting (33.6% of tags) and/or liking the post or (sub)comment (44.2% of the tags). Tagged individuals preferred to respond to the tagger directly by liking (98.6% of like responses) and/or commenting (90.1% of comment

responses) on the tagger's (sub)comment. These results indicate that individuals socially reinforce each other's social media use by acknowledging specific people and extending the interaction further.

Satisfying one's social needs often is seen as the driving force behind why people use social media (e.g., Friedländer, 2017; Krasnova et al., 2017; Lin et al., 2017). Chen (2011) found that greater Twitter use satisfied peoples need to connect with others by building a sense of community and interconnectedness on the platform. Similarly, Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) proposed that social media use was a product of two key needs: the need to belong and the need for self-presentation. The need to belong is the psychological need for social acceptance and socialization. The need for self-presentation is the process of managing how others perceive oneself. Based on a review of prior literature, Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) found that operationalized measures of these needs were repeatedly found to be associated with greater use of social media. Similarly, the need for social approval may play a role in the use of social media as well. Frequent social media users score higher on the need for social approval than less frequent users do (Lo Coco et al., 2018). Need for social approval is associated with greater social conformity (Horton, Marlowe, & Crowne, 1963; Strickland & Crowne, 1962), more intimate (and longer) public self-disclosures (Cravens, 1975), and greater fear of missing out (Lai, Altavilla, Ronconi, & Aceto, 2016). These social needs are beneficial in understanding the desire to post, especially about oneself, on social media.

How the Coronavirus is Changing People's Social Lives

In the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, much of everyday life was pushed online (Anderson & Vogels, 2020; Vogels, 2020; Vogels et al., 2020). As people were unable to

socialize in person, concerns arose about the psychological impact of this mandated social isolation and the inability to socialize directly while remaining physically distant (Killgore, Cloonan, Taylor, & Dailey, 2020; Sutin, Luchetti, & Terracciano, 2020). However, both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies found that rates of loneliness did not significantly differ before and after the pandemic in the United States (Luchetti et al., 2020; McGinty, Presskreischer, Han, & Barry, 2020; Sutin et al., 2020). In fact, perceived social and emotional support appear to have increased since the pandemic began (Luchetti et al., 2020).

While social needs are typically better addressed through face-to-face interactions (Boyle & O'Sullivan, 2016; Sacco & Ismail, 2014), computer-mediated interactions, such as social media use, can also satisfy these needs (e.g., Chen, 2011; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). Based on uses and gratification theory, people may start to desire using these sites more than they did before the pandemic due to social media becoming a primary medium for satisfying their social needs. In addition, the instrumentality principle posits that situational factors, such as goal importance, are key determinants in the decisions we make (Finkel & Eastwick, 2015). As social needs are central to most people's well-being, social media provide highly attractive alternative means of connecting until in-person interactions are viable. During the pandemic, researchers have found that greater social media use is associated with greater emotional and social support (Zhong, Huang, & Liu, 2021). However, the desire to turn to social media during this time has yet to be assessed.

The Importance of Desire in Understanding Social Media Use

Desire to engage in a behavior is a key component in predicting how often an individual engages in that behavior (e.g., Esposito, van Bavel, Baranowski, & Dutch-

Brown, 2016; Gabbiadini, Cristini, Scacchi, & Monaci, 2017; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; Perugini & Conner, 2000). The prior study of this dissertation indicates that the desire to post on social media consists of four key elements: desire to post because of positive events (positive events), desire to post due to negative events (negative events), frequency of desiring to post (frequency), and a desire to publicly self-present the best version of oneself online (identity). With the multitude of distressing experiences we have shared in 2020 paired with a deepening reliance on social media for socializing, desire to post has likely increased to new levels compared to those found shortly before the pandemic.

The Current Study

The current study assessed changes in desire to post on social media in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Data to develop the desire to post construct were first collected in the Fall of 2019, then new data collected in the midst of the pandemic of 2020 to assess the extent to which desire to post had changed. Based on the new cultural milieu, we hypothesized that:

> H3) Desire to post would be greater during the COVID-19 outbreak as compared to prior to the outbreak, as indicated in score on the overall tool and its four scales.

As the pandemic impaired people's ability to socialize in-person, people would need to find an alternative way to satisfy their social needs. Social media provides an attractive alternative for people to connect with others about the events happening in their lives while remaining social distant, as such we hypothesized that:

H4a) The positive and negative events scales would be more strongly related to the identity scale during the pandemic as compared to these interrelationships before the pandemic emerged.

H4b) Interrelationships between the frequency of desiring to post and the other three scales capturing desire to post because of positive event, negative events, and the desire to publicly self-present the best version of oneself online would be stronger compared to the interrelationships assessed before the pandemic

CHAPTER VIII

Study 2 Method

Participants

Two large samples of Canadian and American adult social media users (N = 1,315; Study 1's sample n = 667; new sample for Study 2 n = 648) were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk)®, a crowdsourcing website that allows individuals to choose and complete online tasks for monetary compensation (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). The same recruitment criteria were used as in Study 1 (i.e., must be at least 19 years old, living in U.S. or Canada, and has used Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and/or Snapchat in the previous 30 days). To keep the two time periods comparable, an equivalent sample size was collected in the second period as had been collected in the first round of data collection.

The participants were diverse in age, with a 64-year age range from the youngest to oldest participant (M = 41.06; SD = 12.95). The sample was predominantly White (75.1%; 9.1% Black; 8.1% Asian; 3.7% Hispanic) and slightly over half were women (56.0%; 43.0% men). To ensure the samples collected at two different time points were comparable, chi-square analyses were conducted to compare groups on each demographic characteristic. Men were more likely to have participated in the second period of data collection and employment demographics had changed in several ways during the latter period of data collection (for all demographics, see Table 8.1). The changes in employment were in line with the wide employment changes seen during the pandemic (Parker et al., 2020). Overall, these changes do not imply a radical change in who qualified for and participated in this research between the two time periods.

Table 8.1

Demographics for Time Periods 1 and 2

	Total	Period 1	Period 2
Sample size	1,315	667	648
Data collection dates		Fall 2019	June 2020
Gender			
Man	43.0	39.6$_a$	46.6$_b$
Woman	56.0	59.2$_a$	52.6$_b$
Other (e.g., agender, transman)	1.0	1.2$_a$	.8$_a$
Age			
Mean age (in years)	41.06	40.82$_a$	41.31$_a$
SD age	12.95	12.23	13.66
Age range	19-83	19-83	20-78
Race/ethnicity			
White	75.1	76.0$_a$	74.2$_a$
Black	9.1	9.6$_a$	8.6$_a$
Asian	8.1	6.9$_a$	9.4$_a$
Hispanic	3.7	3.3$_a$	4.2$_a$
Indigenous	.5	.6$_a$	.5$_a$
Arab	.2	.1$_a$	.3$_a$
Multi-racial	2.4	2.5$_a$	2.2$_a$
Other	.7	.7$_a$	.6$_a$
Education			
Some high school	.3	.6$_a$	0$_b$
High school graduate	6.8	7.8$_a$	5.9$_a$
Some college	15.5	17.7$_a$	13.3$_b$
Trade/tech school	3.5	4.2$_a$	2.8$_a$
Associate degree	10.7	10.0$_a$	11.4$_a$
Bachelor's degree	42.5	40.8$_a$	44.3$_a$
Master's degree	16.1	14.5$_a$	17.7$_a$
Professional degree	2.0	1.8$_a$	2.2$_a$
Doctorate degree	2.4	2.4$_a$	2.5$_a$
Employment			
Full-time	66.0	69.4$_a$	62.5$_b$
Part-time	12.8	11.4$_a$	14.2$_a$
Seasonal	.4	.4$_a$	.3$_a$
Self-employed	6.4	5.5$_a$	7.3$_a$
Out of work and looking for work	3.0	2.4$_a$	3.5$_b$
Out of work and currently not looking	.6	.1$_a$	1.1$_b$
Homemaker	3.2	4.5$_a$	1.9$_b$
Student	1.2	.9$_a$	1.5$_a$
Military	.1	.1$_a$	0$_a$
Retired	4.9	3.9$_a$	6.0$_a$
Unable to work	1.1	1.0$_a$	1.2$_a$

Other	.2	0_a	$.5_a$

Note. Significant differences between the two time periods are denoted with differing subscripts.

Materials

The same materials were used as in Study 1.

Procedure

The procedure from Study 1 was replicated with the new participants. Across the two time periods, participants took 11.72 minutes to complete the survey on average.

Data Analysis

While there were 1,875 completed responses, responses were removed when individuals misreported their location (e.g., IP address does not match their self-reported location), failed an attention check or spambot question, or showed signs of patterned responding (e.g., answering all the same value for all items in a scale or series of scales). This resulted in 1,366 usable responses (72.85%). Of these usable responses, 34 responses were removed due to missing data on the measure of interest. Preliminary tests assessed univariate and multivariate outliers. No univariate adjustments were needed, as all scores were within 3.5 standard deviations of their respective means (Iglewicz & Hoaglin, 1993). Multivariate outliers were dropped (n = 17). This resulted in a final sample size of 1,315 (96.27% of the 1,366 usable responses).

First, a series of multigroup CFAs were used to assess measurement invariance (i.e., how stable this newly developed measure was between the two data collections; Hirschfeld & von Brachel, 2014). This was done using the lavaan package in R (Rosseel, 2012). To achieve strict invariance, the CFI while holding all of the loadings, intercepts, and variances constant must be within .01 of the configural model CFI (Hu & Bentler,

1998; Wu, Li, & Zumbo, 2007). Other less stringent measures include a nonsignificant $\Delta\chi^2$ (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002; Wu et al., 2007) and $\Delta TLI \leq .05$ (Wu et al., 2007).

Next, a *t*-test was conducted to assess differences in the overall scores on the Desire to Post Questionnaire based on the period of data collection. A MANOVA was used to test for differences across the four scales based on the period of data collection. Correlations were calculated between the scales for each period of data collection. Finally, correlation comparisons were conducted to see if the interrelationships between the scales had changed between the two periods of data collection.

CHAPTER IX

Study 2 Results

Preliminary Analyses

The 14-item tool developed and validated in Study 1 was used to measure the desire to post on social media for this second study. The internal consistency for the overall tool was very high (α = .92). The Cronbach's alphas for the four scales were also strong: negative events (three items: α = .82), positive events (four items: α = .86), frequency (four items: α = .89), and identity (three items: α = .88). Scores were calculated by taking the average score on the items for the overall tool and for each of the individual scales. Higher scores indicated stronger desire to post.

On average, respondents' overall desire to post was moderate, scoring at the midpoint of 4 on a scale of 0 to 8 (M = 4.11; SD = 1.67). Scores on each of the individual scales ranged from 3.20 to 5.43. The difference between the score on each scale and the midpoint was assessed using a series of one-sample t-tests with a Bonferroni correction (adjusted alpha level = .0125). The frequency scale score fell at approximately the midpoint (M = 4.05; SD = 1.96; p = .351). Two of the scales fell significantly below the midpoint of 4 (both ps < .001): the negative events scale (M = 3.20; SD = 1.97) and the identity scale (M = 3.36; SD = 2.22). The average positive events scale score was significantly higher than the midpoint (p < .001), with a mean of 5.43 (SD = 2.08). The correlations between the scales also were calculated, and all of the scales had large, positive correlations with each other (see Table 9.1).

Table 9.1

Correlations between the Desire to Post Questionnaire and Its Four Scales

	DPQ	DPQ – Neg	DPQ – Pos	DPQ – ID	DPQ – Freq
DPQ	-				
DPQ – Neg	.772	-			
DPQ – Pos	.852	.528	-		
DPQ – ID	.801	.594	.550	-	
DPQ – Freq	.825	.491	.621	.515	-

Note. N = 1,315. DPQ = Desire to Post Questionnaire. Neg = Negative events subscale. Pos = Positive events subscale. ID = Identity subscale. Freq = Frequency subscale. All p-values less than .001.

Measurement Invariance

Across a series of nested CFA models, no significant changes were seen for χ^2 (see Table 9.2). In addition, all changes in CFI were less than the cut off of .01, and the changes in TLI were less than the cut off of .05. This suggests the Desire to Post Questionnaire achieved strict measurement invariance, meaning the model structure was stable across the two time periods.

Table 9.2

Assessing Measurement Invariance in the Desire to Post Questionnaire's Structure Before and During COVID-19

Model	**χ^2**	**df**	**CFI**	**ΔCFI**	**TLI**	**ΔTLI**
Configural	694.487	142	0.994	-	0.993	-
Metric	720.279	152	0.994	0	0.993	0
Scalar	760.949	245	0.995	.001	0.996	.003
Strict	760.949	245	0.995	.001	0.996	.003

Note. No significant changes were detected in χ^2 across the models (all ps > .09).

Changes in Desire

Contrary to expectations, an independent samples *t*-test revealed that overall scores on the Desire to Post Questionnaire did not differ between individuals who responded in Fall 2019 or June 2020, $t(1313) = 1.210$, $p = .226$. A MANOVA tested for differences across the four scales by the period of data collection. The multivariate test was significant, Pillai's trace: .013, $F(4, 1310) = 4.41$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$. The univariate *F* test revealed that the significant multivariate result was due to differences on the positive events scale ($p = .032$) and the frequency scale ($p = .033$). The pairwise comparisons showed that the desire to post due to positive events was lower amongst participants from June 2020 ($M = 5.30$; $SD = 2.04$) as compared with those who completed the scale in the fall of 2019 ($M = 5.55$; $SD = 2.12$). Similarly, scores on the frequency scale were lower for those who completed the survey in June 2020 ($M = 3.93$; $SD = 1.92$) than participants from Fall 2019 ($M = 4.16$; $SD = 1.99$).

Changing Relationships between Desires

Correlations were conducted within each period of data collection to assess whether the four scales' interrelationships changed after the pandemic began, (see Table 9.3). Correlation comparisons were calculated for each set of correlations while applying a Bonferroni correction to control for Type I error (adjusted alpha level = .0083). Only two correlations significantly changed: the negative events scale's correlations with both the identity scale ($z = 3.19$, $p = .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .13$) and the frequency scale ($z = 2.67$, $p = .004$, $\Delta R^2 = .11$). In both cases, the correlations in June 2020 had become stronger than they had been in Fall 2019. Thus, these findings indicate that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of desiring to post when experiencing negative events had become

more closely tied to desiring to post frequently (frequency scale) and wanting to publicly present the best possible version of oneself online (identity scale).

Table 9.3

Correlations between Desire to Post Scales by Data Collection Period

	DPQ – Neg	DPQ – Pos	DPQ – ID	DPQ – Freq
DPQ – Neg	-	.565	.649	.551
DPQ – Pos	.499	-	.583	.623
DPQ – ID	.535	.518	-	.559
DPQ – Freq	.440	.617	.473	-

Note. Fall 2019 correlations are below the diagonal ($N = 667$). June 2020 correlations are above the diagonal ($N = 648$). DPQ = Desire to Post Questionnaire. Freq = Frequency scale. Neg = Negative events scale. Pos = Positive events scale. ID = Identity scale. All *p*-values less than .001.

CHAPTER X

Study 2 Discussion

The current study explored how the desire to post has changed after COVID-19 hit as compared to pre-pandemic levels in a sample of Canadian and American adults. Further validating the construct's structure, strict measurement invariance was achieved, meaning the four factor structure worked well in both time periods in assessing the desire to post. No changes were seen in scores for overall desire to post, desiring to post when experiencing negative events, and desiring to be seen as someone who post frequently (posting seen as part of one's identity) between Fall 2019 and June 2020. While differences were found in desiring to post when experiencing positive events and the frequency with which people desired to post, they were in the opposite direction than was predicted. As such, our first hypothesis was not supported. This may be partially due to the loosening of stay-at-home orders throughout most of the United States by the start of June (Secon, 2020). Another possibility could be that while the occurrences that may spark the desire to post had increased, the intensity of people's desire to post had not increased when they encountered these stimuli.

Partially supporting our predictions (H2a), desiring to post when experiencing negative events saw a strengthening of its relationship with the importance people place on being someone who posts often and keeps their followers informed about their life in the midst of the pandemic compared to before the pandemic, but no change was seen in associations between an individuals' desire to post when experiencing positive events and their desire to post to reinforce one's identity as a person has people following their (selectively-curated) life story online. Perhaps this was the case because people perceived

negative events during the pandemic as more important or having a stronger impact, driving the need to share with others more so than the positive events they experienced. This is a consistent finding in social psychology, with negative events having a stronger and longer impact than than positive events (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001).

Trending in line with predictions (H2b), desiring to post when experiencing negative events had a marginally stronger relationship with the frequency with which people desired to post during the pandemic as compared with Fall 2019. Since the start of the pandemic, there have been many distressing events that have occurred, and we have seen corresponding rises in social media posts. For example, many people turned to social media to voice their opinions following the killing of George Floyd, resulting in record breaking engagement with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter (Anderson, Barthel, Perrin, & Vogels, 2020). The relationship between desiring to post frequently and desiring to post when experiencing positive events, however, saw no change after the pandemic started, with a near identical relationship to pre-pandemic times. Prior to COVID-19, greater desire to post when experiencing positive events was strongly associated with greater desire to post frequently, whereas negative events did not have as strong of a relationship with the desire to post frequently. By June 2020, the positive and negative event scales had equivalent correlations with the frequency scale. Perhaps only the negative events scale's correlation with the frequency scale saw a change as it had more room to grow as compared with the positive events scale's correlation with the frequency scale.

These findings hold important implications for understanding how people relate to and use social media in times of crisis to stay connected with others. Most prior research on desire to use social media has focused on problematic or unhealthy social media use (e.g., Andreassen, Pallesen, & Griffiths, 2017; Andreassen, Torsheim, Brunborg, & Pallesen, 2012; Pontes, Taylor, & Stavropoulos, 2018). However, social media use can be healthy and can satisfy social needs (Chen, 2011; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Zhong et al., 2021). This research highlights how desiring to post on social media changes in times of crisis where people are inhibited from connecting with others in person. Even outside of a global crisis, these data will be of use to clinicians supporting clients who are socially isolated and experiencing distressing events in their lives. When negative events are greatly affecting people's lives, they may see more value in using social media to keep others informed about their lives, especially in times when they are not able to connect easily with others in person. This research provides new insights into how the integration of social media into our lives has served us during a time of crisis.

This study had several limitations. Although the current study had a large sample size, it was predominantly White and all North Americans (predominantly U.S. residents). Results may have differed had this sample been more racially diverse or had been conducted in other countries where COVID-19 was being addressed differently or was less widespread. In addition, this study was not a longitudinal design so comparisons cannot be made within individuals over time. However, this decision was made purposefully to avoid demand characteristics, attrition limitations, and the potential that participants may simply try to answer the same way they did the first time. Future research should assess how the desire to post is associated with perceived social

gratification of posting on social media. We also had not anticipated global racial protests to begin right as the second period of data collection had been scheduled to begin. As such, these data cannot fully isolate the effects of COVID-19 from the effects of these global protests on the desire to post. Future research should explore the desire to post during other periods of civil unrest to see how large-scale social movements affect the desire to post. Experimental manipulation of anticipated outcomes of posting would help to better understand how expectations and desires can lead to posting behaviors.

The desire to post is a relatively new construct and holds great potential to help better understand posting behavior during both "normal" times and times of crisis. Although times of crisis do not appear to increase people's desire to post directly, experiencing a crisis does intensify the relationship between desiring to post when experiencing to negative events and feeling a need to post more frequently as well as the relationship between negative events and the importance people place on being a person who keeps others informed about their life on social media. COVID-19 seems to have led people to prioritize keeping their loved ones informed about the rough times even if they have to do so while physically apart.

CHAPTER XI

General Discussion

Across the two research articles incorporated into this dissertation, a measure assessing the desire to post on social media was developed and validated, with pre- and post-pandemic scores compared cross-sectionally to assess history effects. As demonstrated in the model of goal directed behavior, desire is a key step in any motivational process (e.g., Esposito et al., 2016; Gabbiadini et al., 2017; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; Perugini & Conner, 2000). This dissertation sought to develop and validate a measure for the desire to post on social media. Understanding the desire to post helps clarify the motivational process prompting self-disclosure online, which has critical implications for digital privacy management as well understanding the interface of digital technology uptake and social needs.

Study 1 (Chapter II) developed and validated a tool that measured four key dimensions of the desire to post: desiring to post due to negative events in one's life, desiring to post due to positive events, frequency of posting desires, and desire to publicly self-present the best version of oneself online. Study 2 expanded upon this research by exploring how a time of crisis (i.e., the coronavirus pandemic) was associated with the desire to post. Although overall scores for the construct did not reveal differences across the two time points, the scales assessing desire to post when experiencing positive events and the frequency with which people desired to post decreased during COVID-19, indicating that people wanted to talk less about positive events than they did prior to the pandemic and were not as focused on the frequency with which they posted. Perhaps the severity of the pandemic made people feel a need to strike

a more solemn tone in their posts and devote more of their mental energies to other priorities rather than their social media presence.

In addition, the correlation between the desire to post when experiencing negative events and the desire to publicly self-present the best version of oneself online had become stronger during COVID-19, as did the correlation between the desire to post when experiencing negative events and the frequency with which people desired to post. In light of all the negative events happening in 2020, it seems that desiring to post when going through these negative events was becoming more closely tied to reaching out frequently on social media in a way that would garner attention from others. This could help to explain why prior research found that people felt more social support during the pandemic than before it began (Luchetti et al., 2020), especially amongst those who used social media more frequently (Zhong, Huang, & Liu, 2021).

Limitations

The current dissertation had several limitations in relation to its design, sample, and measures. I discuss each in its own section below, as well as suggest some areas for future research.

Design limitations. This dissertation did not conduct a follow-up survey through a longitudinal design feature to measure the actual behaviors in which people engaged after completing the desire questionnaire. Although doing so would have allowed a full test of the derived measure within the model of goal-directed behavior, this additional step was not needed for scale development and validation and would have presented its own challenges surrounding attrition, especially selective attrition in the midst of the

pandemic. For similar reasons, Study 2 did not employ a longitudinal design. As a result, changes within individuals' desire to post over time could not be assessed.

Another design limitation pertains to isolating the source of the observed history effects. Not only was the pandemic not anticipated, but neither were the global racial protests that began at the start of data collection for Study 2. As such, the data from Study 2 cannot be fully parsed from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects of these global protests on the desire to post. Future research should explore the desire to post during other periods of civil unrest to see how large-scale social movements as well as times of crisis, such as extreme weather events, affect the desire to post. There is some evidence that posting dramatically increasing in response to these events (Anderson, Barthel, Perrin, & Vogels, 2020; Anderson, Toor, Rainie, & Smith, 2018; Hutchinson, 2020; Niles, Emery, Reagan, Dodds, & Danforth, 2019). Experimental manipulation of anticipated outcomes of posting would allow researchers to control expectations in the study of desire to post and subsequent posting behaviors.

Sample limitations. Across both studies, the samples were predominantly White and limited to Canadian and American residents (primarily U.S. residents). Other demographic characteristics may be associated with a different structure for the desire to post. For example, the desire to post and self-disclose on social media in collectivistic cultures may be more about relationship maintenance and community building rather than egoistic desires. Similarly, countries with different free-speech laws likely would see different desires driving self-disclosure as uncensored posting may come at a price. Future work should explore these potential differences. Regarding Study 2, results may

have differed had this sample been more racially diverse or had been conducted in other countries where COVID-19 was being addressed differently or was less widespread.

In addition, the research comprising this dissertation focused on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat users. These sites were chosen because of their broad uptake, widespread popularity, and permissive self-disclosure policies (Jacob, Evans, R., & Scourfield, 2017; Primack, Carroll, Shensa, Davis, & Levine, 2016; Smith & Anderson, 2018). Other platforms, such as YouTube, Tumblr, Reddit, and TikTok, may introduce different structures or dynamics associated with desiring to post. Future research should investigate how this desire to post functions on a wider range of social media.

Measure limitations. As the validated model in Study 1 diverged from the hypothesized structure, other scales may have been more useful in establishing the validity of the construct's four scales in Study 2. However, the selected scales mostly converged and diverged as expected. Additional psychometric work would be valuable, but the development and confirmation work presented here indicates that this new measure has acceptable to strong psychometric properties.

This research used a historical event as the presumed reason for the change in scores, but we did not directly assess the level to which participants had been affected by the pandemic. Future work could explore the relationship between the desire to post and the extent to which someone is in crisis or the level to which a large-scale event affected an individual. In addition, we did not ask about geographic region or community type within the United States or Canada. However, different regions had very different experiences with the pandemic (Jones & Kiley, 2020) and there are different rates of

social media use by urbanicity (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Future research should explore how the desire to post varies depending on region and community type.

Conclusions and Implications

The derived tool replicates the conceptual framework of desire with four scales that provide useful and nuanced insights into the components of the desire to post. Broadly, this dissertation furthers the growing body of research on desire and the importance it plays in understanding behavior. While on an applied level, the four newly validated scales provide a useful measure for parsing social media posting behavior and self-disclosure (i.e., the positive/negative event scales) on these sites. Each of the four scales measuring the desire to post have their own potential utility in researching specific types of social media use. The scales about self-disclosure in times of positive or negative events will be of use to researchers studying disclosure of highly personal information online. In addition, these scales provide key insights into how personal events may influence the desire to post on social media. In the case of negative events, this scale could be illuminating for research on social media use in times of personal crisis or hardship. Conversely, the positive events scale could be of use in research on maintaining social connections, how social comparisons affect social media use, or the fear of missing out.

The identity scale had particularly strong correlations with problematic social media use and cognitive preoccupation. As such, this scale may be of use to clinicians who wish to better understand clients struggling with problematic social media use. Similarly, the frequency scale could help clarify that frequent desire is not inherently an indication of problematic use and other factors, such as personality traits, distorted needs,

or automatic thoughts, may be better predictors (for a comprehensive review, see Andreassen, 2015). As seen in the current study, the other three scales accounted for a greater share of the variance in problematic social media use as compared with the frequency scale. The identity scale (a desire to publicly self-present the best version of oneself online) had a much stronger relationship with problematic social media use. Considering the vast amount of time people spend online (Perrin & Kumar, 2019), this identity scale could also be beneficial in intrapersonal psychology research, as it could be helpful to understand how social media use becomes ingratiated within a person's self-concept. Future research could explore how the scores on the identity scale (an ideal-self) could relate to self-image and self-esteem, as well as explore whether people with higher scores on the identity scale are more reliant on external validation for self-esteem due to the value they place on others' perceptions of them and their social media use.

These findings also hold important implications for understanding how people relate to and use social media in times of crisis to stay connected with others. Most prior research on desire to use social media has focused on problematic or unhealthy social media use (e.g., Andreassen, Pallesen, & Griffiths, 2017; Andreassen, Torsheim, Brunborg, & Pallesen, 2012; Pontes, Taylor, & Stavropoulos, 2018). However, social media use can be healthy and can help satisfy social needs (Chen, 2011; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Zhong, Huang, & Liu, 2021). This research highlights how desiring to post on social media changes in times of crisis where people are inhibited from connecting with others in person as well as how it is affected by sociopolitical and historical contexts. Even outside of a global crisis, these data will be of use to clinicians supporting clients who are socially isolated and experiencing distressing events in their

lives. When negative events are greatly affecting people's lives, they may see more value in using social media to keep others informed about their lives, especially in times when they are not able to connect easily with others in person. This research provides timely new insights into how the integration of social media into our lives has served us during a time of crisis.

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APPENDIX A

Initial Draft of the Desire to Post on Social Media Questionnaire

(31 items)

When using social media, you may post your own content (e.g., statuses, pictures, videos, tweets, stories). Please think about your desire to engage is this activity as you complete the following questions.

1. During the last month, how often would you have liked to post on social media (for example, funny thoughts you had, an article you read, or a meme you saw)?
0) Not at all
1) Once a month
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

2. During the last month, how often would you have liked to post on social media about your life (for example, how your job is going, an activity you did with friends, a romantic gesture your partner made, or how someone was rude to you)?
0) Not at all
1) Once a month
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

3. During the last month, how often did you think about posting something on social media (even if you didn't post it)?
0) Not at all
1) Once a month
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

4. During the last month, how often did you think about posting something about your life on social media (even if you didn't post it)?
0) Not at all
1) Once a month
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

5. When you have thoughts about posting on social media, how strong is your desire to actually post?

No Desire	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Strong Desire

6. When you have thoughts about posting about your life on social media, how strong is your desire to actually post?

No Desire	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Strong Desire

Using the scale below, how strong is your desire to post on social media:

No Desire	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Strong Desire

7. When something good happens to you?
8. When something bad happens to you?
9. When you attend an event?
10. When you see or hear something interesting or unusual?
11. When you see or hear something funny?
12. When you see or hear something upsetting?
13. When you are unsure about what to do in real life?

14. Generally speaking, how strong is your desire to post on social media?

No Desire	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Strong Desire

Using the scale below, how important to you is:

Not At All Important	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Extremely Important

15. Posting on social media regularly?
16. Having a large following on social media?
17. Keeping your followers up-to-date on your life?
18. Looking good on social media?

19. Compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to post on social media?

Much Less Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Much More Desire

20. Compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to post about your life on social media?

Much Less Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Much More Desire

21. How long could you go comfortably without posting anything on social media?

0) Forever
1) A year or two
2) Several months
3) A month
4) A few weeks
5) A week
6) A few days
7) One day
8) Less than one day

22. How long could you go comfortably without posting about your life on social media?

0) Forever
1) A year or two
2) Several months
3) A month
4) A few weeks
5) A week
6) A few days
7) One day
8) Less than one day

23. For the next month, how often do you currently want to post on social media?

0) Not at all
1) Once
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

Use the scale below for items 24-27.
For the next two weeks, how much to do you desire to post on social media:

No Desire	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Strong Desire

24. At least twice a day?
25. At least once a day?
26. At least once every other day?
27. At least once per week?

Use the scale below for items 28-31.
In the next two weeks how much would you like to post on social media:

Not At All	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Very Much So

28. At least twice a day?
29. At least once a day?
30. At least once every other day?
31. At least once per week?

APPENDIX B

Final Version of the Desire to Post on Social Media Questionnaire

(14 items)

1. During the last month, how often would you have liked to post on social media (for example, funny thoughts you had, an article you read, or a meme you saw)?
0) Not at all
1) Once a month
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

2. During the last month, how often would you have liked to post on social media about your life (for example, how your job is going, an activity you did with friends, a romantic gesture your partner made, or how someone was rude to you)?
0) Not at all
1) Once a month
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

3. During the last month, how often did you think about posting something on social media (even if you didn't post it)?
0) Not at all
1) Once a month
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

4. During the last month, how often did you think about posting something about your life on social media (even if you didn't post it)?
0) Not at all

1) Once a month
2) Once every two weeks
3) Once a week
4) Twice a week
5) 3 to 4 times a week
6) Once a day
7) A couple of times a day
8) Many times a day

Using the scale below, how strong is your desire to post on social media:

No Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong Desire

5. When something good happens to you?
6. When something bad happens to you?
7. When you attend an event?
8. When you see or hear something interesting or unusual?
9. When you see or hear something funny?
10. When you see or hear something upsetting?
11. When you are unsure about what to do in real life?

Using the scale below, how important to you in:

Not At All Important 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Extremely Important

12. Having a large following on social media?
13. Keeping your followers up-to-date on your life?
14. Looking good on social media?

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent & Screener Questionnaire

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Dear MTurk User:

You are invited to participate in an online survey about social media use. This study hopes to better understand how often people use social media and why they want to keep using social media. We are interested in assessing adults' social media habits and desires. We intend to use these results to develop a scale regarding social media behaviors.

This questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes to complete online. You can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer. All of your answers are confidential; there will be no way to identify who answered which questionnaire because we will not be asking you to provide your names. We ask that you refrain from including any identifying information in your responses. Survey results will be securely stored in a password protected database that will only be accessed by the researchers listed above.

Completion of this questionnaire is completely voluntary and you may decline to participate or withdraw your participation up until you submit your survey. If you wish to terminate your survey session, you can simply exit the survey by closing the browser without submitting your answers and your responses will be deleted. Submission of a survey is considered complete once you click on the "submit" button. Because this is a confidential online survey, you cannot withdraw or delete your answers once they have been submitted. Once you submit the survey, this will be taken as an indication of your informed consent.

There are very few risks associated with participating in this survey and you will likely experience no discomfort. However, if you do experience any discomfort, remember: completion of the survey is entirely voluntary and you are free to skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

You will receive $.75 for your participation in this study. A summary of the findings will be available to those who would like to receive them, and available through the UNB Psychology website.

This project is on file with the Research Ethics Board, University of New Brunswick (REB ###).

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey or your rights or treatment as a participant, you may contact the primary researcher, Emily Vogels at (evogels@unb.ca), or the Chair of the Department of Psychology Research Ethics Committee, Dr. Biljana Stevanovski, (bstevano@unb.ca), or Dr. Steven Turner (turner@unb.ca), Chair of the University of New Brunswick's Research Ethics Board for assistance.

Thank you so much for your help!

Emily Vogels
Dr. Lucia O'Sullivan,
Department of Psychology

Please select your age range:
- **13-18****
- **19-25**
- **26-30**
- **31-35**
- **36-40**
- **41-45**
- **46-50**
- **51-55**
- **56-60**
- **61-65**
- **66+**

Are you currently employed?
- **Yes, Full time**
- **Yes, Part time**
- **Yes, Seasonal**
- **No**

Do you own your own computer?
- **Yes**
- **No**

How long have you been using the internet?
- **Less than 6 months**
- **6 to 12 months**
- **1 to 3 years**
- **3 to 5 years**
- **5 to 8 years**
- **8 to 10 years**
- **10 to 15 years**
- **15 to 20 years**
- **20+ years**

In which country do you currently reside?

- ○ **Australia****
- ○ **Canada**
- ○ **China****
- ○ **India****
- ○ **Mexico****
- ○ **United States**
- ○ **United Kingdom****
- ○ **Other (please specify): _____****

What social media platforms do you use? (Check all that apply)

- ○ **I do not use social media****
- ○ **Facebook**+
- ○ **Instagram**+
- ○ **LinkedIn**
- ○ **Pinterest**
- ○ **Reddit**
- ○ **Snapchat**+
- ○ **Tumblr**
- ○ **Twitter**+
- ○ **WhatsApp**
- ○ **YouTube**
- ○ **Other (please specify): _____**

What social media platforms have you used in the past 30 days? (Check all that apply)

- ○ **I do not use social media****
- ○ **Facebook**+
- ○ **Instagram**+
- ○ **LinkedIn**
- ○ **Pinterest**
- ○ **Reddit**
- ○ **Snapchat**+
- ○ **Tumblr**
- ○ **Twitter**+
- ○ **WhatsApp**
- ○ **YouTube**
- ○ **Other (please specify): _____**

I have read and understood the above information and consent to participating in the survey.

- ○ **I <u>agree</u> to participate**
- ○ **I do not agree to participate****

** OR no + selected

Thank you for your interest, but you are not eligible to participate.

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire

Demographics

Age (in years): _____

Gender:

- o Man
- o Woman
- o Transgender man
- o Transgender woman
- o Agender
- o Gender Fluid
- o Other (please specify) _____

Relationship Status:

- o Single
- o Dating, one person exclusively
- o Dating, more than one person
- o Living with a romantic partner (not married)
- o Married to a romantic partner
- o Other (please specify) _____

Which of the following BEST describes your sexual orientation?

- o Gay
- o Lesbian
- o Bisexual
- o Heterosexual
- o Asexual
- o Questioning
- o Other (specify) _____
- o Don't know
- o No labels preferred

Which best describes your race/ethnicity?

- o Black
- o Arab
- o Caucasian/White
- o Chinese
- o Filipino
- o Aboriginal (e.g., First Nations People, Métis, Inuit, etc.)
- o Inuk (Inuit)
- o Japanese
- o Korean
- o Latin American/Hispanic

- Multi-racial
- South Asian (e.g. East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)
- Southeast Asian (e.g. Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian)
- West Asian (e.g. Iranian, Afghan)
- Other (please specify) _____

Your highest level of education:

- Some high school, no diploma
- High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)
- Some college credit, no degree
- Trade/technical/vocational training
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate degree
- Other. Please specify: _____

Employment Status:

- Employed part-time
- Employed full-time
- Seasonal employment
- Self-employed
- Out of work and looking for work
- Out of work and not currently looking for work
- Homemaker
- Student
- Military
- Retired
- Unable to work
- Other (please specify) _____

In which country were you born? _____

What is your native (first) language? _____

Are you a fluent speaker of English? Yes No

Are you a native speaker of English? Yes No

Social media use

We would like to know more about your social media habits. Please indicate which social media platforms have you used in the past 30 days. (Check all that apply)

I do not use social media**
Facebook
Instagram
LinkedIn
Pinterest
Reddit
Snapchat
Tumblr
Twitter
WhatsApp
YouTube
Other (please specify): _____

If they have Facebook:

You indicated you use Facebook. We would like to know more about how you use Facebook.

In the past week, about how many times did you look at posts on Facebook (passively or actively such as by reading posts or watching videos):

Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you interact with posts on Facebook (e.g., commenting, liking/reacting, sharing, voting in a poll):

Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you send a private message on Facebook:

Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you post your own content on Facebook (e.g., status updates, pictures, videos, stories, live stream):

Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

If they have Instagram:

You indicated you use Instagram. We would like to know more about how you use Instagram.

In the past week, about how many times did you look at posts on Instagram (passively or actively such as by reading posts or watching videos):

Times per day? _____

Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you interact with posts on Instagram (i.e., commenting, liking):
Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you send a private message (i.e., a DM) on Instagram:
Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you post your own content on Instagram (e.g., pictures, videos, stories, live stream):
Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

If they have Snapchat:
You indicated you use Snapchat. We would like to know more about how you use Snapchat.

In the past week, about how many times did you look at stories or shows on Snapchat actively (by reading or watching) or passively (by clicking though):
Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you interact with stories or shows on Snapchat (e.g., by sending a chat, voting in a poll, screenshotting something in the story, or forwarding a something in a show):
Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you send a private message (i.e., a snap or a chat) on Snapchat:
Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you post to your story or to a public story:
Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

If they have Twitter:
You indicated you use Twitter. We would like to know more about how you use Twitter.

In the past week, about how many times did you look at posts on Twitter (passively or actively such as by reading posts or watching videos):

Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you interact with posts on Twitter (e.g., replying, liking, retweeting, voting in a poll):

Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you send a private message (i.e., a DM) on Twitter:

Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

In the past week, about how many times did you post your own content on Twitter (e.g., tweeted text, pictures, GIFs, or videos):

Times per day? _____
Total times in the week? _____

Desire to Post Questionnaire The preliminary draft of the desire to post questionnaire consists of 31 items. The items were designed based on the item structure seen in Spector et al.'s (1996) Sexual Desire Inventory-2 and the desire items used in Gabbiadini et al.'s (2017) study using the model of goal-directed behavior to understand binge drinking. The items were based on researcher-generated content as well as suggestions from scientific experts in the field and social media users.

Sexual Desire
(Spector et al., 1996)

This questionnaire asks about your level of sexual desire. By desire, we mean INTEREST IN or WISH FOR SEXUAL ACTIVITY. For each item, please select the number that best shows your thoughts and feelings. Your answers will be private and anonymous.

1. During the last month, how often would you have liked to engage in sexual activity with a partner (for example, touching each other's genitals, giving or receiving oral stimulation, intercourse, etc.)?
    0) Not at all
    1) Once a month
    2) Once every two weeks
    3) Once a week
    4) Twice a week
    5) 3 to 4 times a week
    6) Once a day
    7) More than once a day

2. During the last month, how often have you had sexual thoughts involving a partner?
    0) Not at all
    1) Once or twice a month
    2) Once a week
    3) Twice a week
    4) 3 to 4 times a week
    5) Once a day
    6) A couple of times a day
    7) Many times a day

3. When you have sexual thoughts, how strong is your desire to engage in sexual behavior with a partner?

No Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong Desire

4. When you first see an attractive person, how strong is your sexual desire?

No Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong Desire

5. When you spend time with an attractive person (for example, at work or school), how strong is your sexual desire?

No Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong Desire

6. When you are in romantic situations (such as a candle lit dinner, a walk on the beach, etc.), how strong is your sexual desire?

No Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong Desire

7. How strong is your desire to engage in sexual activity with a partner?

No Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong Desire

8. How important is it for you to fulfill your sexual desire through activity with a partner?

Not At All Important 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Extremely Important

9. Compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to behave sexually with a partner?

Much Less Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Much More Desire

10. During the last month, how often would you have liked to behave sexually by yourself (for example, masturbating, touching your genitals etc.)?
    0) Not at all
    1) Once a month
    2) Once every two weeks
    3) Once a week
    4) Twice a week
    5) 3 to 4 times a week
    6) Once a day
    7) More than once a day

11. How strong is your desire to engage in sexual activity by yourself?

No Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Strong Desire

12. How important is it for you to fulfill your desires to behave sexually by yourself?

Not At All Important 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Extremely Important

13. Compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to behave sexually by yourself?

Much Less Desire 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Much More Desire

14. How long could you go comfortably without having sexual activity of some kind?
    0) Forever
    1) A year or two
    2) Several months
    3) A month
    4) A few weeks
    5) A week
    6) A few days
    7) One day
    8) Less than one day

Desire to binge drink

(Gabbiadini et al., 2017)

I desire, in the next 2 weeks, to drink five/four or more drinks of alcoholic drinks, in one occasion

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4 Neither agree/ nor disagree	5	6	7	Strongly agree

My desire, to drink five/four or more drinks of alcoholic drinks, in one occasion in the next 2 weeks, could be described as:

1. No desire
2. A very weak desire
3. A weak desire
4. A moderate desire
5. A strong enough desire
6. A strong desire
7. A very strong desire

I would like, in the next 2 weeks, to drink five/four or more drinks of alcoholic drinks, in one occasion.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4 Neither agree/ nor disagree	5	6	7	Strongly agree

Cognitive Preoccupation
(Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2017)

	Never								**Always**
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
At times, do you find yourself unable to stop thinking about using social media	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Is it hard to distract yourself from thinking about using social media	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Do thoughts about using social media intrude into your daily activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Problematic use of social media
(Andreassen et al., 2017)

How often during the last year have you . . .

	Very Rarely 1	**Rarely 2**	**Sometimes 3**	**Often 4**	**Very Often 5**
Spent a lot of time thinking about social media or planned use of social media?	1	2	3	4	5
Thought about how you could free more time to spend on social media?	1	2	3	4	5
Thought a lot about what has happened on social media recently?	1	2	3	4	5
Spent more time on social media than initially intended?	1	2	3	4	5
Felt an urge to use social media more and more?	1	2	3	4	5
Felt that you had to use social media more and more in order to get the same pleasure from it?	1	2	3	4	5
Used social media in order to forget about personal problems?	1	2	3	4	5
Used social media to reduce feelings of guilt, anxiety, helplessness, and depression?	1	2	3	4	5
Used social media in order to reduce restlessness?	1	2	3	4	5
Experienced that others have told you to reduce your use of social media but not listened to them?	1	2	3	4	5
Tried to cut down on the use of social media without success?	1	2	3	4	5
Decided to use social media less frequently, but not managed to do so?	1	2	3	4	5
Become restless or troubled if you have been prohibited from using social media?	1	2	3	4	5

Become irritable if you have been prohibited from using social media?	1	2	3	4	5
Felt bad if you, for different reasons, could not log on to social media for some time?	1	2	3	4	5
Used social media so much that it has had a negative impact on your job/studies?	1	2	3	4	5
Given less priority to hobbies, leisure activities, and exercise because of social media?	1	2	3	4	5
Ignored your partner, family members, or friends because of social media?	1	2	3	4	5

Privacy Concerns
(Vitak, 2015)

Indicate your level of concern about the following things that might happen when you use social media sites.

	Not At All Concerned				**Very Concerned**
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Your account being hacked	1	2	3	4	5
Your picture being used in a Facebook ad	1	2	3	4	5
Unwanted contact from another user	1	2	3	4	5
Your account information being compromised	1	2	3	4	5
Private messages becoming publicly visible	1	2	3	4	5
A Facebook friend posting mean, unflattering, or factually incorrect content about you	1	2	3	4	5
Being tagged in a photo you don't want linked to your account	1	2	3	4	5
Your employer viewing content (text or photos) that might negatively impact your job	1	2	3	4	5
Your personal information becoming publicly visible	1	2	3	4	5
Your personal information being sold to other companies for marketing purposes	1	2	3	4	5
Being tagged in an update that identifies your current physical location	1	2	3	4	5

Social Desirability
(Haghighat, 2007)

Would you smile at people every time you meet them?	**Yes**	**No**
Do you always practice what you preach to people?	**Yes**	**No**
If you say to people that you will do something, do you always keep your promise no matter how inconvenient it might be?	**Yes**	**No**
Would you ever lie to people?	**Yes**	**No**

Submission of a survey is considered complete once you click on the "submit" button. Because this is confidential online survey, you cannot withdraw or delete your answers once they have been submitted. Once you submit the survey, this will be taken as an indication of your informed consent

I choose to submit my responses

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

APPENDIX E

Debriefing

Thank you for completing this survey!
This page is completely disconnected from your survey.

About This Project: Social media use has become nearly ubiquitous in North America (Gruzd, Jacobson, Mai, & Dubois, 2018; Perrin, 2015; Smith & Anderson, 2018). Prevalence rates put social media use above 75% in the United States and Canada (Gruzd et al., 2018; Perrin, 2015), with many individuals using multiple social media platforms (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Because social media activity can be seen by many different individuals, social media users may be judged based on their social media use by potential employers (Harrison & Budworth, 2015) and romantic partners (Cravens, Leckie, & Whiting, 2013; Helsper & Whitty, 2010; McDaniel, Drouin, & Cravens, 2017). There have been many concerns raised regarding the privacy of information posted on social media (Hoffmann, Lutz, & Ranzini, 2016; Jia & Xu, 2016; Utz & Krämer, 2009; Walrave, Vanwesenbeeck, & Heirman, 2012). Having concerns, however, does not lead to efforts to protect one's information (Acquisti & Gross, 2006; Hallam & Zanella, 2017; Hoffmann et al., 2016).

The current study aims to further investigate social media use and privacy concerns by investigating the desire to post personal information on social media. We hope to be able to develop a scale that would measure this desire so it could be used in future research on social media use and privacy behaviors.

How do I contact the researcher?
You can contact Emily Vogels (evogels@unb.ca) for more information or with your questions and comments about the study. You may also contact the Chair of the Psychology Research Ethics Committee, Dr. Biljana Stevanovski, at bstevano@unb.ca or the Chair of the Research Ethics Board of the University of New Brunswick, Dr. R. Steven Turner at turner@unb.ca with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Please enter your Amazon Mechanical Turk ID so we can confirm compensation:
_____

Thank you for completing this survey

M-Turk completion code: ########

CURRICULUM VITAE

Emily Vogels

UNIVERSITIES ATTENDED

2015-2021	Ph.D., Experimental Psychology University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB Supervisor: Lucia F. O'Sullivan, Ph.D.
2013-2015	M.S., Experimental Psychology/Cognitive and Affective Sciences University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh, Oshkosh, WI Supervisor: Anca M. Miron, Ph.D.
2009-2013	B.S. (Hons.), Psychology, & B.S. (Hons.), Human Development University of Wisconsin – Green Bay, Green Bay, WI Supervisor: Regan A. R. Gurung, Ph.D.

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles:

Hong, P. Y., Lishner, D. A., Vogels, E. A., & Kelso, S. (in press). Do factual rehearsal, emotion reflection, or instructor acknowledgement increase academic performance and academic entitlement? *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*. doi:10.1037/stl0000278

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Silver, L. Vogels, E. A., Mordecai, M., Cha, J., Rasmussen, R., & Rainie, L. (2019, November). Mobile divides in emerging economies. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2019/11/20/mobile-divides-in-emerging-economies/

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Vogels, E. A. (2021, September). Americans and 'cancel culture:' Where some see calls for accountability, others see censorship, punishment. Keynote presentation at the annual convention of Character Assassination and Reputation Politics.

Amaya, A., Vogels, E. A., & Brown, A. (2021, May). Does adding a third gender option really improve measurement? Oral presentation at the annual convention of American Association for Public Opinion Research.

Vogels, E. A., & Perunovic, W. Q. E. (2019, June). Comparing the apple of my eye: Parental reactions to social comparisons of their school-aged children. Gimme-5 at the annual convention of Canadian Psychological Association, Halifax, NS.

Stewart, H., & Vogels, E. A. (2019, May). Stroking it: Definitions and perceived motives for "dick pics". Poster presentation at the annual convention of Society for Sex Therapy and Research, Toronto, ON.

Vogels, E. A., & Stewart, H. (2019, March). Feeling sexy or sexism? Predicting which women have sent pictures of their genitals. Poster presentation at the annual convention of Association for Women in Psychology, Newport, RI.

Vogels, E. A., & Stewart, H. (2018, November). Sexy messages or sexual harassment: Experiences of individuals who have received "dick pics". Poster presentation at the annual convention of Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, Montreal, QC.

Hong, P. Y., Vogels, E. A., Lishner, D. A., & Kelso, S. (2018, July). The role of emotion-based reflection papers and professor support in academic entitlement, learning outcome, and professor ratings within a college population. Poster presentation at the 25th Biennial Meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development, Gold Coast, Queensland.

Vogels, E. A. (2017, October). Coming to love oneself: The relationship between sexually explicit media and body image. Poster presentation at the annual convention of Canadian Sex Research Forum, Fredericton, NB.

Vogels, E. A., & O'Sullivan, L. F. (2016, November). Porn, peers, and performing oral sex: The mediating role of peer norms on porn's influence regarding oral sex. Oral presentation at the annual convention of Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, Phoenix, AZ.

Vogels, E. A., & O'Sullivan, L. F. (2016, November). Pillow talk does not a relationship make: Exploring links between relationship satisfaction and sexual communication. Oral presentation at the annual convention of Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, Phoenix, AZ.

Vogels, E. A., & O'Sullivan, L. F. (2016, September). Liking it rough: A path analysis of how online SEM exposure and perceived realism contribute to desire for rough sex. Data blitz presentation at the annual convention of Canadian Sex Research Forum, Quebec City, QC.

Ebert, A., Kelso, S., Vogels, E. A., Steinert, S., Hanson, M., P. Y., & Lishner, D. A. (2015, November). An examination of source credibility on invalidating messages on affect. Poster presentation at the annual convention of Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Chicago, IL.

Kelso, S., Ebert, A., Vogels, E. A., Swenson, N., Neuhaus, A., Hong, P. Y., & Lishner, D. A. (2015, May). The effect of mindfulness on affective forecasting. Poster

presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Vogels, E. A., Hong, P. Y., Kelso, S., & Ebert, A. (2015, May). Mindfulness and affective forecasting. Presentation at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Hong, P. Y., Lishner, D. A., Olson, N., Vogels, E., Ebert, A., Kelso, S., & Rast, C. (2014, May). The impact of different types of emotional invalidation on specific emotional states. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Adelson, S., Bock, J., Deschaine, M., Vogels, E., & Lishner, D. (2014, April). Traits and states: Evaluating the construct validity of trait empathy measures. Poster presented at the 20th annual Celebration of Scholarship, Oshkosh, WI.

Vogels, E., & Gurung, R. A. R. (2013, May). Hidden intelligence: Downplaying intelligence in social settings. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Vogels, E. (2013, April). Hidden intelligence: Downplaying intelligence in social settings. Poster presented at the 10th annual Posters in the Rotunda, Madison, WI.

Vogels, E. (2013, April). Hidden intelligence: Downplaying intelligence in social settings. Poster presented at the 12th annual Academic Excellence Symposium, Green Bay, WI.