

# Thesis

## Awareness of Social Media Behavior



Online culture; Art, Media, and Society

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# 1 Introduction

This thesis will investigate the awareness of social media behavior amongst students aged 17 to 29. Awareness in this case will be analyzed through the lens of 2 focus groups with students and an online questionnaire. The reason why this research will be focussing on awareness is because the majority of students own a smartphone and are active on social media platforms. As an online culture student, my asking others about their phone usage has come across as an attack in which the responders started to defend their phone usage. Most of our society is dependable on the contact they are able to make, however, on social media the shape of communication and being social has shifted and is now measurable through amounts of likes, friends or followers. As younger generations grow up, their reality involves a device that can indicate how popular you are and they also are exposed to the never ending World Wide Web. The documentary called *'The Social Dilemma'* on Netflix shows the growth in self harm and suicide amongst younger generation starting from 11 years old. These numbers doubled within the last 10 years, meaning approximately when social media started becoming a habit. According to the documentary the growth in self harm and suicide is linked to the younger generations that are 'glued to their phones' and this is why the link between social media and self harm needs to be investigated. There is no scientific proof of social media being addictive, that is why this thesis starts with investigating how students view their own social media behavior and why it is socially relevant to start such an investigation.

This thesis will try to answer the following research questions: Are students aware of their social media behavior? Are they aware of the negative consequences of social media usage? Does social media influence the creativity of students?

The literature review will entail findings by van Dijck (2013), Turel and Vaghefi (2019) and Whelan (2021). The findings by van Dijck are focused on the culture of connectivity, her theories show how social media constructed its own form of social behavior, and theorizes how society reacts to these structures. Turel and Vaghefi (2019) did an experiment amongst 229 participants that had to delete all their social media apps for a week. They theorized how ninety two percent failed this experiment. Lastly Whelan (2021) investigated social media fatigues, the theories show that *"individuals that are prone to boredom need to be aware of their limits and recognize the signs of overload so that they do not miss the positive benefits of social media"* (Whelan, 2021: 881).

The methodology chapter is larger than expected, the reason for that is the loss of the focus group recordings. Therefore I decided to ask the same questions the focus groups had in an online questionnaire that was spread through students as well. Thus the methodology entails information on focus group interviews as well as online surveys.

The focus groups and the online questionnaire are analyzed and discussed in chapter four and five through looking at the data gathered and the themes that were constructed. The conclusion entails the comparison of the two different methodological approaches and their findings. The similarities as well as the differences are discussed aiming to answer the research question: what is the awareness of social media behavior amongst students in the Netherlands?

## 2 Literature review

### 2.1 The Culture of Connectivity

The first work to discuss in the literature review is by Jose van Dijck, who wrote a book on connectivity through the internet "The Culture of Connectivity ". The term "social" associated with media means that the online platform is user-centric and users collectively participate on the platform. Therefore, human collaboration is emphasized (van Dijck, 2013). In addition, social media can be seen as a human network amplifier in which a network of people promotes connections as social value. According to van Dijck the meaning of the word "social" is controversial. In today's social media context, the term seems to embrace both human and automated connections. Originally most platforms started out as community initiatives, however users with creative ideas used these platforms to share their ideas, content, or products. She also states that nowadays users emphasize human connectedness when explaining a platform's value: Facebook, for example, helps its users by reminding them to make and maintain friends by connecting with other users or to congratulate their friends on birthdays. From the technological inscription of online sociality, we derive that connectivity, and thus being social is a quantifiable value, also known as the *popularity principle*: the more connections you make, the more valuable you become. While the first half-decade gave rise to user communities embracing the Web's potential for connectedness and collaboration, nowadays the word "social" has come to mean: technologically manageable and economically exploitable (van Dijck, 2013). This means that present-day social media platforms are designed in a way that gives another meaning to the word 'social': the platforms focus on the economical profits they can make by selling their user's data, and therefore they need as many users as possible and as much interaction as possible. Van Dijck argues that humans are sensitive to social pressures, and that the internet gave rise to tools to design addictive platforms. On these platforms, there is no need to deal with direct confrontation or conflict (social pressure), however, you are able to watch and be involved when you wish to. Overall, sociality on social media is different than in the real world: it's the number of friends and followers you have, the content you share, and the people that enjoy it. The number of friends and followers predicts how popular you are. And what about the platform itself? The structure in which platforms promote connectivity through personalized algorithms, and their users being sensitive to this pressure, creates a circle that captures you and makes it hard for you to leave, as your social nature does not want to be 'alone' or without your x amount of friends.

Platforms treat users unequally due to the algorithms used and their reward system. This causes users who have proven to be successful and trusted to get a broader audience provided by the platform (Van Dijck, 2013). Successful online societies require not only personalities, but also fans, creators, and consumers. This means that online platforms are much more powerful than people are aware of. User empowerment depends on your knowledge of how the mechanism works and on your ability to modify it. Therefore, activists argue that social media is seeking a new user rights movement that points to user empowerment. The purpose of activists can

streamline the system by providing users with a way to opt-out of social media (*ibidem*). But even if the user is given that option, this concept faces social norms, ideological commands, and the cultural logic that supports them. People are experiencing social pressure to belong to groups and families in their offline lives, therefore, opting out of connected media is not an option for people who are plugged in<sup>1</sup>. For plug-in people, opt-out is not an option to completely withdraw from sociality, as online activity is completely intertwined with offline activity. For example, certain content creators are always working to gain some followers: for them, stopping social media activities on different platforms for a few days can lead to poor ratings and a negative impact on their business. This is how algorithms scare their users when leaving the platforms. Overall, "social media" has become a comprehensive term that hides more than it reveals; once connected, unsubscribing from social media is hardly an option. The aftermath of social media detox still seems to be a big blow to entrepreneurs' online reviews, nevertheless, people still feel the need to relieve the pressure that the online world imposes on them.

It might seem easy to relieve these shackles, however, during recent studies on a social media detox amongst 224 social media users, 80% failed to complete one week without social media (Turel & Vaghefi, 2019) . This implicated the question of why users cannot complete a social media detox. Before going further into the causes and results of this experiment let's start by elaborating on social media detoxing.

## **2.2 Social media detoxing**

To complete a social media detox, users need to delete all social media apps on their phones, also other devices that could run social media platforms should not be used for social media. There are no specific periods given for a detox, one could for example detox for months, but even a day can be considered a detox. A recent study by Turel and Vaghefi (2019) tested how people reacted when they did a social media detox for seven days. They describe the detox as taking a short break from social networking sites. According to the psychopathological framework used in this study, social media can increase symptoms of depression caused by the promotion of envy. Second, the study states that people suffering from ADHD may benefit the most from the social media detox as a major source of distraction is eliminated. During the experiment in this study (Turel & Vaghefi, 2019) 224 social media users were asked to do a social media detox. The outcomes were tested against a model that focused on the role of urge and excessive use of social media categorized by gender. Once again, 80% of the participants failed to complete the full week. The findings showed that people with excessive social media use had more urges and were more likely to give up within a couple of days. Furthermore, the results supported their theory on the inability of humans to control urges: having a lack of self-control hindered their possible success in doing the detox. What also resulted from their experiment was that women were more likely to fail the full detox as they associate stressful situations with isolation, the fear of missing out, and boredom; also women experience these stressors as threats whereas men see

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<sup>1</sup> *Plug-ins* is a term for people who are empowered by social media platforms without resistance to it (reference? Also a dictionary entry is ok)

stressors as opportunities. This explains the difference in their reaction to the detox. The end of the study by Turel and Vaghefi (2019) argues for the need of finding treatment for excessive social media usage in the future. A critical note on their experiment is that the participants of this experiment were mainly externally motivated to help within this experiment, meaning they did not have personal reasons to stop using social media for a week. Without an understanding of why social media negatively affects you or what benefits are gained by doing a social media detox, the experiment was purely based on the nature of humans. They compared excessive social media use with addictions like alcoholism. Further investigation should delve into how informing participants could change the results of social media detox.

Drinking, smoking, and doing drugs are seen as social activities as long as you are together with others, however, whenever one starts doing that kind of activity alone for hours, days, or weeks by oneself, the perception changes from a form of sociality to addiction. One main reason to feed addiction is boredom, according to Whelan (2021) since boredom proneness is related to social media overload and fatigue, there are two main perspectives on social media that they incorporate in their study. Some studies conclude that social media use is associated with life satisfaction (Lönngqvist and Große Deters, 2016), higher subjective happiness (Brailovskaia and Margraf, 2016), and social support (Ellison et al., 2007). Other associate social media use with lower happiness (Brooks, 2015), depression (Brooks and Longstreet, 2015), addiction (Islam et al., 2019; Li et al., 2018; Xue et al., 2018), exhibitionism (Mäntymäki and Islam, 2016), stress (Meier et al., 2016) and higher employee turnover (Yingjie et al., 2019). Whelan (2021) introduces the term *social media overload* as a state in which someone attempts to absorb all recommended information on a social media platform, however, this amount exceeds their information processing capacity. The same goes for communication overload, in this case, the communication absorption abilities are exceeded by the demand for communication through, for example, WhatsApp group chats, direct messages, and facetime calls. When suffering from an overload a person is more likely to feel fatigued. Boredom starts when there is a lack of emotional stimulation, and to help themselves, people seek alternative experiences such as painting or using social media to cope with their boredom, even if this might have a negative impact on them. One way to overcome boredom is overloading on social media content. Boredom is described as an unpleasant but much-needed emotion (Whelan, 2021), without it our ancestors would have never advanced further than other species. Boredom prompted our ancestors to start rubbing sticks together to create fire and create a wheel to carry heavy materials (Whelan, 2021). Boredom encourages us to seek out new challenges or experiences, in doing so our brains release dopamine, feelings of joy, and excitement.

On social media the opportunities to learn something new, watch something interesting or meet new people are limitless. This nearly endless surplus of experiences releases dopamine as well, which explains why people turn to social media when they experience boredom; social media serves as an on-demand mental/emotional stimulation. Whelan (2021) states that too much stimulation through anything can be a bad thing. Interestingly, they used an addiction lens throughout their research, however they argue that it is not clear whether or not social media

addiction is a real disorder, like any other addiction. The need for clarity on this part of social media behavior, also for future research, continues to rise. The article, therefore, refers to a social media overload, as if someone is bombarded with social media, but it does not investigate what causes people to use it so excessively, or what triggers them, but only that users are exposed to more content than they can process. According to the article, *causes of social media overload* are communication rate and processing time, intensity, lack of cognitive control, stress, regret, discontinuance intentions, and fatigue. According to Turel & Vaghefi (2019), many people are unable to overcome their impulsive habitual use of social media which causes them to become overwhelmed with endless amounts of content and connection demands. This is another example showing that social media use is not an established addiction, but rather an activity that rises from *habitual compulsive behavior*. They describe many negative effects of social media caused by the overload of information processing, in which exceeding one's limit is caused by the designs applied to most popular social media platforms that encourage compulsive usage. The article states that an unintended consequence of social media usage is an increase in exhaustion levels. This is caused by the cognitive effort needed to pay constant attention to the wide range of social media energy levels, which is described as *social media fatigue*. Results of these studies came from, for example, the difficulty to adapt to new interface features on social media. Fatigue on social media is a relative term, and each person has a different experience. Users that cope with insecurities tend to experience social media fatigue, while users that are confident do the opposite (Bright et al., 2015). Men are more likely to suffer from social media fatigue than women (Zhang et al., 2016) hence they might do better on social media detox as men are more likely to succeed because they experience stress the same as doing challenges (Turel & Vaghefi, 2019). Age and the level of mindfulness - maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens - are also important moderators. The impact of social media overload on fatigue becomes more pronounced as users grow older (Zhang et al., 2016). Likewise, workers with low mindfulness experience increase burnout when they use social media at work (*ibidem*). Numerous studies have been done to explain why people use social media. Outcomes supported boredom, seeking entertainment, and killing time are powerful predictors of usage across social media platforms (Ku et al., 2013; QuanHaase and Young, 2010; Whiting and Williams, 2013). Boredom motivates the desire to change current goals into something more exciting (Bench and Lench, 2013). Social media platforms are intentionally designed to take advantage of the psychological need for stimuli (Alter, 2017). This often distracts from less stimulating but important functions (study, work, conversation with colleagues, etc.). Social media services also offer the opportunity to network with many people. Therefore, social media users may have to process a large number of communication requests from the network at the same time. For example, you might receive multiple Snapchat notifications on your smartphone, a Discord notification when a group member posts a comment, or a Facebook notification when a contact sends an instant message. Although it is possible to eliminate the noise of these notifications, the application sends notifications that someone is sending a message to the user or that new



information has been provided. Not only do these interruptions interfere with the user's main tasks, but they can also overwhelm the user because they cannot effectively deal with the situation. Interruptions can worsen communication congestion in two ways: 1) they take time away from working on their current job, potentially leading to a sense of psychological distress (Speier et al., 1999); 2) the interruptions can place high demands on cognitive processes as the user is forced to make a decision whether or not to switch activities (Kononova et al., 2016). The composition of the study design by Whelan (2019) was a research model that was measured on established research equipment and the formulation was adapted to the context of social media.

In the studies by Turel and Vaghefi (2019) the boredom proneness measures are taken from the external stimulation instead of both internal and external. The *boredom proneness scale factors* identified by Vodanovich *et al.* (2005) are external stimulation and internal stimulation. The items on the external stimulation subscale reflect a need for variety and change, whereas the internal stimulation subscale refers to a perceived inability to generate sufficient stimulation for oneself. Similar to previous studies (e.g., Brooks, 2015), since we are interested in social media usage- an external-focused activity -the internal stimulation section of the boredom proneness scale does not apply and was not captured (Whelan, 2021: 876). This suggests internal stimulation has no link to social media fatigue, earlier, it was unclear whether excessive social media usage could be categorized as addictive and Whelan concludes that “[e]ither way, individuals that are prone to boredom need to be aware of their limits and recognize the signs of overload so that they do not miss the positive benefits of social media” (Whelan, 2021: 881). Ignoring internal stimulation in their research seems to avoid the discussion on whether or not social media could be seen as an addiction. In this case, internal stimulation is explained as the inability to generate sufficient stimulation for oneself, this leaves space to argue whether individuals are not able to recognize the different effects of activities. Another argument for this phenomenon is that individuals are left with barely any information that even helps them to learn about what makes them get caught up on social media, and eventually suffer from a social media overload. It is too easy to end with individuals needing to be aware without giving them enough valuable information.

This thesis will investigate whether students are informed about social media, how they use it and how they would react if they could not be on social media to argue the need for a general better understanding of social media usage amongst students.

### 3. Methodology

To answer the question to what extent the awareness of social media behavior is noticeable I used two methods of doing survey research (Given, 2008), 2 focus groups have been interviewed and an online questionnaire has been shared among students aged 19 to 29. The focus groups were interviewed in Dutch, while the online questionnaire was carried out in English. The answers to both surveys have been analyzed using textual analysis. Focus group research is a form of survey research that is guided by the investigators to generate data. The structure of the surveys applied during focus groups varies from a relatively open discussion in which the investigator gives the group more freedom from the conversation on a certain topic, to a focus group in which the investigator has more influence on the group and also coordinates the topics discussed (Given, 2008).

The most crucial element of focus groups is the discussion between the attendees. This data does require a decision made by the group: the different points of view on a certain topic matter. The group selection is another important part of the focus groups as both the needs of the investigator and the attendees need to be considered. Attendees need to be comfortable both with the group and the investigator to talk about the research topics; however, for an in depth conversation to arise the attendees need to be actively interested in the topic.

For the analysis of the focus group the audio/video-recordings need to be transcribed and analyzed with textual analysis. Overall, the analysis needs to pay attention to the topics that consequently were discussed or raised interest among the attendees, basically, answering the questions and what part of the topic discussed was most important to the attendees.

For the focus group research of this thesis two groups were interviewed. The first group consists of 10 people, the second group consists of 19 people. The groups are first year students of Fontys Hogescholen in Eindhoven that study nursing. The first group consists of only girls, the second group included 2 boys and 17 girls that are studying others' well-being. They are also attending a module called FitPhone, in which they will analyze their own phone usage. The focus group took place before they could get too much into the module which would prevent the reliability of the focus group research. The reason students are the chosen group for this thesis is because as first year students start studying, they are losing a part of their parental guidance when they move out of the house. They are becoming responsible for their own actions; including phone usage. Being in that state of freedom yet also being responsible raised interest to investigate how they view their own phone usage.

The group was asked nine questions:

1. How old are you?

*(Dutch: Hoe oud ben je?)*

2. Make a list of your top 5 apps  
(Dutch: *Maak lijst van je top 5 apps*)
3. Do you ever notice getting bothered by other people's phone usage or your own?  
(Dutch: *Raak je ooit geïrriteerd door het telefoon gebruik van andere of van jezelf?*)
4. What advice would you give to a friend whenever they want to cut their phone usage?  
(Dutch: *Welk advies zou je geven aan een vriend die zijn telefoon gebruik wil verminderen?*)
5. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about deleting your social media apps?  
(Dutch: *Wat is het eerste wat in je opkomt als je social media zou moeten verwijderen?*)
6. How long would you be able to go without social media?  
(Dutch: *Hoe lang zou je zonder social media kunnen?*)
7. What would you do with your time not spent on social media?  
(Dutch: *Wat zou je met je tijd doen die niet aan social media wordt gespendeerd?*)
8. What would it be like to not spend time on social media for a month?  
(Dutch: *Hoe zou het zijn om een maand geen social media te gebruiken?*)
9. Could you tell me something you know about algorithms and phone usage?  
(Dutch: *Kan je me iets vertellen over algoritmen en telefoon gebruik?*)

The focus groups were video recorded from two sides of the room to make sure the students were visible at all times. Lastly, the students received a detailed informed consent sheet in which it is stated that they will be free to join or leave the discussion at any moment (appendix 2). Furthermore, the students were informed on the procedure of recording and transcribing; the video recordings are deleted after transcribing the data, however the reason to choose to video recording is that within the process of transcribing it is easier to see the attendees talk instead of trying to recognize their voices through purely voice recording. Whenever an attendee wishes not to be video recorded, we made sure they were not in the video frame.

The students receive post-it notes to write down their answers, the investigator collects all the post-its and places them in front of the groups by sticking them to a board. Then the investigator asks more questions on their answers to get a better grip on both individual views and group (dis)agreements. The aim is to look for different views on certain topics that can potentially be giving answers to what extent the awareness of social media behavior reaches. All post-it notes are collected as part of the data collection and shortly after doing the focus groups ethnographic notes have been made and used for this research.

All the data collected in focus groups are transcribed and analyzed according to the same methods used for normal interviews: textual analysis. We try to find the key themes discussed by the focus groups and we focus on their awareness of social media behavior. In this case study,

textual analysis is a useful tool. It provides a framework for the critical and creative examination of texts that produce meaning in a particular context (Mills, 2010). It allows the analyst to locate meanings in texts by evaluating how language is used to promote specific opinions and how it renders these viewpoints respectable and self-evident while downplaying and marginalizing competing viewpoints. For this thesis textual analysis is the right method to use as we will look at different answers that eventually all together show themes that will be answering the question on to what extent the students are aware of their own social media behavior.

### **Ethnographic notes**

However, during this thesis the video recordings unfortunately got lost. Therefore all post-its that were used during the focus groups are the only hard data left that are valuable for analysis. Thus, we decided to make an online questionnaire with the same questions and use these two methodologies together in order to have enough data to analyze. An online questionnaire is a familiar research tool in social sciences: *“A key advantage of online qualitative surveys is openness and flexibility to address a wide range of research questions of interest to social researchers, as the method allows access to data that range in focus from peoples' views, experiences, or material practices, through to representational or meaning-making practices”* (Braun, 2021). For the online questionnaire there is also an informed consent sheet (appendix 1) included and because the students in the focus groups received post-its without limits on the amount of words, the respondents to the questionnaire also had no word limit.

For this reason this thesis will include the answers on the post-its as well as the ethnographic notes from the focus groups. Furthermore the online questionnaire will add data to this thesis and the findings of the online questionnaire and the focus groups will be compared to each other. By applying this methodology this thesis is a qualitative research inquiry.

## 4. Focus group

All data on the focus groups can be found in appendix 3.

### 4.1 Analysis focus groups

**Question 1** How old are you?

There were 29 students aged between 17 and 24

**Question 2** Make a list of your top 5 apps.

The overall top 5 is 1. Whatsapp 2. Instagram 3. Snapchat 4. Tiktok 5. Spotify.

**Question 3** Do you ever notice getting bothered by others using their phone or your own phone usage?

This question was not answered through the use of post-its during the first focus group, while discussing the question most answers entail others picking up their phone during conversation. One student mentioned that she had the idea that when someone uses their phone in social situations it must be important for that person. Others state that they use their phone when they start feeling awkward in group dynamics. In the second focus group the answers were more divided between phone usage of others and themselves. Once again in *group dynamics* phones are used by these students to escape from awkward situations and in one on one conversation the students do not appreciate others picking up their phones.

The themes that were discovered were;

1. When others pick up their phone during one on one contact the students get annoyed
2. While being in conversation, picking up one's phone is not appreciated and shows disinterest.
3. The students use their phone to escape from awkward group situations or just pick up their phones out of habitual behavior.
4. They all do get bothered, more by others than by themselves.
5. Picking up the phone as a response to another person picking up their phone.

**Question 4** What advice would you give to a friend who wants to lower their phone usage?

The advice given by the students focused on creating physical distance from your phone, by leaving the phone at home while walking a dog, or by putting the phone in another room for it to be out of one's sight. Another option is to set timers on screen time, by doing so you will be reminded when you spend a certain amount of hours on your phone. The students explained that by setting timers you risk ignoring them. Furthermore, the students explained that by turning off your phone's volume and notifications one should be less triggered to pick up their phones.

#### Themes

1. Distance yourself from your phone, physical distance, it cannot be near you.
2. Set up screen time limits on phone or on certain apps, be careful not to snooze through your alarms.
3. Turn off volume and or notifications, the phone should not be able to trigger you.
4. Delete apps to silence your notifications.
5. Plan other activities, do not sit at home but rather do something with your time.

**Question 5** What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about deleting social media?

The answers to question 5 were divided, some students were totally against the idea stating things like: 'why would I?' or that it was 'not necessary'. Others explained that they would be afraid to start missing out on things, especially contact with others. Therefore, they asked whether they could still use whatsapp, in that case, the students were more willing to delete all the other apps. Lastly, some students that were either raised not using social media, already took a break from social media or were just not that into social media at all; these students reacted calmly to this question, it does not matter to them.

1. Indifferent or positive, the written answer was short but in conversation they explained how they were planning to live without social media.
2. Losing contact with others is the main negative point for students that are not totally against the idea.
3. Missing out on things, especially what others do, nobody told anything about how others were going to miss them and their online activities.

4. Big no, people are totally against the idea and even explain the panic they would experience.

**Question 6** How long would you be able to go without social media?

The importance of staying in contact with friends, family, work and school relations through Whatsapp is noticeable. Without Whatsapp some students could not imagine being able to put their phone away. The students also explained that they calculated their maximum time by looking at the lengths of their workshifts: students answered 5-6 hours because that is the length of their workshifts. Furthermore, the students anticipate longer periods of time when they know they are going to be occupied with holidays or other activities, in normal day life, the period would be shorter. Others state that they might need some time getting used to this but eventually it will bring them peace of mind. One student already experienced taking some time off social media, she answered being able to go without social media for 1-2 weeks. One girl explained she was just curious what effect it could have after one week.

1. 1 week was mentioned 10 times
2. Longer period (weeks, months, always)
3. 0-24 uren (6x)
4. 1 day
5. Whatsapp is important for the students, they want to be able to stay in contact with important people (Friends, family, work)

**Question 7** What would you do with your time not spent on social media?

Half of the students answered that they would spend time on school, according to the students doing school work is extremely difficult when their phone is within reach, in particular, notifications are the most distracting. Two girls were talking about unfinished hobbies, or unsatisfied hobbies. One loved cooking and the other loved making clothes, both of them have all ingredients and materials however do not seem to be picking it up. I asked them whether they watch cooking videos or self made fashion, and they both did. The students blame their phones for distracting them from doing house chores, school, exercise and even hobbies.

1. School (15x)

2. Friends & family ( 11x)
3. Going outside (11x)
4. Exercise (10x)
5. Hobby (7x)
6. More sleep
7. Basic daily things they can easily do, however social media distracts them.

**Question 8** What would it be like to not spend time on social media for a month?

The experiences differ from student to students however they all explain needing time to get used to not spending time on social media. After some time, some will start feeling peaceful and spend more time on themselves whereas others start feeling restless and isolated, they also suffer from FOMO, the ‘fear of missing out’, which would be triggered. The students describe needing the phone in order not to start feeling isolated or restless. Another statement was made regarding boredom, the students describe that being on a train without their distractive phone feels like taking forever, however with their phone, it feels like 5 minutes. One teacher asked who would enjoy having moments that last longer, there were 2 students out of the second group that raised their hands, the others did not like that idea at all.

1. Pro and con answers, most of them say that they’ll have to get used at the start but afterwards it brings them rest. Others say it would bring them peace but at one point they will not even know what to do with their time, or they feel isolated. (10x)
2. Getting used to but then it will be okay and it will bring more rest.(7x)
3. Rest, peaceful (10x)
4. More time for other things (school, themselves, getting things done) (7x)
5. The students expressed losing social contact, they are unable to show their interest through, for example, commenting on a post done by one of their friends.
6. Time for oneself
7. Hard no: restless, separated etc., real panic feelings and the fear of missing out.



**Question 9** Could you tell me something you know about algorithms and phone usage?

The first group had one girl who was guessing an answer, there were parts of her answer that were right but most of it proved she had no idea what algorithms are. The second group had one guy who studied IT before, he knew about algorithms but he was the only student that had a clue out of 29 students.

## 4.2 Discussion of the focus groups

The first part of the discussion regards the focus groups. The **research question** to be answered is: are students aware of their social media behavior? The students were given 9 questions in Dutch, the first question to analyze is the question which apps are their favorite. Looking at the data (appendix 3) the overall winners are Whatsapp and Snapchat, which will make sense after seeing the rest of their answers. Whatsapp and Snapchat were rated high because the students use these apps to stay in touch with their friends and family. Interesting is the second place rating for Instagram that was noted on fourteen of the students lists. Instagram is used for seeing what others do in their lives, this is also later confirmed in other questions where missing out on ‘things’ refer to what friends post on, for example, Instagram.

Looking at question three, the students were asked: do you ever notice getting bothered by other people’s phone usage or your own? The data showed that whenever others would pay attention to their phone instead of the person they are talking to, this comes across as uninterested. What also comes forward is that in one-on-one situations phone usage is noticed immediately. In group situations phones can act like a personal escape, especially when the students start feeling awkward or not part of a group. The students do not seem to be bothered by their own phone usage, they do get bothered by others and notice others getting bothered by their phone usage. This is the first time the lack of awareness of their own phone usage behavior is noticeable.

Question four asks the students to give advice to a friend who wants to lower their social media usage. What becomes clear in their answers is that phones are extremely distracting, their tips largely involve taking physical distance from your phone, preferably out of your sight. Another common tip is to set screen time limits, for example, you only spend 2 hours on your phone and then the timer goes off and you are reminded to put your phone away. The negative note on this tip they gave was that you can just set a new timer and keep on using your phone. Another approach was given by a girl that mentioned an app that is called Forest. This app gamified lowering phone usage by ‘planting trees’ for every hour not spent, this app works with a reward system. Another tip is to turn off all notifications and volume on your phone, or even delete apps. By doing so the students explained to be less triggered, which will lower the urge to pick up their phone.

Question five: what is the first thing that comes to your mind when you imagine deleting your social media apps? This is the first question to have different points of view that range from being fine with this and having a plan for what they would do with their time to not being able to imagine how this could be even possible. The students explained that staying in contact with their friends and family is highly valued, which explains why they rated Whatsapp and Snapchat first and second. Losing contact and missing out on things posted on social media gives the main reactions by the students that are not totally against the idea. Overall the answers were divided in three groups and the negative correlation lies in missing out on mainly contact with others.

The students were asked how long they think they could go without social media. What is interesting is that even though most students would experience missing contact with others through social media, answers of one week or more than one week were mentioned most. Important to note is that the students were allowed to keep using their Whatsapp because of work and family connections. Different students explained that the contact through snapchat or Instagram is different than through Whatsapp: they explain Whatsapp to be more personal with close friends/family and practical for work purposes than the other social media apps, hence missing out on fun content is measured in the answers. Hence their answers are based on the amount of time they could spend without the apps that do not mainly focus on communication but rather on entertainment.

There were several girls who said that they calculated their answer based on the maximum amount of hours they usually work, that would be 6-8 hours. Others answered their maximum amount of time without social media is based on the amount of distraction they would get, the main example given was going on a vacation. .

Moving on, the students were asked what they would do with their time not spent on social media. What is interesting is that the massive amount of hours spent on social media would be invested in school, friends and family, sleeping, going outside, exercising and being occupied with hobbies. Those are basic everyday activities, the students explained that they are distracted from those things by their phones, especially school work is easily interrupted and they find it hard to fall asleep at night. Basically they would start spending more time on their basic physical life; no one came up with big plans such as redecorating their house or investigate how to live healthier

The last question that was answered by all the students is question eighth: what it would be like to not spend time on social media for a month. The answers were again divided in three major themes: students that were negative, students that were both positive and negative and students that are open to the idea. The students that were negative explained that they would feel restless and isolated, which could cause them to start feeling bored as they do not know what to do with their time. . The majority of the students had pro-con answers in which they explained that in the beginning they would have to get used to not having social media but it would eventually bring

them more rest and peace. The positive group of students saw this hypothetical month as a month full of time for themselves and their real friends- this refers to the friends the students hang out with in real-life- as well as their long lost hobbies. They also mention how peaceful it could be.

The very last question asked the students to share anything they know about algorithms and phone usage. This question was asked to test common knowledge of social media, as this is a basic term to understand when you want to make sense of social media. In both groups respondents became quiet, then in the first group one girl gave a sort of right answer but it was far off from the actual meaning of algorithms and in the second group there was one student that used to study IT, he was the only one to explain algorithms amongst 29 students. This is no definitive proof, but it does show the lack of education on social media.

Going back to the research question: are the students aware of their social media behavior? The students are aware of their social media behavior however they experience different bonds with their phones. What is clear is that the students find smartphones distracting and when asked what they would do if they were to spend not as much time on social media, they would go back to basic daily activities, some of them also mentioned wanting to do hobbies. The students mentioned not wanting to be bored, hence they would maybe go without social media for a while but when they enter the train they would rather watch their phones than their surroundings. The awareness of the negative downfalls of social media are mentioned by the students as not being able to focus on school, cleaning and sleeping. There are exceptions in which students have already done a detox or they were brought up without social media, these students seem to have distanced themselves from being closely bonded with their phones. But most of the students would not want to go without their phone not knowing the benefits it could bring to their mental health.

## 5. Online Questionnaire

All the data gathered on the online questionnaire is attached to this thesis in appendix 4

### 5.1 Analysis online questionnaire

**Question 1** How old are you?

13 participants are aged between 19 and 29 and one participant is 62 years old.

**Question 2** Make a list of your top 5 apps.

Their top 5 apps were: 1. Whatsapp 2. Instagram 3. WeChat 4. Is shared by TikTok, Spotify, mail and Youtube 5. Snapchat.

**Question 3** Do you ever notice getting bothered by other people's phone usage or your own? In case you do, why or what triggers you?

This group seems to notice the phone usage of other groups of people on for example, festivals, work, family gatherings, on the train or at events. They wonder why the present is not enough, they notice the difference it makes not to use your phone in events and they want to enjoy that. This group shows some people that notice their own behavior first as they mindlessly scroll instead of doing things they'd rather do, or they scroll until they get tired and fall asleep.

Themes

1. Yes in conversation with others
2. Mindlessly scrolling
3. Bothered by group's phone usage
4. Bothered by others in social situations

**Question 4** What advice would you give to a friend that wants to lower their social media usage?

Most of the answers tell you to delete apps, or to limit your screen time by setting restrictions. Some participants already thought about how to make this work, for example by not using it from 17:00-09:00 every day or by taking out your camera instead of your phone to be able to still capture things that happen. The social media detox was mentioned once as well.

1. Delete apps

2. Set limits on your phone or for yourself.
3. Find distractions

**Question 5** What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you imagine deleting your social media apps?

Three answers were mixed with positive and negative notes, both relief and panic, boredom and peace, and relief but also missing it. Some think they are going to miss out on things, communication tools or work opportunities. The participants also answer that they will be less distracted and that might be a good thing.

1. Mixed experiences
2. Missing out on things, work and communication.
3. Less distraction.

**Question 6** How long would you be able to go without social media? (for communication purposes you are allowed to use Whatsapp)

The answers are periods between 3-5 hours to someone's whole life. Some participants have experiences with deleting social media that were positive. Some describe not having the urge to go on social media after not using social media for a month. Some sound insecure because of the question marks used in their answers, one of them is not sure because they have not tried it yet.

1. 0-1 day
2. A week
3. Months
4. Longer periods.

**Question 7** What would you do with your time not spent on social media?

10 out of 14 answered reading, that is the majority and reading is a very simple task. Some mention school and finding new hobbies as well. These participants would do simple everyday life activities if they were not to spend their time scrolling. Also they are mentioning activities that are more complex than when your phone is around sending notifications.

1. Read
2. Schoolwork

3. Going outside
4. Friends and family

**Question 8** Could you tell me something you know about algorithms and phone usage?

This group only had 3 people that had no clue what the question was, other answers were either totally right, or were showing some basic understanding. The basic understanding is that algorithms decide what content you see first and that it has the intention to keep you on your phone as long as possible. The best answer was *'Algorithms is inaccessible to most of the users. Users' phone usage is recorded and datafied by digital devices and algorithms. These data feed to the development of algorithms for profit-driven purposes.'*

1. Tracking your data
2. Things you like are collected and shown
3. Spend more time is the aim of algorithms
4. Data is being datafied and used for many aims.

## 5.2 Discussion of the online questionnaire

This group entails students from the Bachelor of Arts: Online Culture; Art, Media and Society, one of their lecturers and some Dutch (ex)students. Looking at the second question, the top 3 apps were WhatsApp, Instagram and WeChat (a Chinese company providing free messages and calling), the fourth favorite were Youtube, TikTok, mail and Spotify and in fifth place was Snapchat. WeChat seems to be brought up by international students participating in the online questionnaire. This shows that this group values communication highly.

Question three gave answers that point at the behavior of others in group situations. These answers were constructed through observation of phone usage within social situations by the participants, this reveals their interest and knowledge on this social media behavior. This also makes some participants dare to take strong stands in their answers. The answers given that say something about someone's own online behavior were not that critical of themselves. Lastly the answers given regarding one-on-one conversations show that the participants were wondering why being on one's phone would make a situation better; is this reality enough? They are wondering why others seem incapable of enjoying their time without using their phone in between, they wonder why the phone needs to interrupt their time.

In the fourth question the participants were clear on the method to stop using social media: deleting apps on your phone. Some participants have their own experiences with lowering their phone usage and they were willing to share this information. They also shared a little bit of

philosophy on why a certain tip could help. Even ‘digital detoxing’ has been noted by the participants, this shows their knowledge of the issue of using too much social media. One theme found in their answers was finding hobbies or distractions. What also became clear was that notifications are triggering and distracting in general.

On the fifth question the answers were focused on what the participants were giving up such as communication for work or school and the updates on social media they normally see. Missing out on things seems to be bothering them. There were other answers that show the rest and peaceful time some participants anticipated by not using social media. And just three that shared both positive and negative thoughts on this question: they do see what it could bring but also what it takes from them.

The answers to question six were showing that some participants have many reasons not to use social media, they could go without for their whole lifetime, or for years because social media is described as unnecessary. Others that have not tried living without social media seem to be unsure of their own capabilities, however one of them shows interest in what one week without social media could bring to their life. Some participants already positively experienced deleting their social media before so they are willing to do it again.

Question seven asks what the students would do with their time not spent on social media. The answers show reading, schoolwork, going outside and seeing friends and family. These activities are easily started but get interrupted by phones easily. One student says they have no idea what to do with their time, whereas others are willing to pick up on brain stimulation such as solving puzzles, being creative and finding new hobbies. In conclusion, the participants want to do simple things with the hours not spent on social media.

Question eight asks the participants whether they can explain something about algorithms and phone usage. Some participants had really accurate answers to this question whereas others were more guessing, however they were thinking in the right direction. The participants seem to know what algorithms are through Instagram as they personalized everyone’s feed. Just a few participants were focused on what algorithms do for data privacy and their profit making businesses.

## 6. Conclusion

What is the awareness of social media behavior amongst students in the Netherlands? To answer this question two focus groups were done and one online questionnaire was shared amongst students from Online Culture; Art, Media and Society, their lecturer and 6 other Dutch (ex)students. In question two the results of the online questionnaire showed apps used by international students that are barely known in the Netherlands, WeChat got rated third hence all participants showed that communication is their top priority when making a list of their favorite apps.

Second, looking at the answers to question three the difference within knowledge between the online questionnaire and the focus groups explain the different perspectives given in the answers. The online questionnaire had answers that explained getting bothered by human behavior in group situations in which the participant was not involved directly and the phone usage in one-on-one conversations were harder than in the focus groups. The online participants wonder why phones interrupt social moments that in their eyes should not be interrupted by phones. The focus groups notice getting bothered while someone uses their phone when being in one-on-one conversations, however they do not seem to be bothered by how social situations are disrupted by phone usage. This difference in perspective shows that the online participants from which 9 participants study Online Culture are more interested and educated on social matters like phone usage than the focus groups who are studying nursery.

In question four all participants suggested that deleting apps would help best to lower your phone usage. Furthermore they do agree that phones are distracting and triggering hence you should turn off your notifications. A difference between the answers of the focus groups and the online questionnaire is that the answers of the focus groups argue putting your phone away somewhere you are not able to see it but this was not mentioned in the answers of the online questionnaire. In the online questionnaire the advice is more radical and involves own experiences as well, this makes the answers more thought through than the plans of the focus groups.

The fifth question showed that the focus groups had students that were totally against the idea of deleting their social media apps, others were seeing both positive and negative, some were indifferent but there was no one really happy about it. In the online questionnaire, there was no one totally against the idea, there were some that also described positive and negative feelings and some that were saying that deleting their social media apps brings them joy. The reason for this difference might come from the difference in experience that the groups have on deleting your social media. In the focus groups there was one girl who experienced detoxing from social media, she explained that she could go without social media for two to three weeks if she wanted to. In the online questionnaire 5 people have tried detoxing from social media or are stating they could go without for their whole life. Statistically speaking 1/29 in the focus group had experience whereas the online questionnaire had  $\frac{1}{3}$  participants with experience.



The anticipated time the participants could go without social media within the focus groups was 10 minutes at its lowest whereas the online questionnaire had 3-5 hours at its lowest. Both groups have some participants that could go without social media forever, it really depends on the person and their relation to social media and communication opportunities. Both groups showed that having the need to communicate fast through their phones, that also explains the top 5 apps of the participants being related to communication mainly.

All the participants answered basic daily activities on question seven such as reading and doing school work, both these activities are easily organized: the participants do not have to plan beforehand or travel somewhere to be able to read or work on school. The students in the focus group explained that they listed things they get distracted from easily. Living without social media would give them time to get things done and focus on themselves. The participants from the online questionnaire listed their activities and had no further explanation.

Question eighth was not part of the online questionnaire so no statements can be made besides that the focus groups were mainly agreeing the need to get used to a month without social media and that eventually it would bring them peace but also negative sides. The negative sides were missing out on things, Fomo, and losing contact with friends.

The biggest and also logical difference between the answers of the focus groups and the online questionnaire were found in question nine. The focus group became quiet when this question was asked whereas in the online questionnaire this question raised the longest answers on average. Most of the online participants knew something about algorithms. In the focus groups one girl tried guessing something that eventually led to the wrong answer and one guy who used to study IT gave a general explanation of algorithms. The rest of the students in the focus groups were quiet and did not know anything about algorithms. This proves the difference in education between the focus groups and the online questionnaire takers.

All considered, the findings of the gathered data show that students that are less educated on social media have different perspectives on what social media does to social situations and their own behavior. Both groups agree on certain topics such as their top apps, how to spend their time without social media, and how to lower their phone usage. The online questionnaire had more experienced people on social media detoxing than the focus groups which explained their more positive response to the idea of deleting their social media apps. The differences between the two groups show that education on social media triggers the awareness of social media and this is shown through the wider perspective on social media behavior the online participants describe.

The findings of the focus groups and the online questionnaire are correlated to the theories discussed in the literature review. Some examples of this correlation are the findings by Turel and Vaghefi(2019) on the relapse factors within a week of participating in a social media detox are confirmed by the participants as they describe the fear of missing out on things that will raise their stress levels. According to Turel and Vaghefi this feeling caused the participants of his

inquiry to not make the one week of social media detoxing. Furthermore, online social stress described by van Dijck (2013) on chances such as work or networking opportunities is also described by one of the participants who is an influencer hence has to be online in order to have work and make money. Moreover the majority of the participants describe being scared of losing contact or missing out on things people post online which also confirms this theory by van Dijck (2013) in case they were to delete their social media.. Lastly the theory by Whelan (2021) on social media fatigue can be confirmed in the results of the focus groups and the online questionnaire. The overload of social media content that might be perceived as fitting to your hobbies does not make you do more of your own creative work. The two girls that loved cooking and designing clothes were exhibiting this theory fully as they are overloaded with content on their hobbies online but they never pick it up themselves or use their own creativity instead of watching others. In conclusion, looking at the data the awareness of social media behavior is present but the perspectives differ from person to person according to the amount of interest and education. Further research on how to raise awareness on social media behavior could make changes to the creativity and peacefulness within society and is therefore highly suggested.

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# Appendix 1

## Informed consent Online Questionnaire



### Student introduction

I am an Online Culture, Art, Media and Society student at Tilburg University. For my bachelor thesis I am investigating the awareness of social media behavior amongst people between 17 and 25 years old. The methodology applied to the research question is content analysis on a short questionnaire. It will take less than 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The data collected will be stored safely in the TiU google drive and only be used for the purpose of this thesis. Based on the privacy regulations of Tilburg University, the data provided by this questionnaire will be deleted after I graduate in July 2023.

### Participation

If you want to take part in this questionnaire there are a couple important notes to be read before you start. Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to decline to take part and withdraw from the research once participation has begun, without any negative consequences, and without providing any explanation. Furthermore, you have the right, in principle, to request access to and rectification, removal, restriction of, or object to the processing of the personal data. I will graduate in the summer 2023 which frames the period the data will be stored. In case any questions arise you can contact [k.l.m.rutten@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:k.l.m.rutten@tilburguniversity.edu), or my supervisor Dr. Eleonora Sciubba [m.e.sciubba@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:m.e.sciubba@tilburguniversity.edu).

### Informed consent

*I have read the information above and understand the regulations applied. I am aware that whenever questions arise before, during or after the questionnaire I can reach out to the student writing their thesis. I voluntarily participate in this research, and I can withdraw from the questionnaire whenever I want without any negative consequences or explanation. I have the right to request access to and rectification, removal, restriction of or object the processing of my data.*

Date:

I give consent (yes/no):

1. How old are you?
2. Make a list of your top 5 apps
3. Do you ever notice getting bothered by other people's phone usage or your own?
4. What advice would you give to a friend that wants to lower their social media usage ?
5. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you imagine deleting your social media apps?
6. How long would you be able to go without social media?
7. What would you do with your time not spent on social media?
8. Could you tell me something you know about algorithms and phone usage?

## Appendix 2

### Informed consent Focus Groups

### Informed consent

#### Student introductie

Ik ben een afstudeerstudent van de opleiding Online Culture: Art, Media and Society aan Tilburg University. Voor mijn scriptie schrijf ik een onderzoek naar het bewustzijn van social media gedrag. De onderzoeksmethode die ik toepas is het interviewen van focusgroepen. In dit geval bevat de onderzoeksmethode een gesprek tussen de studenten in dit lokaal waarbij er een aantal centrale vragen worden gesteld rondom jullie kijk op social media.

#### Focusgroep

Voor dit groepsinterview (focus groep) wordt gebruik gemaakt van twee camera's die het gesprek zullen opnemen. De reden voor het maken van beeldmateriaal is dat op deze manier voorkomen wordt dat uitspraken gelinkt worden aan de verkeerde persoon. Nadat ik mijn scriptie behaal zal het beeldmateriaal worden vernietigd in verband met privacy. Dit formulier is het informed consent, hierbij vraagt het onderzoek om jouw toestemming beeldmateriaal op te nemen waar jij zichtbaar op staat en daarnaast om het groepsinterview wat we voeren te transcriberen en te analyseren. Mocht er een moment zijn tijdens het interview of daarna ben je ten alle tijden vrij om je terug te trekken uit het onderzoek en worden jouw gegevens verwijderd. Mocht dit het geval zijn mail [k.l.m.rutten@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:k.l.m.rutten@tilburguniversity.edu).

#### Informed consent

*Ik heb het informatie-en toestemmings reglement gelezen en begrepen. Ik ben me ervan bewust dat als ik vragen heb, ik ze kan stellen en hoe ik in contact kom in deze situatie. Ik doe vrijwillig mee aan deze focusgroep en ik kan me op elk moment terugtrekken zonder opgaf van reden. Ik heb het recht om toegang te krijgen tot een rectificatie, verwijdering, beperking van of bezwaar te maken tegen de verwerking van mijn persoonsgegevens. Ik geef vrijwillig toestemming voor deelname aan dit onderzoek.*

Datum:

Naam:

Handtekening:

## Appendix 3 Focus group data

### Data analyse

Final theme's

1. Contact with others is a standard, change is difficult.
2. Phone usage can be functioning as a personal escape in bigger groups.
3. Distracting, need physical distance in order to not use it, when not used different experiences.
4. Usage is seen as social however when in real social activities, unappreciated.
5. (Used for social contact, however without social media, the real social situation is unseen, they see missing the online contact as feeling lonely)
6. Algorithms push forward content on someone's hobbies or creative side, this is a double ended sword because even though it could act as inspiration, people stop their putting the same amount of time into their hobbies.
- 7.

1. How old are you?

17	4
18	6
19	5
20	7
21	3
22	1
23	
24	2
25	

2. Make a list of your top 5 apps

App	1st place	2nd place	3rd place	4th place	5th place
-----	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------



Whatsapp	8	2	6	4	2
Tiktok	6	3	3	1	5
Instagram	3	14	4	3	
Snapchat	10	4	4	4	1
Spotify		1	6	4	4
Netflix			1	5	6
Youtube		2	1	2	4
Games					1
Videoland				1	4
Facebook		1	1	3	
Pinterest					1
Disney +				1	1
Discord	1				1
Nonogram.com			1		
Twitter				1	
Facetime			1		

App	Score*
Whatsapp	3, 1, 1, 2, 2, 3, 5, 3, 2, 5, 4, 2, 5, 5, 3, 3, 5, 3, 4, 5, 5, 5,
Tiktok	3, 4, 5, 5, 5, 4, 5, 5, 1, 1, 1, 3, 3, 5, 2, 4, 1, 1,
Instagram	5, 4, 2, 3, 4, 4, 4, 3, 4, 3, 4, 2, 4, 4, 4, 5, 3, 4, 2, 4, 4, 5, 4, 4,
Snapchat	5, 2, 4, 4, 5, 3, 3, 5, 2, 5, 5, 5, 5, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5, 5, 3, 2, 4, 1,
Spotify	4, 3, 2, 3, 1, 1, 1, 3, 2, 2, 3, 1, 3, 3, 2,
Netflix	2, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1, 1, 1, 2, 1, 1, 2,

Youtube	1, 1, 2, 4, 1, 4, 3, 1, 2,
Games	1
Videoland	2, 1, (1, 1, 1,)
Facebook	4, 2, 3, 2, 2,
Pinterest	1,
Disney +	1, (2),
Discord	5, 1,
Nonogram.com	3,
Twitter	2,
Facetime	3,

\* Score: 5 points for top position, 4 for second, 3 for third, 2 for 4th and 1 for last on the list

3. Do you ever notice getting bothered by other people's phone usage or your own?

Vraag 3 : Word je wel eens geïrriteerd door andermans telefoon gebruik of merk je dat bij jezelf?  
(20 responses)

Ethnographic notes:

When answering this question we did not use post its, and the class became a bit quieter, but the first few answers came that were mainly focused on the habitual behavior of others, so that could be some difficulty with that I don't think discussed their own behavior with the phone when answering this question. So for others, telephone use can be seen as a nuisance, but in itself that is not yet worth mentioning in a group dynamic. What also stood out was the comment of a girl who said if someone is busy with the phone I have the idea that it is important and then I won't say anything about it, if it really became a standard thing then maybe it would.

17-5 Before giving answers, I gave some more context, so both your own behavior and that of others and the answers were therefore more divided this time between behavior of oneself or of someone else. The closing of certain situations or awkward moments is arranged by pulling back into the phone. On the other hand, you see that with 1 on 1 contact, the use of the other person's telephone is noticeable. most of the class agreed that this feels bad and that it comes across as disinterested.

Thema's

1. One on one phone usage 8 times mentioned, it seems to be watched more closely than on their owns or within groups
2. While being in conversation picking up ones phone is unappreciated and shows desinterest.
3. The students notice getting bothered by their own phone usage whenever they want to feel more comfortable or just pick up their phones out of habitual behavior.
4. They all do get bothered, moreover by others than by themselves.
5. The students explain picking up their phone as a response to another person picking up their phone or out of automatism.

Dutch answers	English translation	Theme(s) and notes
1 op 1 met iemand kan het ongeïnteresseerd overkomen, kan irritant zijn, niet altijd.	One on one can come across uninterested, that can be annoying, not always.	1 and 2
Ja: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• automatisme bij mezelf.</li> <li>• 1 op 1 → telefoongebruik bij ander = ongeïnteresseerd.</li> </ul>	Yes: out of automatism when I'm with myself, when I am one on one, phone usage is considered uninterested.	1 and 3 and 5
Merk wel is bij mijzelf in groep als ik niet mee kan praten dan pak ik mijn telefoon	I notice when I am in a group that I can not talk with I start using my phone.	3
Ja, me moeder is altijd geïrriteerd dat ik langzaam of niet reageer. Zelf vind ik dit ook vervelend als andere dit bij mij doen.	Yes, my mother is always annoyed when I react slowly or not at all, I get annoyed at others when they do this to me.	4
Ik pak hem niet in een gesprek maar meer bij stilte als mensen dit in gesprek doen, stoort dat.	I do not pick up the phone in conversation rather when silence arises, when people do use their phone in conversation; annoying.	2 and 3
Als het awkward is ga je sneller op je telefoon.	Whenever it gets awkward you're more likely to pick up your phone	3

Ja, vindt het welleens vervelend als iemand heel traag reageert wanneer die iets met mij wilt doen.	Yes, I find it annoying when someone reacts really late whenever they want to do something with me.	1
Ja, vervelend als iemand in gesprek op telefoon gaat.	Yes, its annoying when someone uses their phone during conversations.	1 and 2
Afsluiten van de groep → geen communicatie.	Disconnecting from the group → No communication	2 and 3
Ja	Yes.	
Ja, als je tegen iemand praat en de ander zit op de telefoon.	Yes, whenever you talk to someone who is using their phone.	1
Ja, soms beetje ongemakkelijk.	Yes, sometimes it is a little uncomfortable	
Soms geen persoonlijke communicatie Uitstelgedrag Te laat slapen	Sometimes no personal communication, procrastination, sleeping too late.	
Zelf gebruik ik mijn telefoon niet veel als ik met vrienden ben, maar ik merk wel dat ik het idee krijg dat mensen ongeïnteresseert zijn als ze hun telefoon pakken, dit kan soms irritant zijn.	I do not use my phone a lot when I'm with my friends, however, I do notice that I get the idea that people are uninterested whenever they pick up their phone. This can be annoying.	1 and 4
Wanneer je in gesprek bent en iemand zit op de telefoon	Whenever you are in conversation and someone picks up their phone.	1
Ja, 1 op 1 of verkeerde timing.	Yes, one on one or the wrong timing.	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vervelend dat ik uit het niets mijn telefoon pak.</li> <li>• Als je een op een met iemand bent en diegene pakt</li> </ul>	It annoys me that I pick up my phone out of nowhere. Whenever you are one on one with someone that picks up their phone you are likely to do the same thing.	1 and 5

telefoon ben je snel geneigd de telefoon ook te pakken.		
Ja, bij mij en bij anderen. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Komt door verveeldheid</li> <li>• Je voelt je geërgerd als de ander niet oplet</li> </ul>	Yes with myself and others, caused by boredom, you feel annoyed when the other person is not paying attention.	1 and 2
1 op 1 valt het wel op als iemand ineens zijn tel pakt, vind het niet per se vervelend.	One on one it is more noticeable when someone all of a sudden picks up their phone, I do not get annoyed per se.	1 and 2
Als anderen telefoon pakken doe ik dat ook of andersom in gezelschap.	Whenever someone picks up their phone I will too or the other way around.	3 and 5

4. What advice would you give to a friend that wants to lower their social media usage?

Ethnographic notes:

16-5 The tips that were given focused on limiting phone use by, for example, timers on certain apps or even on the phone in general. Some have had positive experiences with this themselves, but they immediately said that if that timer goes off you do have the awareness of time but that you can change that timer and then you can continue. Also your phone so physically not too close would be good to reduce your phone use, this can be done in various ways, such as when you walk the dog or when you go to bed, so don't take your phone with you. It was also suggested to put the phone out of the picture during study, but this also works for some if they turn off notifications.

A nice point was made by a girl who wrote or Don't Download Tiktok, she explained that that app is really too addictive, someone else explained that when you like something on tiktok they keep adding it to the videos you see so that you get as much content about it as possible.

17-5 There was a girl who used the forest app, she sets a time when she can't use her phone and then she gets a tree as a reward. Others say they put a time limit on using it. According to the group, both have advantages and disadvantages. Either you still have to take actions to leave your phone alone, or you will want to spend even more time on certain things after your time limit.

Themes

1. Distance yourself from your phone, physical distance, it can not be near you.
2. Set up screentime on phone or on certain apps, be careful not to snooze through your alarms, or set up a timer in which you will not be able to use your phone by using the app Forest. This comes with an reward system instead of an end to something enjoyed.

3. Turn off volume/Notifications, the phone should not be able to distract you hence you make sure the screen does not light up.
4. Delete apps, also another helpfull tool if you want to silence your phone.
5. Plan other activities, do not be sitting at home but rather do something with your time.

<p>Je telefoon op een andere plek leggen zodat je er niet op kan kijken.</p> <p>App voor schermtijd instaleren dat je er maar een bepaalde tijd op kan.</p>	<p>Put your phone away to be unable to look at your phone, install a screen time app on your phone to limit your screen time.</p>	<p>1 and 2</p>
<p>Als je niet afgeleid wil worden, leg hem dan ergens waar je hem niet kan zien.</p>	<p>If you do not want to get distracted, put your phone somewhere you can not see it.</p>	<p>1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limieten instellen</li> <li>• Apps verwijderen → minder neiging iets te openen, want het is er niet meer</li> <li>• Telefoon weg leggen</li> </ul>	<p>Setting limits, delete apps → less urge to open something, it's not there anymore, put your phone away.</p>	<p>1 and 2 and 4</p>
<p>Telefoon niet heel de tijd bijhouden, maar ook soms wegleggen als dit kan. Zo heb je minder snel de neiging om op je telefoon te gaan.</p>	<p>Do not keep your phone on you all the time, whenever possible, put it away. This way you have less urge to be on your phone.</p>	<p>1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schermtijd instellen</li> <li>• Telefoon in een andere kamer leggen</li> <li>• Bij houden hoeveel hij/zij op telefoon zit voor bewust wording.</li> </ul>	<p>Set screen time limits, leave your phone in a different room, track how much one spends time on his/her phone to create awareness.</p>	<p>1 and 2</p>

Gebruik: do not disturb en limit screentime.	Use: do not disturb and limit screen time.	2 and 3
Notificaties voor niet belangrijke dingen uit. Wegleggen als je toch niet nodig hebt.	Notifications for unnecessary things off, put the phone away when you do not need it anyway.	1 and 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Als je gaat slapen → telefoon beneden laten</li> <li>Telefoon wegleggen</li> <li>Telefoon op stil zetten</li> <li>Verleidelijke apps verwijderen</li> </ul>	Whenever you go to bed → leave phone downstairs, put phone away, put your phone on silence, delete tempting apps.	1,3 and 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gebruik de app Forest</li> <li>Geluid uitzetten</li> <li>Telefoon ergens anders wegleggen</li> </ul>	Use the app Forest, turn off volume, put the phone in another spot.	1 and 2 (There was a girl who used the forest app, she sets a time when she can't use her phone and then she gets a tree as a reward) and 3
Schermtijd max. instellen. Alleen apps gebruiken die je echt leuk/interessant vindt.	Set screen time limit, only use apps you really like/find interesting.	2
Afleiding zoeken/nieuwe hobby	Look for distraction, find new hobbies.	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Afleiding zoeken</li> <li>Samen afspraken maken</li> <li>Onbelangrijke apps verwijderen</li> </ul>	Look for distraction, plan things together, delete useless apps.	4 and 5
Limieten op apps zetten Apparaat vrije tijd aanzetten voor bepaalde tijd Vliegtuigstand aanzetten Apps verwijderen	Put limits on apps, put devices in free time for a certain amount of time, put on airplane mode, delete apps.	2, 3 and 4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zet internet/4G uit</li> <li>• Verwijder onnodige social media</li> <li>• Zet een wekker</li> <li>• Geluid dempen</li> </ul>	Turn off internet connection, delete useless social media, set an alarm, demp volume.	2, 3 and 4
Tijd beter besteden en planning maken	Spend your time in a better way and make a plan.	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denk aan de positieve invloed die het kan hebben</li> </ul>	Think about the positive influence it could have on you.	
Planning/tijden afspreken	Planning, set time limits.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meldingen uitzetten</li> <li>• Evt. tijdslimiet</li> <li>• Planning maken</li> </ul>	Turn of notifications, time limits, set up agenda (planning).	2 and 3
Verwijder bepaalde apps	Delete certain apps.	4
Meldingen op stil/uit zetten zodat je niet constant herrindert wordt.  Vaker wegleggen als je hem niet nodig hebt (schoolwerk)	Turn off notifications to not be notified all the time, put your phone away more often when you do not need it (schoolwork).	1 and 3
Hobby zoeken Meldingen uitzetten	Find a hobby, turn off notifications.	3 and 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geluid uit</li> <li>• Meldingen uit</li> </ul>	Turn off volume, turn off notifications.	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telefoon op andere plek leggen</li> </ul>	Put your phone in a different spot, turn off the internet.	1 and 3



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wifi/5G uitzetten</li> </ul>		
Tijdslimiet op apps aanzetten Leuke dingen gaan doen	Set a time limit on apps, start doing fun stuff.	2 and 5
Telefoon op stille modus zetten  Geluid uitzetten	Put the phone on silent, turn off the volume.	3
Geen tiktok downloaden Andere activiteiten plannen	Do not download TikTok, plan other activities.	5
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Probeer je telefoon beneden te leggen wanneer je naar bed gaat</li> <li>2. Zet je meldingen uit → trigger minder</li> </ol>	Try to leave your phone downstairs when you go to bed, turn off notifications → less triggers.	1 and 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schermtijd instellen (apparaat vrije tijd)</li> <li>Veel gebruikte niet belangrijke apps verwijderen</li> </ul>	Set timer, delete much used unimportant apps.	2 and 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meldingen uit</li> <li>Vaker thuis laten liggen</li> </ul>	Turn off notifications, leave at home more often.	1 and 3
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Timer instellen</li> <li>2. Telefoon wegleggen</li> </ol>	Set screen time, put phone away	1 and 2

5. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you imagine deleting your social media apps?

Ethnographic notes

16-5 Again this class shows surprisingly different answers, this time we move from 'calm' to 'panic'. The reason for panic was shared by the other students who said that they were afraid of missing (important) things, that they would not be able to make contact with their friends or that the contact with others would even disappear. Furthermore, it would not be nice, but they would get along with whatsapp alone, without whatsapp is really not an option and actually snapchat was also comparable to whatsapp and some thought this was even more fun to get what friends were doing over whatsapp. It was mentioned that it would be impractical.

17-5 We noticed for the first time that we had a few outliers in the group, a girl said that because of her father's profession and her safety she should not be online with her name etc, so she grew up without social media so it's not a big part of her life either. so it didn't matter to her to uninstall apps. At odds with her answer are answers such as: not necessary. why would I?

### Themes

1. Half reacts indifferent or positive, so they have short answers and in conversation they were explaining their plan when they would delete all the apps.
2. Losing contact with others is the main negative point for students that are not totally against the idea.
3. Missing out on things especially what others do, nobody told anything about that others were going to miss them and their online activities.
4. Big no, people are totally against the idea and even explain the panic they would experience.
- 5.

Dutch answers	English translation	Themes
1. Ligt eraan welke, maar prima.	It depends on what apps, but fine.	1
Rustig	Calm.	1
Ligt eraan welke app. Whatsapp zou echt niet willen, insta of snapchat is prima.	It depends on the app, I really do not want whatsapp the leave, insta or snapchat are fine.	1, 2,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dat ik dingen ga missen</li> <li>• Contact met mensen gaat weg</li> </ul>	That I would start missing out on things, the contact with people leaves.	2,3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dat je belangrijke dingen mist</li> <li>• Onpraktisch</li> </ul>	That you miss important, impractical.	2,3

PANIEK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ik kan niet zo goed tegen veranderingen</li> <li>Hoe spreek ik mijn vrienden dan?</li> </ul>	PANICK, I do not go well with changes, how will I be in contact with my girlfriends?	2, 4,
Niet leuk	Not nice	4,
Niet fijn	Not nice	4,
Toch wel bang om iets te missen, mar je krijgt dan wel meer gedaan. Zou het wel verwijderen	Scared to be missing out on something, but you really get more things done this way. I would delete it.	1, 2, 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bang om dingen te missen</li> </ul>	Scared to be missing out on things.	2, 3
Makkelijk contact maken gaat weg	Effortless contact starts missing.	2
Niet nodig.	Unnecessary.	4,
Zou ik nooit doen.	I would never.	4,
Je raakt geïrriteerd	I will get annoyed.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lijkt haast niet mogelijk</li> <li>Je mist zoveel</li> <li>Fomo</li> </ul>	Seems impossible, you're missing so much, FOMO.	2, 3,
Bang om sociale contacten te verliezen Fomo	Scared to lose social contacts, FOMO.	2, 3,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sociale contacten vallen weg</li> <li>Fomo</li> </ul>	Social contacts are gone, FOMO.	2, 3
Maakt niet uit	It doesn't matter.	1
Maakt niet uit	It doesn't matter.	1
Prima	Fine	1
Gevoel van dingen missen	Feeling of missing things.	2, 3,

Paar uurtjes fijn maar in de trein verveel ik me al weer.	Couple of hours fine, however I will be bored by the time I am on the train.	
Naar en onprettig heb mensen met wie ik alleen door social media contact heb	Annoying and unpleasant, I got people I am only in contact with through social media.	2
Niet fijn	Not nice	
Dat je dingen mist	That you miss things.	2, 3,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dan ga ik me vervelen</li> </ul>	That I'll get bored	
Niet fijn, minder contact	Not nice, less contact	2
Lijkt me niet fijn, je ziet niet meer wat je vrienden doen.	Seems unpleasant to me, you can not see what your friends are doing.	2, 3,
Waarom zou ik?	Why would I?	4,
Geen probleem	No problem.	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liever niet</li> </ul>	Rather not	4,
Oké	Okay.	1

#### 6. How long would you be able to go without social media?

16-5 With this question I noticed that there were several girls who said that she calculated this time based on the maximum they achieve during work. So if they work they could do without it for 5-6 hours, but then they must be busy with work. Otherwise they will look. What also strikes me is that there is a big difference between whether or not whatsapp is, because this app is used for daily practices such as school, work and sports activities, but also family and close friends are associated with the app. The answers differed between when I have something to do 1 day and otherwise 10 minutes to forever. There is of course a big difference, but here you also see the difference that some could really relax, where others become restless at the idea that they miss what is happening online. What is clear is that if there was nothing to do, the girls would only be able to do without their phone for a short period of time. There was a girl who had already removed everything once and would slowly build it up, she indicated 1-2 weeks without being able to.

17-5 What struck us is that yesterday we had a few hours, 10 minutes, etc. Today we all had at least a day or a week with whatsapp. Also I got answers like forever, or for months. The class indicated that it would take some getting used to, or that if there were other activities it would be easier to keep up, when it comes to just doing the right thing.

1. 1 week was mentioned 10 times, one girl explained she was just curious what effect it could have
2. Longer period (weeks, months, always) one girl already did a social media detox a while ago and she would enjoy another round.
3. X uren (6x) These answers were substantiated by explaining that they could if they would have been distracted by work or fun things.
4. 1 day
5. Whatsapp is important the students, they want to be able to stay in contact with important people (Friends, family, work)

Dutch answer	English translation	Themes
Denk 1 dag	Think one day.	4,
Minder dan een dag	Less than a day.	3
1-2 weken	1-2 weeks.	2
1u denk dat de eerste dagen het lastigst is, als je eenmaal zonder kan, blijft dat zo. Dus is denk of 3 dagen of altijd.	One hour, I think it would be though the first couple of days, whenever you are able to go without, this remains the same. So I think either 3 days, or forever.	2
6 uur	6 hours.	3
Paar uur	Couple of hours.	3
Paar uur door whatsapp anders langer	Couple of hours because of whatsapp, otherwise longer.	3, 2, 5
10 uur	10 hours.	3,
Wanneer ik iets te doen heb 1 dag anders 10 min	Whenever you have something to do, it's 1 day. Otherwise 10 minutes.	4, (10 minutes lowest)
5 uur	5 hours.	3,
1 week	1 week.	1,

Ligt aan de situatie als ik weg ben en bezig een maand ofzo, maar als er niks is dan 1 week.	It depends on the situation, whenever I'm away and busy for about a month, but whenever I have nothing planned, 1 week.	2, 1,
week	Week.	1,
1 week	1 week.	1,
1 wk.	1 WK.	1
1 dag, 1 week	1 day, 1 week.	1, 4,
1 week	1 week.	1,
Als whatsapp blijft kan ik prima zonder	If whatsapp stays I could easily go without.	2, 5
Paar weken	Couple of weeks.	2,
Altijd	Forever.	2,
Paar weken Paar maanden	Couple of weeks, a couple of months.	2,
Maanden	Months.	2,
Niet heel lang	Not really long.	
Paar weken	Couple of weeks.	2,
Een week	One week.	1,
Paar dagen/week	Couple of days/week.	1,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ligt aan de urgentie</li> <li>1 week (voor de lol)</li> </ul>	Depending on the urgency, 1 week (for fun).	This is the girl who was curious to see what effect it would have on her, 1,
Wel even	A moment	
Met whatsapp max. een dag. Zonder wel langer.	With whatsapp max one day, without a longer period of time.	4, 5, 2,

7. What would you do with your time not spent on social media?

16-5 First, many students wrote down school, so I asked if it was one of the most difficult things to do when using your phone. The answer was clearly yes. That phone is distracting and especially if there are notifications during learning. What was also an interesting point was that I heard that 2 girls really have hobbies that they would like to take up, but that they have been putting it off for years or at least don't take the time for it. The examples were baking and crafts, I asked if they saw many recipes or crafts online, the answer was yes, especially that kind of content. If all those hours were added together, they would have already made very elaborate recipes or finished their crafts. A girl wanted to start Netflix because she is already doing so much school. that's another technological activity but that was her reason. People would also clean up because they simply skip that easier with the distraction of their phone. Looking at the rest of the answers everyone would really like to do fun things with friends, outdoors, active etc.

17-5 In general, the majority of the group would go to school because the telephone intervenes most easily. What was also interesting was that there is more time for yourself, one girl indicated that she receives notifications during the shower and that she feels that she has to respond, I asked if others were aware of this.

1. School (15x)
2. Vrienden & familie ( 11x)
3. Going outside (11x)
4. Exercise (10x)
5. Hobby (7x)
6. We also see sleep more
7. All-in all, these activities are basic daily things they can easily do, social media stands in between these activities.
8. (wondering) why nobody came with something really big, As big and time consuming as their phone usage.

Dutch answer	English translation	Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meer buiten zijn</li> <li>• sporten /hobby's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More being outside</li> <li>• exercise/ hobbies</li> </ul>	3,4, 5,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meer tijd aan studie</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More time for study</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studie</li> <li>• Sporten</li> <li>• Vaker met vrienden (buiten) zijn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study</li> <li>• Exercise</li> <li>• Going out(side) with friends more often</li> </ul>	1, 4, 2,
Meer fysiek contact	More physical contact	2,

Meer tijd aan studie/vrienden/werk	More time for study/friends/work	1,2, work
Meer aan school	More school work	1, work
Meer lezen en tekenen	More reading and drawing	5,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sporten</li> <li>• Studie</li> <li>• Buiten zijn</li> <li>• Tijd met vrienden doorbrengen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise</li> <li>• Study</li> <li>• Being outside</li> <li>• Spend time with friends</li> </ul>	4, 1, 3, 2.
Meer tijd voor mezelf en met vrienden afspreken	More time for myself and meeting with friends	2, myself, 5,
Tijd voor hobbies zoals tekenen en schilderen	Time for hobbies like drawing and painting	
Meer tijd voor studie	More time for study	1,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sporten</li> <li>• Vrienden</li> <li>• Buiten zijn</li> <li>• school/werk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise</li> <li>• Friends</li> <li>• Going outside</li> <li>• school/work</li> </ul>	4, 2, 4, 1, work
Tijd extra voor school	Extra time for school	1,
•	•	One of the girls was the one that grew up without social media
•	•	Her neighbor student
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lezen</li> <li>• Meer sporten</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• More exercise</li> </ul>	5, 4,
Tekenen, wandelen, lezen, uitgaan	Drawing. Walking, reading, going out	5, 4, 3,
Meer naar buiten gaan	More going outside	3,
Waarschijnlijk iet anders Tijdsverdrijven	Probably something else, spending time	



Netflix serie starten (tv)	Start a netflix series (tv)	She explained spending many hours on school already, this is me time
Mijn hobby's afmaken	Finish my hobbies	5, . What was also an interesting point was that I heard that 2 girls really have hobbies that they would like to take up, but that they have been putting it off for years or at least don't take the time for it. The examples were baking and crafts, I asked if they saw many recipes or crafts online, the answer was yes, especially that kind of content.
School Sporten Iets met familie Met de hond wandelen	School Exercise Something with family Walking the dog	1, 4, 2, 3,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leuke dingen doen met vriendinnen/vrienden</li> <li>• Opruimen ~</li> <li>• Sporten!!</li> <li>• Werken</li> <li>• Zonnen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing fun things with friends</li> <li>• Clean up</li> <li>• Exercise!!</li> <li>• Work</li> <li>• sunbath</li> </ul>	2, 4, work, tan, clean
Aan school, meer sporten & oude hobby's opzoeken	Work on school, more exercise & look up old hobbies	1, 4, 5,
School Leuke dingen	School Leuke dingen	1,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School</li> <li>• Extra sporten</li> <li>• Opruimen —</li> <li>• Iets koken of bakken wat lang duurt</li> <li>• Slapen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School</li> <li>• Extra exercise</li> <li>• Clean up</li> <li>• Cook or bake something that takes a long time</li> <li>• sleep</li> </ul>	1, 4, clean up, 5, 6
School Stad, terrasjes Opruimen —	School City, terraces, Clean up	1, 3, clean up, 2, 6,

Met vrienden.... Slapen	With friends.... Sleep	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lessen voorbereiden</li> <li>• Sporten</li> <li>• Extra uren slapen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare classes</li> <li>• Exercise</li> <li>• Extra hours of sleep</li> </ul>	1, 4, 6,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vrienden</li> <li>• Werken</li> <li>• Naar buiten</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends</li> <li>• Work</li> <li>• Going outside</li> </ul>	2, work, 3
Opruimen enzo in huis, school, lezen	Clean up and stuff in house, school, reading	Clean up, 1, 5,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vrienden &amp; familie</li> <li>• Buiten</li> <li>• school</li> </ul>	Friends & family Outside school	2, 3, 1,

8. What would it be like to not spend time on social media for a month?

16-5 The answers to this question again varied from secluded and restless to calm and having much more time. They should all get used to not using social media, but most say it will eventually bring peace. Others find it very restless because they suffer from FOMO (fear of missing out) or that they miss things, it was also written 'weird'. Mainly, there will be a lot of time left if no social media is used for a month and it would therefore also ensure that the students start doing fun things, get rest, take time for themselves or start exercising. Not 'needing' anymore is also interesting, because many have the feeling that they need it otherwise they would not feel isolated or restless.

17-5 Here the boredom part came up, most students find this very annoying, they mentioned that if they are on the bus it really seems to take 30 years without a telephone while if they are understimulated by a bus ride their telephone can be used make it look like they'll be home in 5 minutes. Being understimulated is therefore something that is avoided. The teacher asked, who likes it when the time lasts a little longer with lower incentives, again only the girl who works with the father with a special job likes that, the rest of the class didn't like it at all. Just like yesterday, people want to express their creativity in order to ultimately get satisfaction from their development

1. Pro and con answers, most of them say that they'll have to get used at the start but afterwards it brings them rest. Others say It will bring me peace but at one point I will not even know what to do with my time, or i feel isolated. (10x)
2. Getting used to but then it will be okay and it will bring more rest.(7x)
3. Rest, peacefull, (10x)

4. More time for other things (school, themselves, getting things done) (7x)
5. The students expressed losing social contact, they are unable to show they interest through for example comment on a post done by one of their friends.
6. Time for oneself
7. Hard no: restless, separated etc. real panic feelings and the fear of missing out.

Dutch answer	English translation	Themes
Onrustig	Restless.	7,
Afgezonderd	Separated.	7,
Ik denk dat ik dan veel tijd overhoud, veel meer aan school ga doen en alleen echte vrienden nog spreek.	I think I'll save a lot of time for school, and only talking to real friends.	4,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vaker mijn vrienden zien</li> <li>• Meer tijd voor andere dingen (hobby, opruimen, wandelen)</li> <li>• FOMO</li> </ul>	Seeing my friends more often, more time for other things (hobbies, cleaning, walking), FOMO.	4, 1
Op het begin onwennig, daarna denk ik wel dat er meer rust is.	Strange at the beginning, afterwards there will be more ease I think.	2, 3,
Begin even wennen, maar wel rustiger/minder gestresst. Ik hoop dat ik dan meer gedaan krijg	In the beginning getting used to it, but a lot more quiet, less stress, I hope that i'll get more things done that way.	2, 4, 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rustgevend, meer tijd voor jezelf</li> <li>• Verveling, weten wat te doen</li> </ul>	Soothing, more time for myself, boredom, knowing what to do.	3, 1, 6,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meer rust</li> <li>• Meer tijd voor andere dingen</li> </ul>	More rest, more time for other things.	3, 4,
Het is wel mogelijk, denk dat ik er uiteindelijk wel ontspanning uithaal, maar	It is possible, think that eventually I'll relax more,	1, 3, 5,

ik voel me ook eenzaam zonder de sociale contacten.	however I will also feel lonely without social contacts.	
In het begin onwennig, maar daarna fijn. Je vindt een nieuwe hobby.	Strange at the start, but afterwards nice, you'll find a new hobby.	2, 3,
Rustgevend	Soothing.	3,
Veel niks doen Wachten	Lots of doing nothing, waiting.	7, 1,
Niet fijn/lastig	Not nice, difficult.	7,
Wel meer rust voor jezelf	More rest for yourself.	6,
Relaxed Minder druk	Relaxed, less busy.	3,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In het begin een gemis, later een gewenning</li> </ul>	A loss at the start, later used to.	2,
Je raakt eraan gewend, maar in het begin moeilijk om tijd te vullen. Focussen op jezelf, meer rust, maar missen stuk sociaal contact.	You'll get used to it but at the start it's hard to fill up your time, focus on yourself, more rest, however missing out on social contact.	2, 1,6,3,5,
Veel tijd om aan jezelf te werken	Lots of time to work on yourself.	6,
Wel echt even wennen in het begin.	Getting used to in the beginning.	2,
Rustig, maar minder leuk	Peaceful, but less fun.	3, 1,
Rustig, ik zou veel meer tijd voor mezelf hebben. Soms zal ik niet weten wat ik met die tijd moet doen.	Peaceful, I would have way more time for myself, sometimes I would not even know what to do with my time.	2, 6, 1,
Veel moeite, maar geen probleem	Lots of effort, but no problem.	1,

Veel meer tijd Leuke dingen gaan doen Betere voorbereiding voor school	Lot more time, doing fun things, better preparation for schoolwork.	4,
Mis veel informatie, spreek vrienden en familie moeilijker/minder, wel meer tijd voor mezelf.	Missing out on a lot of information, harder to talk to friends and family, more time for myself though,	1, 5, 6,
Rustig Meer dingen afkrijgen Gewenning	Peaceful, getting more things done, used to.	3, 4,
Rustig Minder contacten raar	Peaceful, less contact, weird.	3, 5, 7,
Dan denk ik dat ik er wel al aan gewend ben, en het minder 'nodig' heb.	I think I will be used by it by then and 'need' it less.	2,

9. Could you tell me something you know about algorithms and phone usage?

16-5 There was no less than 1 girl who could explain to me a little bit what algorithms are and how you eventually see this reflected. It seems to me a bit as if the government is again playing the same trick as decades ago with cigarettes. Completely broken advertising and then say when everyone is addicted, yes now you all get cancer and the healthcare industry has to solve it. Clearly the students are not informed how algorithms work and how they are made addicted. And I have to say the girl who spoke was also a bit guessing, but at least there is no shared general knowledge about the background of social media.

17-5 There was a boy from ICT who could explain algorithms, the rest of the class looked like they didnt know what I was asking them.

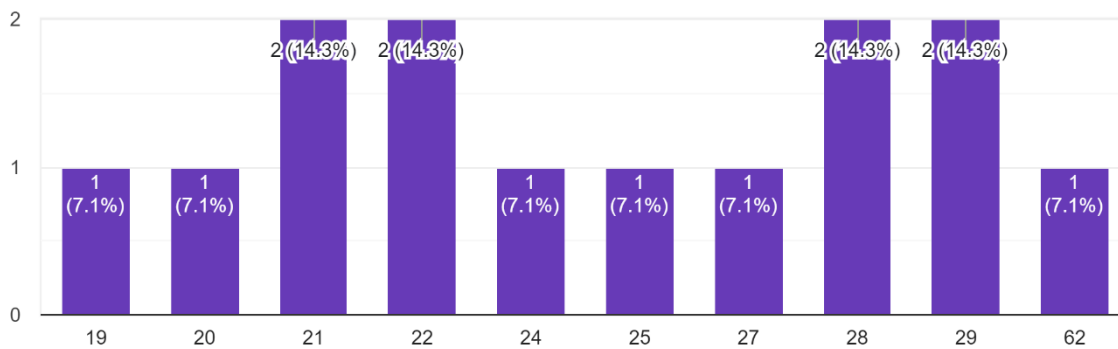
The classes were quiet after asking this question, in the first focus group the answer given by a girl was wrong, it had something to do with the content you like, which is true but she was going somewhere else with the answer hence it was false. The other focus group got one guy that used to study IT, he was the only one who knew things about algorithms.

## Appendix 4 Data online questionnaire

Question 1 How old are you?

How old are you?

14 responses



Question 2 Make a list of your top 5 apps.

Whatsapp 49 punten

Instagram 40

Snapchat 8,

Tiktok 10,

Mail 10,

Spotify 10,

Youtube 10

WeChat 15

Whatsapp INSTAGRAM TikTok Mail Snapchat

Whatsapp, snapchat, youtube, twitter, linkedIN

Whatsapp Gmail Instagram Pinterest Duolingo

Wechat WhatsApp Youtube KugouMusic Netflix

WeChat, Instagram, Douban, Tiktok, Xiaohongshu

whatsapp MyTuner Radio ING Bankieren NOS teletekst Gmail

WhatsApp, Spotify, Instagram, BeReal, Teams

Instagram WhatsApp Facebook Internetbankieren Google

WeChat, Little red book, Weibo, Whatsapp, Facebook

instagram, whatsapp, snapchat, nu.nl and spotify

TikTok, YouTube, Netflix, Twitch, Instagram

Instagram, WhatsApp, Vinted, LinkedIn, Spotify

Instagram, Spotify, telegram, WhatsApp, Gmail

Instagram, Whatsapp, Youtube, Outlook mail, Safari

Question 3 Do you ever notice getting bothered by other people's phone usage or your own? In case you do, why or what triggers you

Analysis

This group seems to notice the phone usage of other groups of people on for example, festivals, work, family gatherings, on the train or at events. They wonder why the present is not enough, they notice the difference it makes not to use your phone in events and they want to enjoy that. This groups shows some people that notice their own behavior first as they mindlessly scroll instead of doing things they'd rather do, or they scroll until they get tired and fall asleep.

Themes

1. Yes in conversation with others
2. Mindlessly scrolling
3. Bothered by group's phone usage
4. Bothered by others in social situations

Wanneer ik een verhaal aan het vertellen ben en iemand kijkt op de telefoon, heel vervelend.

No

Yes, by myself if I realize I'm mindlessly scrolling while I have better things to do in my life. By others when they are distracted from conversation by their phones, loudly playing videos or constantly judging others on social media.

no

When having real-time conversation with my friends/families, if I find they are doing something else at the same time, such as typing on other apps or play digital games, I would feel bothered and upset.

I notice I get very tired and then I stop.

Yes, when I'm at an event and everyone is updating on social media. It triggers me because I don't want to make part of this anti social stuff but I have to, otherwise I am the only one not posting. It takes a lot of time to make good posts and it makes me experience of the events different.

Als ik in de trein of bus en om mij heen kijk en iedereen op een scherm zie staren. Het is zo raar gezicht en dan bedenk ik mij dat ik precies hetzelfde doe

Yes, when friends and family sit together, I don't want to see them playing with their phones all the time and don't talk.

yes, usually other people's phone usage. especially in social situations it can bother me because i think 'isn't the presence of me/us enough? why do u feel the need to distance yourself from your company by using your phone??'

That it's a lot

Yes, when in company. I think it is not nice to play on your phone when you are in company.

Yes, especially in public places (restaurants etc) when people get distracted from life communication

When people use their phone while at work for example. To me it shows disinterest in what you are doing and makes you look like you don't care.

Question 4 What advice would you give to a friend that wants to lower their social media usage ?



Most of the answers tell you to delete apps, or to limit your screentime by setting restrictions. Some participants already thought about how to make this work, for example by not using it from 17:00-09:00 everyday or by taking out your camera instead of your phone to be able to still capture things that happen. The social media detox was mentioned once as well.

1. Delete apps
2. Set limits on your phone or for yourself.
3. Find distractions

Afleiding zoeken als je er moeite mee hebt

Delete it

Set a time restriction on your phone settings or delete 1 or more apps.

uninstall the app

Make a schedule with several timeslots without digital devices, such as doing exercises and going to cinema and theatre.

Be disciplined. What i do is lay away the eyphone from 1700 afternoon to next day 0900. It helps!

Leave your phone at home and take a camera (recorder) so you can still capture things. Try to limit your social media time to certain moments of the day you feel like it's acceptable that you are tuned out into your telephone.

App gebruiken die daarbij kan helpen.

Read more.

shut off notifications for everything. this way your phone doesn't decide for you when u take time out of your day for (mostly) unnecessary things.

Set limits for yourself

Start limiting your time on your phone and find an offline hobby

Digital detox; temporarily deleting apps

Delete the app from your phone so you have to log in on google before you can use it

Question 5 What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you imagine deleting your social media apps?

Three answers were mixed with positive and negative notes, both releave and panic, boredome and peace, and, relief but also missing it. Some think they are going to miss out on things. communication tools or work opportunities. The participants also answer that they will be less distracted and that might be a good thing.

1. Mixed experiences
2. Missing out on things, work and communication.
3. Less distraction.

Mix van opluchting en paniek

Joy

Deleting social media is fine, I need Whatsapp and Gmail for communication though.

I find the app time-consuming and I can learn nothing from using it.

I am worrying what would happen if my personal information is left and held by the deleted apps.

Relief. But also missing it.

My personal accounts doesn't matter but for work I've got an Instagram page. Without it I lose contact and I lose opportunities to network, and eventually I will lose some work. Instagram is the most important platform for me to get work at the moment.

Wat ik allemaal ga missen

Short-video apps

boredom and peace

Silence

Less distraction

The fact that ill miss out something

less useless scrolling, which is probably a good thing

Question 6 how long would you be able to go without social media? (for communication purposes you are allowed to use Whatsapp)

The answers are periods between 3-5 hours to someones whole life. Some participants have experiences with deleting social media that were positive. Some describe the urge to go on social media to dissappear after not using social media for a month. Some sound insecure because of the questionmarks used in their answers, one of them is not sure because they have not tried it yet.

1. 0-1 day
2. A week
3. Months
4. Longer periods.

My whole life

Years, it's not a necessity, but it's handy to keep on touch with others, see what they're up to, and get inspired.

maybe two or three days

3-5 hours

Week. I deleted Twitter and Facebook from my Iphone and I never were on Insta

Privately I can live without social media for a long time. The longest I did was 3 weeks, and got back to social media because I could. I think I could've done longer but I did not feel the urge. For work only a day or two.

Ik heb wel eens een week zonder gedaan. Dat ging best prima

One day

maybe a week or longer? idk i haven't tried it

Over a month

A week, maybe longer?

About a month, but after that time you don't really feel the urge to use it anymore

maybe a couple of days

Question 7 What would you do with your time not spent on social media?

10 out of 14 answered reading, that is the majority and reading is a very simple task. Some mention school and finding new hobbies as well. These participants want to do simple everyday life activities if they would not spend their time scrolling. Also they are mentioning activities that are more complex when your phone is around sending notifications.

1. Read
2. Schoolwork
3. Going outside
4. Friends and family

Geen idee

Read a book

Walk dog, read book, study, bake, watch series, draw.

read a book

Doing exercises, working before deadlines, go to cinema or theatre, and when having conversation with families and friends.

Read books and solve puzzles

Read, explore outside, crafting, clean.

Nieuwe hobby's ontdekken, schilderen, series kijken

Spend time with friends and family, read, work

i'd spend it on school and hobbies

Read or be creative

Meditate, sports, read, other hobbies

Reading and going for a walk

read books, watch movies, spend time with friends/family

Question 8 Could you tell me something you know about algorithms and phone usage?

This group only had 3 people that had no clue what the question was, other answers were either totally right, or were showing some basic understanding. The basic understandings are that algorithms decide what content you see first and that it has the intention to keep you on your phone as long as possible. The best answer was Algorithms is unaccessible to most of the users. Users' phone usage is recorded and datafied by digital devices and algorithms. These data feed to the development of algorithms for profit-driven purposes.

Algoritmes volgen wat je doet op je telefoon en zorgen er volgens mij voor dat je langer op je telefoon blijft zitten.

Your phone tracks how long you use each app.

I don't understand the question

Algorithms is unaccessible to most of the users. Users' phone usage is recorded and datafied by digital devices and algorithms. These data feed to the development of algorithms for profit-driven purposes.

Everyday I use it 4 hours, it says.

Your device saves cookies from the sites, articles you read, things you google, things you click on (basically everything). It will use this information to give you personalised feed and advertisements.

Poeh.. ik weet dat hoop reclame wat je ziet daarop gebaseerd is. En wat betreft telefoon gebruik zijn er een hoop onderzoeken die aangeven dat het zeer verslavend is en niet goed voor de mentale gesteldheid. Zeker voor mensen die hier al gevoelig voor zijn

Algorithms will send you more things that once interested you.

algorithms are made exactly to how they can keep u keep on scrolling. so the more u use your phone the more they know about u and the better they can create your algorithm

Algorithms are designed to keep People on apps for as long as possible

I do not understand this question. What do you want me to tell?

Instagram algorithms that accurately create your recommended page based on the posts you interact with; more or less the same algorithm in Spotify

I know that instagram has a algorithm that decides in what order photos pop up on your timeline, but other than that I'm not that familiar with algorithms or how they work.