Abstract

This survey study among young adults in mainland China (N = 94) investigates the predicting effect of the need to belong, neuroticism and fear of missing out (FoMO) against their general social media engagement and social media engagement before sleep. All three predictors are not significant in predicting general media engagement. All three predictors predict social media engagement before sleep, although only the need to belong remains significant in hierarchical regression analysis. An inflated frequency of social media use is found against previous foreign studies, suggesting that high frequency general social media engagement may be common among mainland Chinese youth today and not regarded as a problem, except maybe for the social media engagement before sleep. Additional analyses reveal that the need to belong mediates the relationship between neuroticism and social media engagement before sleep, suggesting neuroticism may predict problematic social media use through the deficits in the need to belong. Mental health and sleep problem implications are discussed.

Keywords: FoMO, need to belong, neuroticism, social media