



Course: CERT HE Skills for the Workplace,

Health & Social Care

Module: Digital Skills and Research Methods

BMSW4003_LON

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**‘The use of digital platforms for patient’s care in the
modern Mental Health Centers’**

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Abstract

Digital platforms such as Social media and Applications have become an escape valve, identification and a field of self-recognition through the eyes of the other. This report analyses and discusses the use of these technologies used by Mental Health Care Centres, as digital therapies, referring to the relationships established through listening, bonding, dialogue, welcoming, autonomy and co-responsibility of this form, enabling to do the construction of a therapeutic process based on interaction and trust with professionals and users. The analysis and discussion take place through a literature review, search for publications on the subject and has the support of an evaluation date of the first data analysis through a questionnaire with students from the University of Wales, London campus (2021), identifying how the use of these digital tools has been making transformations in Mental Health Care Centres.

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1. Introduction

Currently, the impacts of the excessive use of digital platforms by people around the world are discussed, which makes this academic research dedicated to raising questions about their harms and emphasizing their benefits to work in the field of mental health. Anxiety and depression are serious issues that are acquiring space in technology, but they deserve to be addressed in an even broader way, with more digital tools to help. One of the ways technologies can help people with these issues is online, with digital therapies that act as bridges with health professionals and patients. This report will analyse and discuss the way these digital tools are being used by Mental Health Care Centres, their positive and negative impacts, and how communication and trust are achieved with these centres and patients.

Moreover, many people have felt comfortable looking for care through these digital platforms, also others have joined online support groups, while health systems have included online care and made self-care information available on their own digital platforms. The primary data analysis is to evaluate what interviewed students are looking for in their social media, what they feel about the mental health care's content available online, and how safe they feel when seeking care through these digital platforms.

Anyhow, making a difference in people lives, especially those who need mental health care, requires more than technical knowledge. The importance of this theme is that these technologies are the basis for the beginning and strengthening of relationships with mental health care professionals and patients, especially in primary care. Furthermore, are part of the routine of care in contemporary mental health services and will consequently reflect on the treatment. Along with this, the use of these digital tools contributes to the production of humanized care in mental health at all levels of care.

2. Rationale

The way society deals with contemporary issues changes over time and, there is its own way of dealing with mental health care issues. Currently, digital platforms are occupying an increasingly significant space in the modern mental health care sector.

3. Research Objectives

- Analyse how digital platforms have crossed social formations and become an important technology tool within the mental health professional context.
- Discuss the use of these technologies by Mental Health Care Centres in order to promote, improve and give more accessibility to this care for the patients.
- Date evaluation through primary data analysis, identifying the way interviewed students feel about using these digital platforms and how safe they feel using these technologies for mental health care.

4. Literature Review

Digital platforms are nowadays commonplace which people use to socialize, work and do many other activities. A lot of literature discusses the negative effects of the uses of digital media in modern society. However, in contrast, there is a kind of literature that argue about the positive tools that these same digital platforms can bring in it.

There is a gap in the modern literature about the expansion of public access to mental health resources and the possibilities to open a new path in mental health support and data collection, Foley and Woollard (2019).

Marathe and Shah (2020) argue that “If technology is the problem, can it also be the solution?”.

Hannaver (2005) argues that people are not leaving their home to have fun or socialize and, instead, stay home typing on their devices.

National Institute of Mental Health (2019) argues that many electronic applications are being developed to offer support for people mentally struggling.

As stated by Baldwin (2018), there is a big shift in modern society, where more people are accepting their mental health problems, seeking support and treatment. The new technologies are dramatically changing what mental health care resembles, traditional mental health therapies could be expensive, hard to access, in contradiction to a modern digital world, where everything can be easily accessed by a few typing on the phone.

According to Venters (2018), the biggest technological challenge faced in mental health nowadays is the lack of data. Considering this, this report is accessing not just the existing academic literature but also applying one insight research carried on the students at Wales University campus, to draw an insight of how people feel and what they expect to find when accessing social media's platforms related to the mental health care.

5. Research Methodology

This report is qualitative and quantitative, composed of two types of analyses, secondary and primary:

- Secondary analysis: the bibliographic research is based on the survey of theoretical references already analysed and published by electronic resources, such as books, scientific articles, institutions and health organizations websites. Thus, the research was developed in the following stages:

- Primary analysis: An online survey was carried out with 25 students from the University of Wales, London campus, in December 2021. The questionnaire was created using Microsoft Forms and emailed to the students. Ensuring the objectivity of this academic research, important ethical issues were addressed during the data collection process:

a) Information was collected randomly avoiding all kinds of unfair means.

b) To maintain the randomness of this research, the form was sent only to the student email of the students within the platform used by the University of Wales, London campus.

c) When evaluating the research results, the subjectivity of individual judgment was addressed.

5.1. Analysis and Discussion: The use of digital platforms for patient's care in the modern Mental Health Centers

As Marathe and Shah (2020) argue in "If technology is the problem, can it also be the solution?", even though expanding digital access to contemporary mental health resources is remarkable, this modern workplace faces two contradictory ways. Technology is being built to engage and keep people connected. However, there are studies that confirm that excessive time on social media and apps worsen mental health problems, in this way, Mental Health Care Centres have been helped how to disconnect from these technologies, suggest how to use them safely and give online care support for these mental issues.

Discussing mental health on social media changes the way of dealing with these issues and give the opportunity to share their experiences, according to Foley and Woollard (2019) "Studies have shown how phenotypic information can be extracted from social media to aid the prediction and monitoring of mental health disorders".

Digital platforms are opening new opportunities in mental health care and data collection. Smartphones and tablets are giving to the patients, professionals care and researchers a new way that can access help, measure the progress and development of the understanding of

mental health care. Venters (2018) thinks that the importance of mental health innovation can be shared information and the drive connecting different clinical systems. Also, this has been possible to see that correspondence with health professionals, in a more shared work environment, improves communication with different specialities and this really impacts people's mental health care.

Furthermore, according to the National Institute of Mental Health (2019), these technologies can be developed and available in a sophisticated application for smartphones or tablets. These digital platforms use the device's built-in sensors to collect data and generate typical user behaviour patterns, when the application detects a change in behaviour, for example, it can then provide a signal to the user that help is needed before a crisis occurs. Thus, other digital platforms have been helping the user to connect to the mental health professional, such as Telemedicine, which has been improved access and reduced geographic barriers, travel costs and property costs.

5.2. The Pros and Cons of the use of digital platforms for patient's care in Mental Health Centres.

The use of these technologies has a lot of potentials for mental health professionals and patients, following some of the benefits according to the National Institute of Mental Health (2019):

Convenience: This type of treatment can be performed anytime and anywhere.

Anonymity: Patients seek treatment options without involving others.

An Introduction to Care: Provides the first step for anyone.

Lower cost: access to free content and free consultations.

Serving more people: Provide care to patients in remote areas or in times of sudden need.

24/7 service: Non-stop monitoring and support.

Support: Complementing traditional therapy.

Objective data collection: Quantitatively collect much information.

This technology also presents concerns. Assessing potential barriers becomes important to ensure that these digital tools deliver benefits without causing harm, so this way the mental health community and software developers are together concerned with:

Efficacy: Can work as positively as traditional methods.

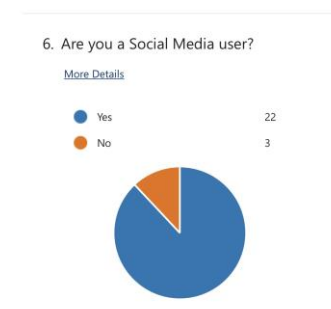
For whom and for what: Uncertainty that it will work for all patients and in any mental health condition.

Privacy: Ensuring confidential personal information.

Regulation: There is no mental health regulation for these technologies currently.

5.3. Primary Data Analysis

In this topic, the analysis of primary data collected through Microsoft Forms has been presented in graphical form. The survey was carried out with 25 students from the University of Wales, London campus, in December 2021, the form was emailed to these students.



3 of these students do not use social media. This shows that a majority is making use of these digital platforms.

8. How many hours a day do you usually spend on Social Media?

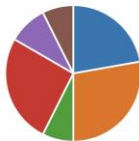
[More Details](#)



2 students spend less than 1 hour a day on social media, while another 2 spend more than 5 or 10 hours, evaluating that most students spend between 1 and 5 hours a day on these digital platforms.

9. What is the main reasons you access Social Media for?

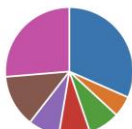
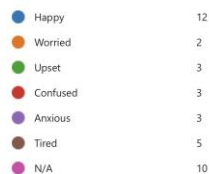
[More Details](#)



The respondents access their social media for many different reasons, but access to personal health and emotional support are not among the most accessed.

10. How do you emotionally feel when you spend a lot of time on Social Media?

[More Details](#)



Despite a little feeling of worry, upset, confusion, anxiety or tiredness, spending many hours on social media causes more feelings of happiness or emotions are not applied.

11. When you are experiencing anxiety, do you access your Social Media?

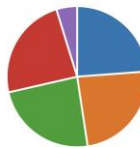
[More Details](#)



9 of the students access their social media when they express anxiety, 11 students do not access, and it does not apply to 2 students.

12. If yes, which content you are searching for?

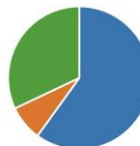
[More Details](#)



Only 5 students search for personal health information when they express anxiety on social media.

21. Do you think that, the access on Social Media can cause mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression?

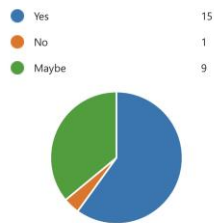
[More Details](#)



Most students think or maybe agree that access to social media can cause mental health issues, only 2 of 25 of the students disagreed with this

22. Do you think that, some content on Social Media can provide care for prevention and treatment of mental health, such as anxiety and depression?

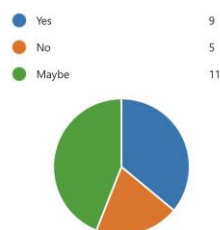
[More Details](#)



15 of the 25 students think that some content on social media can provide care, while another 9 of these students may agree with this, and only 1 of the students disagree.

23. Would you feel safe in accessing some content on Social Media for metal health, such as anxiety and depression?

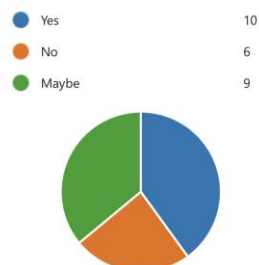
[More Details](#)



9 of the students could feel safe accessing some content on social media for mental health, while another 11 of these students may feel safe, and 5 students do not feel safe with this.

24. Would you indicate a Social Media content aimed at mental health, such as anxiety and depression, to someone you knew needed this care?

[More Details](#)



10 students could indicate a social media content aimed at mental health, while 9 maybe could do it, and 6 students do not could do it.

To access the complete questionnaire and all the answers, go to the appendix, p. 14.

5.4. Results of primary analysis

Evaluating the survey responses, notice that most students are using their social media for many reasons and spend some hours of their days on these platforms. Although a small number of these students search for mental health content on these platforms, some of them agree that these technologies can offer this care and would indicate this type of content, while others might agree, and a minority disagree. Concluding that, in this way, there is indeed a potential for social media to offer and contribute to the care of mental health.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The information network has been transforming interpersonal communications since the introduction of radio and TV. With the invention of the internet, principally from the emergence of digital platforms, these technologies are transforming the way of care in Mental Health Centres.

Moreover, these technologies make it possible for people who previously did not have access to mental health professionals to have access to it. New digital platforms are emerging, and Mental Health Centres are interested in identifying patients with mental issues through these platforms.

This study allowed us to analyse and discuss how the use of these technologies in Mental Health Centres enables work that favours user autonomy through active participation in the process of treatment and promotion of care. Smartphones and tablets can provide accessibility for telemedicine through digital platforms, enabling self-reporting of symptoms and self-care. Interaction with these devices can also provide important monitoring information and diagnostic. Combination of traditional mental health care and digital therapies can provide autonomous self-care expanding the way the patients will be treated.

7. References

- Baldwin, P. (2018) 'Technology and the future of mental health: At first glance, the future of mental health can seem disheartening', *Black Dog Institute*. Available at: <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/news/at-first-glance-the-future-of-mental-health-can-seem-disheartening-depression-is-currently-the-most-common-mental-disorder-with-300-million-people-affected-globally-the-world-health-organisation-e/> [Accessed: 31 December 2021].
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8. Appendix

Emotional patterns on Social Medias users

25

Respostas

06:24

Tempo médio para concluir

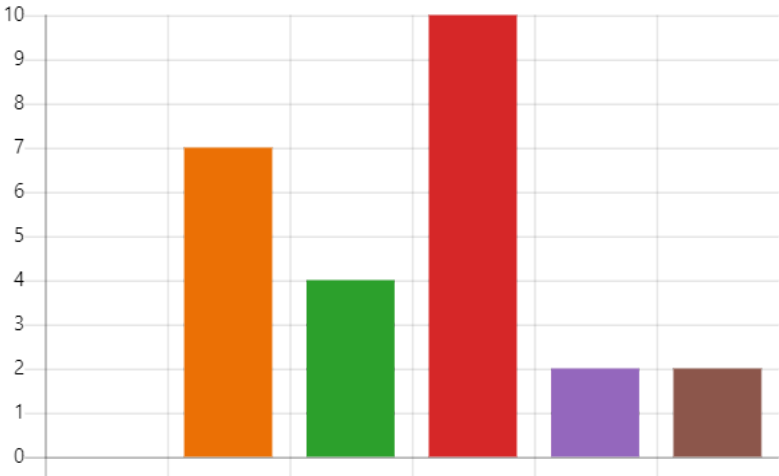
Ativo

Status

1. How old are you?

Insights

Under 18	0
18-24	7
25-34	4
35-44	10
45-54	2
Over 55	2



2. What is your gender?

Insights

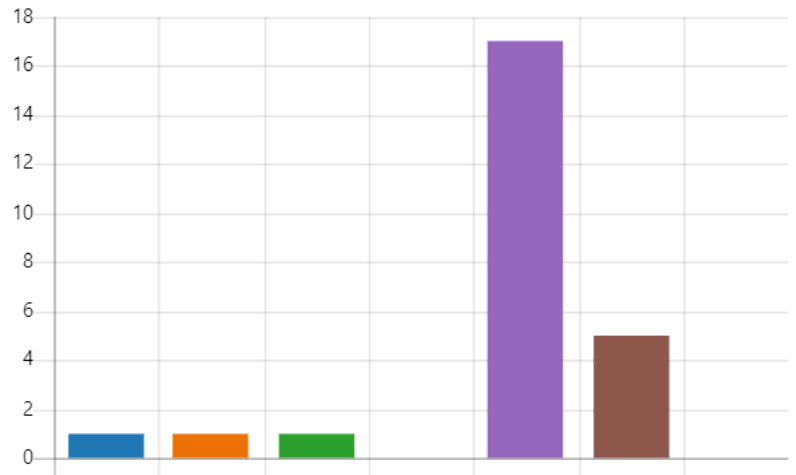
Woman	15
Man	9
Non-binary	0
Prefer not to say	1



3. Which part of the world are you from?

💡 Insights

North America	1
South America	1
Central America	1
Africa	0
Europe	17
Asia	5
Australia	0



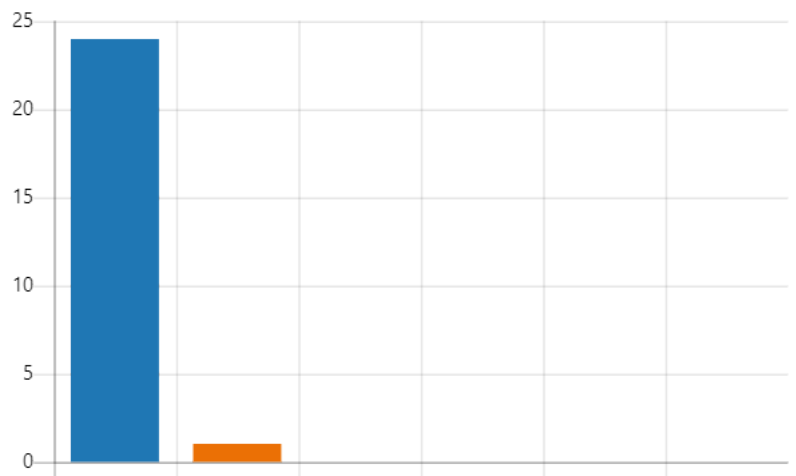
4. How long have you been living in the UK?

Less than 1 year	2
1 to 3 years	1
3 to 5 years	1
5 to 10 years	2
More than 10 years	19



5. How often do you access Internet?

Daily	24
Weekly	1
Monthly	0
Seasonal	0
Yearly	0
Never	0



6. Are you a Social Media user?

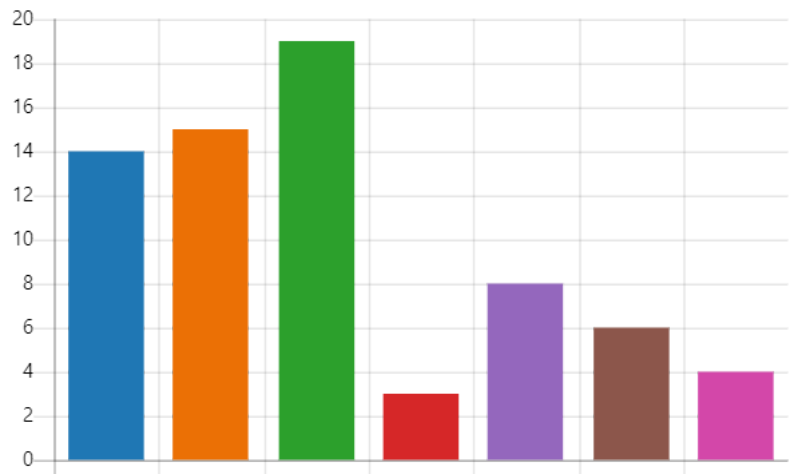
💡 Insights

Yes	22
No	3



7. If yes, which Social Media do you access more often?

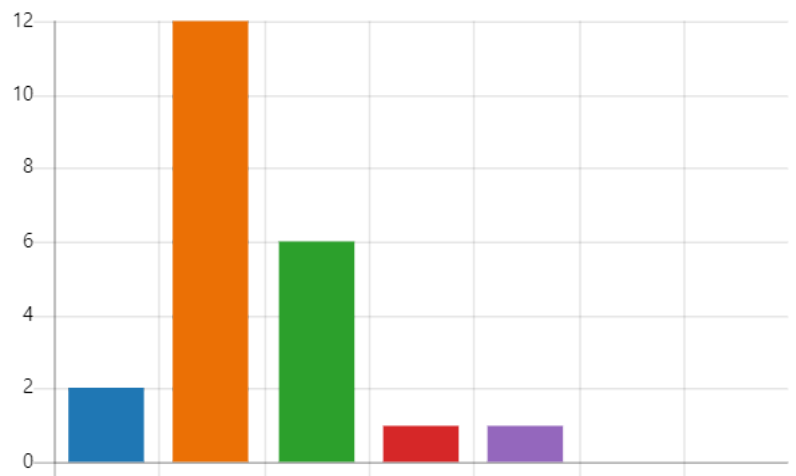
Facebook	14
Instagram	15
WhatsApp	19
LinkedIn	3
Snapchat	8
Twitter	6
Other	4



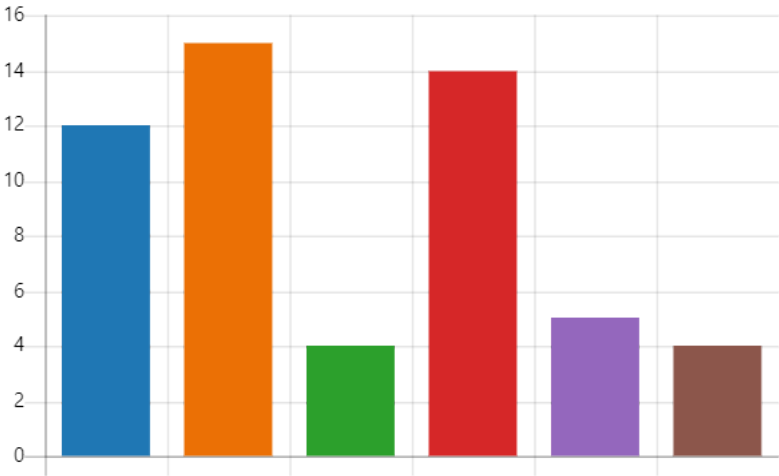
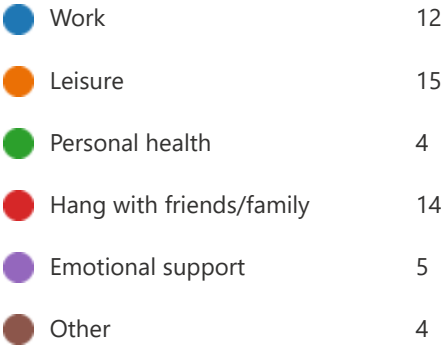
8. How many hours a day do you usually spend on Social Media?

💡 Insights

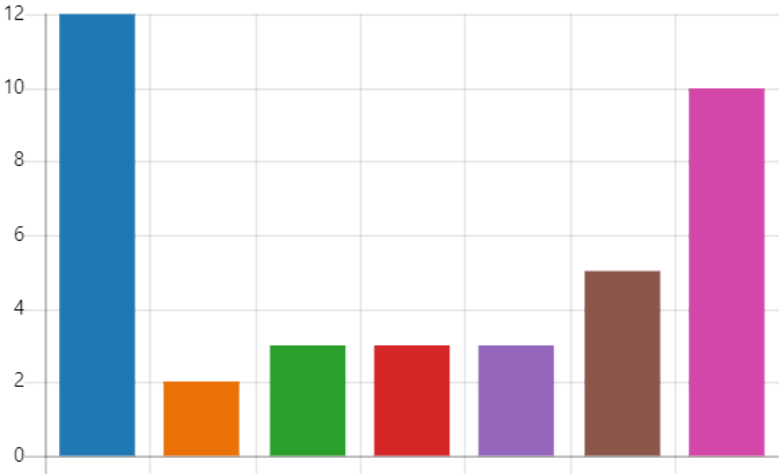
Less than 1 hour a day	2
1 to 3 hours a day	12
3 to 5 hours a day	6
5 to 10 hours a day	1
More than 10 hours a day	1
Weekly	0
Monthly	0



9. What is the main reasons you access Social Media for?



10. How do you emotionally feel when you spend a lot of time on Social Media?



11. When you are experiencing anxiety, do you access your Social Media?

💡 Insights



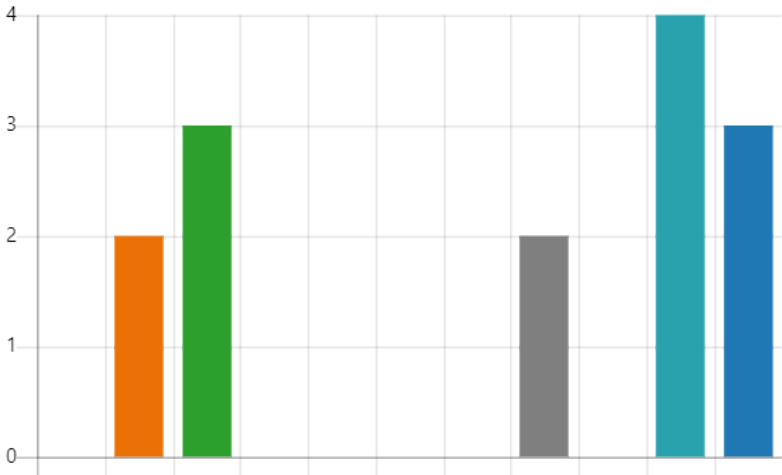
12. If yes, which content you are searching for?

Motivational	5
Personal health information	5
Family/friends	5
Leisure contents	5
Other	1



13. After accessing Social Media because of anxiety, how do you feel like?

More anxious	0
Less anxious	2
More happy	3
Less happy	0
More confused	0
Less confused	0
More worried	0
Less worried	2
More upset	0
Less upset	4
N/A	3



14. When you are experiencing happiness, do you access your Social Media?

💡 Insights

Yes	14
No	7
N/A	1



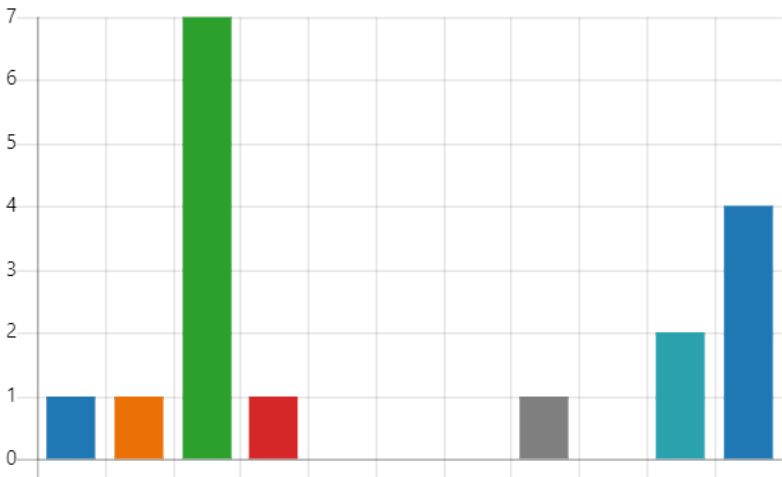
15. If yes, which content you are searching for?

Motivational	6
Personal health information	5
Family/Friends	10
Leisure content	9
Other	2



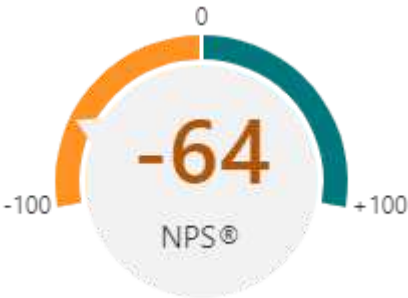
16. After accessing Social Media because of happiness, how do you feel like?

More anxious	1
Less anxious	1
More happy	7
Less happy	1
More confused	0
Less confused	0
More worried	0
Less worried	1
More upset	0
Less upset	2
N/A	4



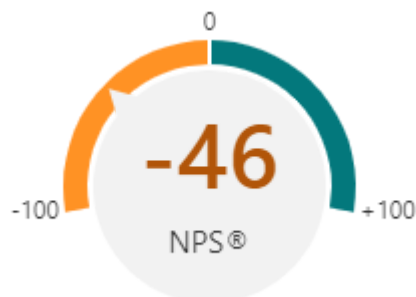
17. In a scale from 0 to 10, how often do you access Social Media when you are experiencing anxiety?

Promotores	2
Passivos	4
Detratores	16



18. In a scale from 0 to 10, how often do you access Social Media when you are experiencing happiness?

Promotores	4
Passivos	4
Detratores	14



19. In a moment of anxiety, what type of support would you like to find on Social Media?

22 Insights

Respostas

Respostas Mais Recentes

"Mental health support"

7 respondentes (32%) responderam **support** para esta pergunta.

Word cloud showing responses for the question: "In a moment of anxiety, what type of support would you like to find on Social Media?". The word **support** is the most prominent. Other words include: **funny memes**, **Specialist advice**, **Motivational**, **memes and gifs**, **positive content**, **health support**, **support group**, **development content**, **anxiety**, **help from friends**, **funny content**, **Emotional support**, **content**, **support from friends**, **techniques forums**, **friends or family**, **Mental**, **funny**, **Suggested breaks**.

20. Do you have any interest on Social Media? Justify your answer.

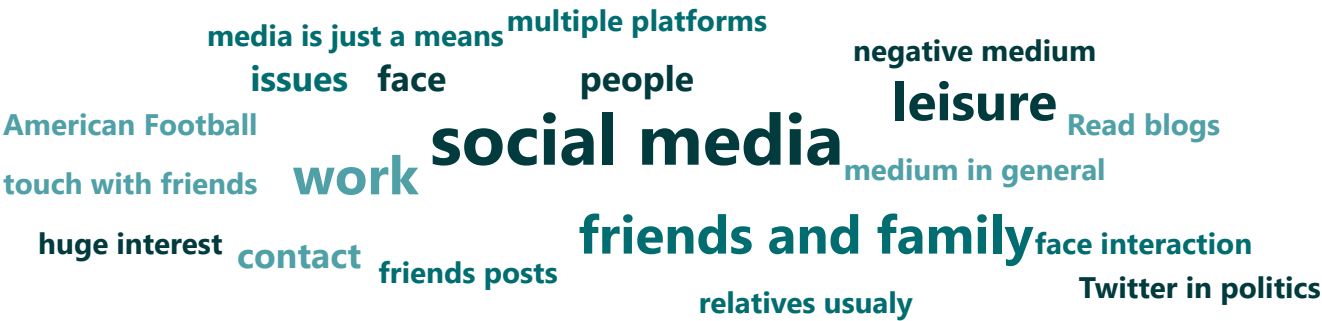
Insights

25
Respostas

Respostas Mais Recentes

- "I appear on social media via friends posts photos etc"
- "No. I find it a very negative medium in general and prefer to have fac..."
- "Not really just scroll due to to depression and try to catch up with peo..."

4 respondentes (16%) responderam **social media** para esta pergunta.



21. Do you think that, the access on Social Media can cause mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression?

Insights

Yes	15
No	2
Maybe	8



22. Do you think that, some content on Social Media can provide care for prevention and treatment of mental health, such as anxiety and depression?

Insights

Yes	15
No	1
Maybe	9



23. Would you feel safe in accessing some content on Social Media for metal health, such as anxiety and depression?

💡 Insights

Yes	9
No	5
Maybe	11



24. Would you indicate a Social Media content aimed at mental health, such as anxiety and depression, to someone you knew needed this care?

Yes	10
No	6
Maybe	9

