

POSTER - HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH

**ADDICTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA: REFLECTIONS ON THE TEACHING-
LEARNING PROCESSES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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In his theses, Christoph Türcke [1,2] argues that the multiplication of technical images and the overexposure to these images, as occurs on social media, results in a sensory oversaturation that leads individuals to seek even more attractive images—behavior characteristic of what Türcke termed image addiction. Thus, since addiction "always desires more than the addictive material can provide," the dependence on these stimuli has caused symptoms similar to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Consequently, the sensory oversaturation in these individuals has impacted human relationships in different social spaces, especially teaching-learning processes [3-7], which are directly harmed by image/social media addiction and the attention deficit culture. In this context, the "solution" found by many university students worldwide, including in Brazil, to regain concentration has been the indiscriminate use of psycho-stimulants [8,9]. In this sense, the objective of this study was to provide an overview of the consequences of image proliferation through social media on the health and learning processes of students at a public university in the state of Espírito Santo, Brazil. To achieve this, an anonymous online self-administered questionnaire was used. This questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section consists of a

screening tool for internet addiction, adapted for social media, the Internet Addiction Test [10], which was adapted and validated for the Brazilian context [11], with the inclusion of questions related to social media use, adapted from Khoury [12]. The second section includes questions about the use of psycho-stimulants, and the third section collects sociodemographic and academic data. Descriptive data analysis, frequency tests, and non-parametric tests were performed to determine the relationship between variables (chi-square, $p < 0.05$). The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee/Plataforma Brasil (CAAE n. 80461624.3.0000.5060). Of the respondents ($n=12$), 50% exhibited some level of social media addiction, with 41.7% reporting some type of impairment in their academic/work performance, physical health, and interpersonal relationships due to social media use. Additionally, 41.7% self-diagnosed with a mental disorder and/or neurodivergence via social media (anxiety, ADHD, or Autism Spectrum Disorder - ASD). Furthermore, approximately 83% of students use or have used some type of over-the-counter stimulant for studying, such as caffeine (75%), taurine/energy drinks (33.3%), and mate (8.3%). Of the total, approximately 17% use ecstasy/MDMA, and 25% use other types of stimulants, including cocaine, to enhance concentration in studies/classes and improve academic performance. 90% of the students reported adverse effects from stimulants, such as tachycardia and sleep disturbances (70%), and anxiety and tremors (50%). Despite these signs and symptoms, they continue using them to improve academic performance. Since the results presented are from a pilot test, due to the small sample size, it was not possible to conduct all the intended statistical analyses to assess whether there is a relationship between social media addiction and the use of psycho-stimulants among university students. However, a marginally significant relationship ($p=0.067$) was observed between sleep disturbance and stimulant use, and a statistically significant association ($p=0.038$) was found between sleep disturbance and failure rates. Therefore, with the implementation of the questionnaire in other universities in the state, it is expected to provide an accurate and current overview of social media and psycho-stimulant use among university students in Espírito Santo and, thus, build a database on the real scope of the problem, which will allow progress in discussions about public policies, particularly those related to education, that can address the various causes (such as the previously mentioned social media addiction) that produce the attention deficit culture in different contexts and societies.

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Palavras-chave: social media; addiction; image addiction; psycho-stimulants; psychoactive substances; self-medication; teaching-learning.