

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONLINE SOCIAL SUPPORT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING: A RANDOM SURVEY IN MALDIVES AND NEW ZEALAND

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Fun is when you have company!

Do we need other people to be happy?





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Being around other people makes us healthier and happier





What we know from literature

PLoS Med. 2010 Jul; 7(7): e1000316.

Published online 2010 Jul 27. doi: [10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316)

Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review

[Julianne Holt-Lunstad](#),^{# 1, *} [Timothy B. Smith](#),^{# 2} and [J. Bradley Layton](#)³

> Psychol Rev. 2011 Jul;118(3):482-95. doi: [10.1037/a0023477](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023477).

Relational regulation theory: a new approach to explain the link between perceived social support and mental health

[Brian Lakey](#)¹, [Edward Orehek](#)

> Soc Sci Med. 2004 Dec;59(11):2259-70. doi: [10.1016/j.socscimed.2004.02.024](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2004.02.024).

Mental health among older adults in Japan: do sources of social support and negative interactions make a difference?

[Hideki Okabayashi](#)¹, [Jersey Liang](#), [Neal Krause](#), [Hiroko Akiyama](#), [Hidehiro Sugisawa](#)

[Front Psychol](#). 2022; 13: 1051968.

Published online 2022 Nov 25. doi: [10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1051968](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1051968)

PMCID: PMC

PMID: 3

Social support and psychological well-being in younger and older adults: The mediating effects of basic psychological need satisfaction

[Huiyoung Shin](#)^{1, *} and [Chaerim Park](#)

> Am J Epidemiol. 1979 Feb;109(2):186-204. doi: [10.1093/oxfordjournals.aje.a112674](https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.aje.a112674).

Social networks, host resistance, and mortality: a nine-year follow-up study of Alameda County residents

[L F Berkman](#), [S L Syme](#)

The contribution of social support and social strain to depressive symptoms in African American, Native American, and European American women

[AM Sherman](#), [A Skrzypek](#), [R Bell](#), [C Tatum](#), [ED Paskett](#)

[Journal of social and personal relationships](#), 2011 • journals.sagepub.com

> Aust N Z J Psychiatry. 2018 Apr;52(4):365-374. doi: [10.1177/0004867417723990](https://doi.org/10.1177/0004867417723990). Epub 2017 Aug 12.

Social connectedness improves public mental health: Investigating bidirectional relationships in the New Zealand attitudes and values survey

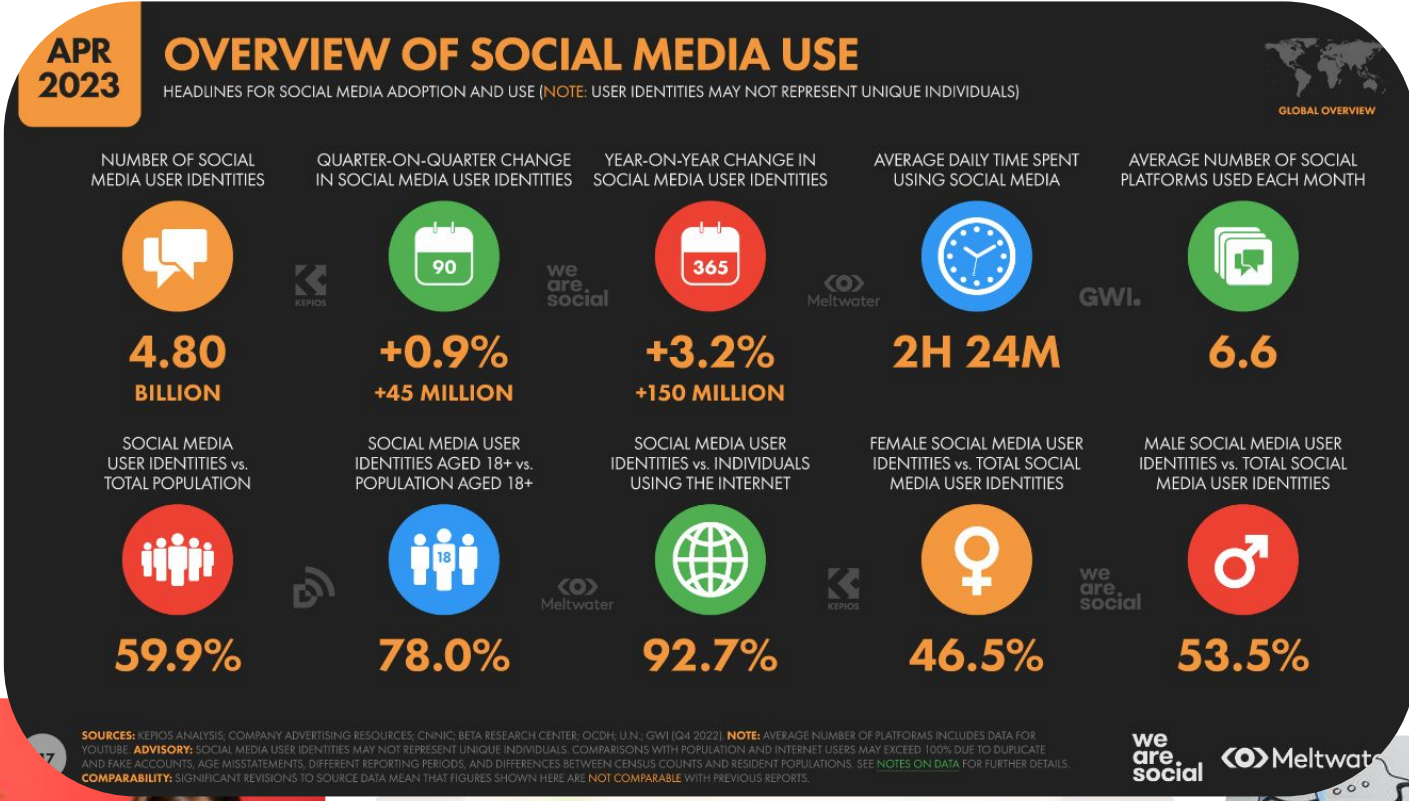
[Alexander K Saeri](#)¹, [Tegan Cruwys](#)¹, [Fiona Kate Barlow](#)¹, [Samantha Stronge](#)², [Chris G Sibley](#)²

> Soc Serv Rev. 2000 Jun 1;74(2):231-252. doi: [10.1177/003981220007400203](https://doi.org/10.1177/003981220007400203).

Social Support, Negative Social Interactions, and Psychological Well-Being

[Karen D Lincoln](#)¹

But What About Online Social Support? Does it have the same benefits as Face-to-Face Social Support?





What we know about online social support and wellbeing

My review of literature yielded 32 review articles of which 24 found significant relationships.

This includes positive associations between online support and wellbeing

Negative associations between online support and wellbeing

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

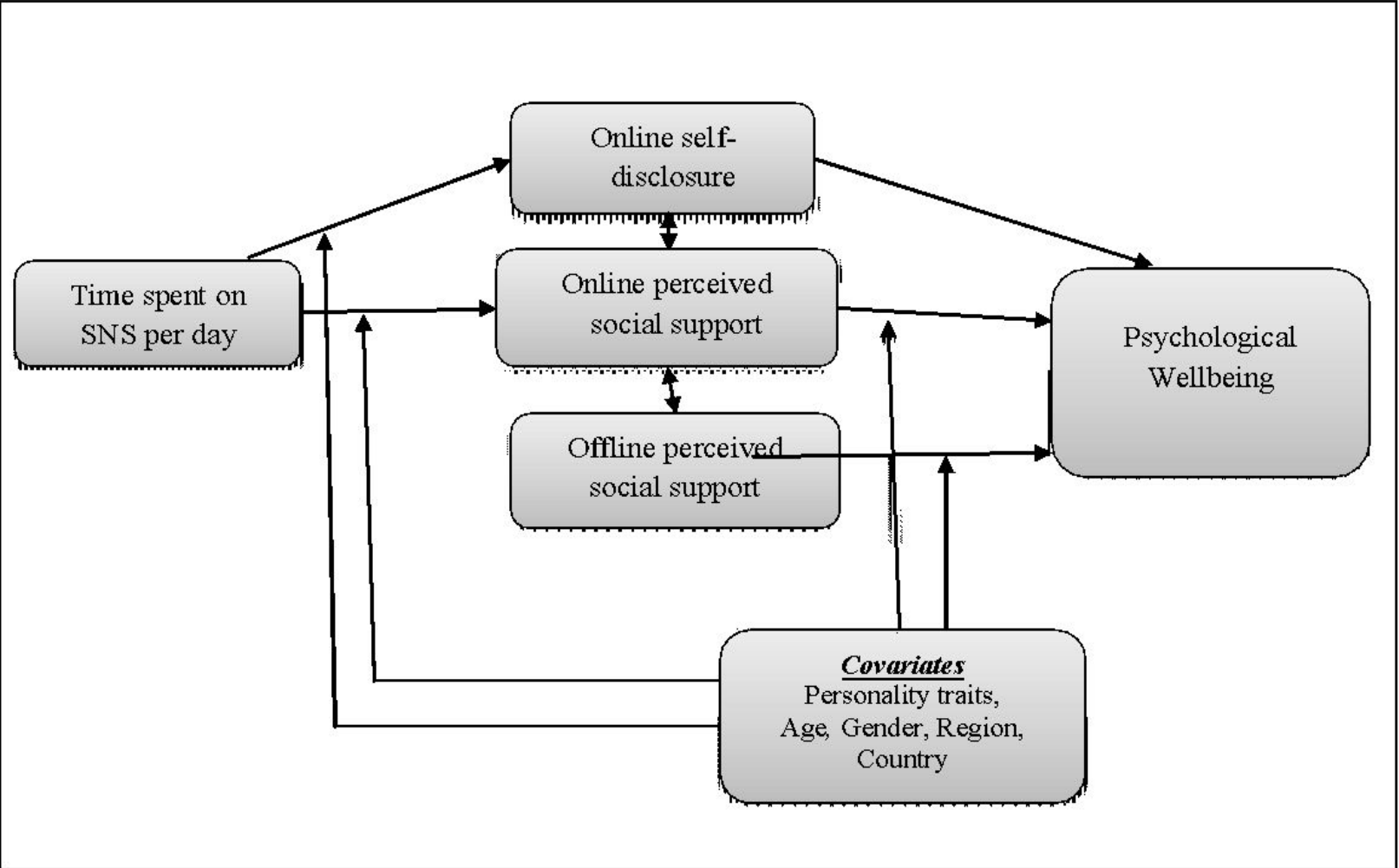


Figure 1. Conceptual model showing the main hypotheses and relationship between other study variables and wellbeing

Research Questions

1

Can social support be acquired from online social networks?

2

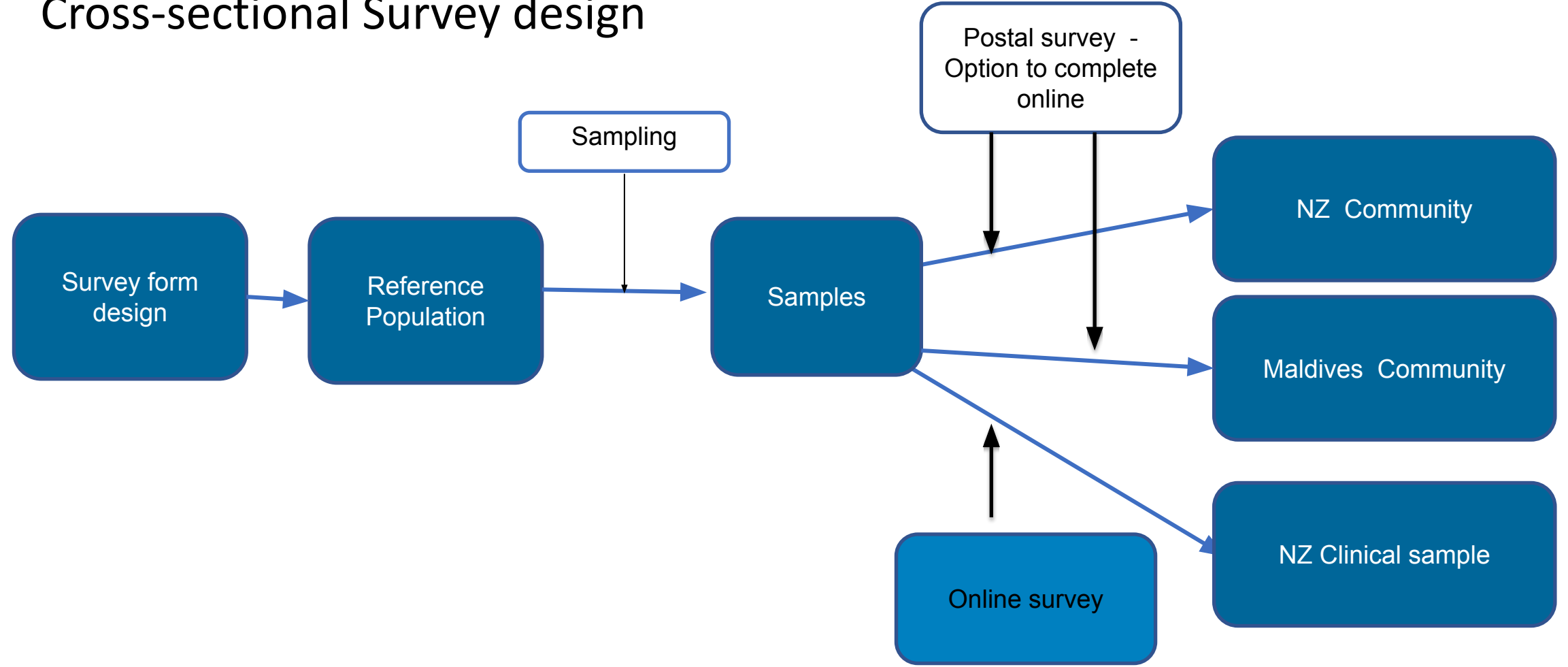
Does online social support have the same benefits as offline (face-to-face social support) on psychological wellbeing.

3

Are there specific groups that benefit more from online social support than offline social support? E.g., socially anxious

Methodology

Cross-sectional Survey design



Survey Questionnaire – Measures

1. Online Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (oMSPSS) – Adapted from Zimet et al. 1988)

2. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) (Zimet et al., 1988).

3. Mental Health Continuum (MHC-SF) (Keyes, 2002).

4. Big Five Inventory-10 (BFI-10; Rammstedt & John, 2007).

5. Online Self-disclosure Scale (oSDS; Hollenbourg and Ferris, 2014).

6. Time spent on SNS per day – one item question – five categories

Participants

Number of participants sample/invited and number of responders for each sample group

Sample groups	Total sampled/invited	Total responded
NZ Random sample	1062	385
Maldives Random sample	1053	411
NZ Clinical	181	78

RESULTS



Psychological Wellbeing

NZ Random Sample: (N = 205)
Online social support was not a statistically significant predictor of wellbeing

Maldives Random Sample: (N = 267)
Online social support was not a statistically significant predictor of wellbeing

NZ Clinical Sample: (N = 45)
Online social support was not a statistically significant predictor of wellbeing

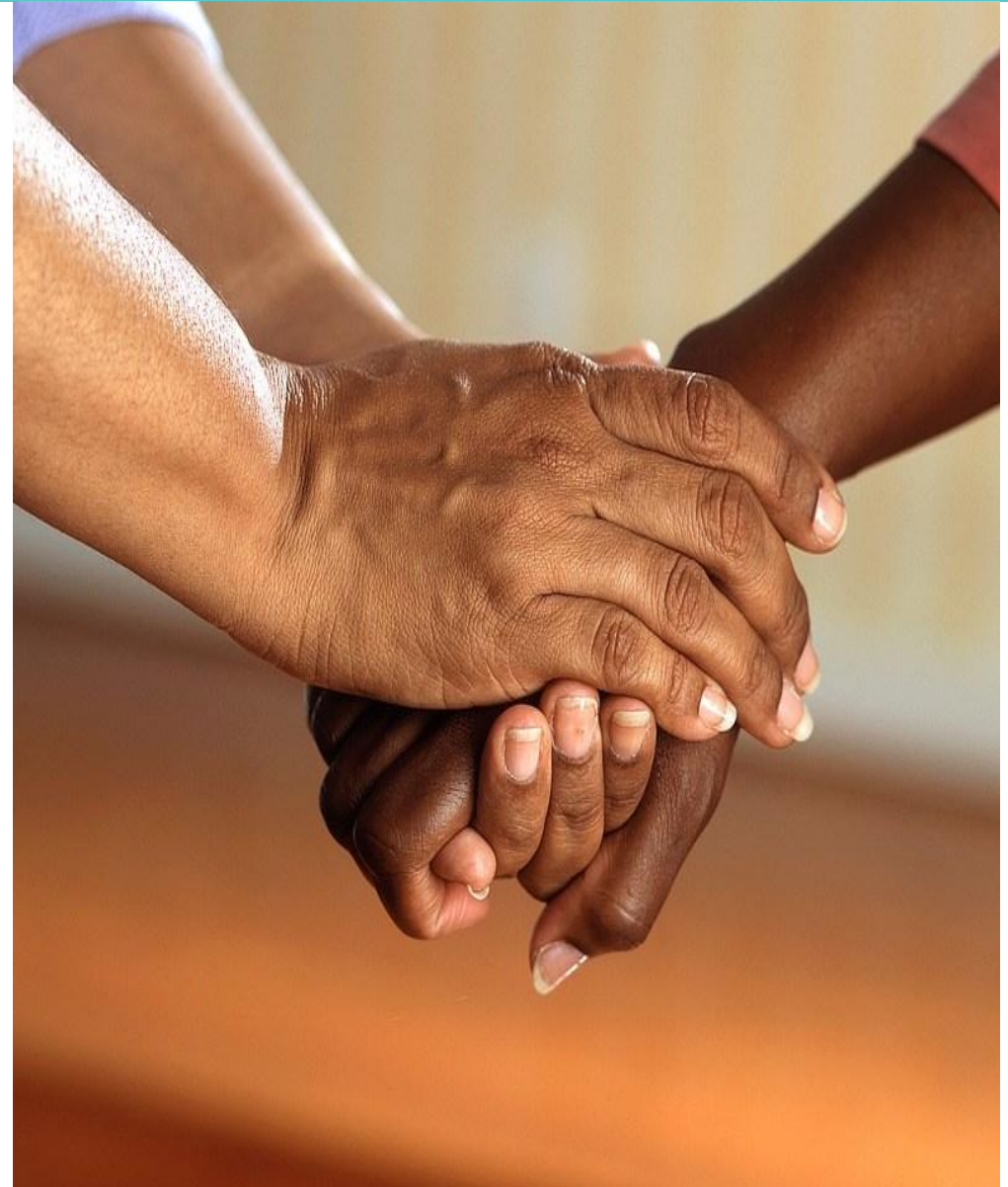
NZ Random Sample: (N = 205)
Offline social support was a statistically significant predictor of wellbeing

Maldives Random Sample: (N = 267)
Offline social support was a statistically significant predictor of wellbeing

NZ Clinical Sample: (N = 45)
Offline social support was not a statistically significant predictor of wellbeing

Conclusion

- While individuals believe that they are getting social support from family and friends on SNSs, this may not translate into direct measurable improvements in wellbeing in the same way that offline social support does.
- ‘The new way of being and relating to others’ in today’s digitalised world most likely cannot replace the importance of promoting and maintaining offline relationships.
- People with mental health problems may have difficulty obtaining or perceiving social support as useful both online and offline.
- Future research should focus on some of the possible indirect relationships or more specific relationships that may exist between online social support and wellbeing.



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<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023477>
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Thank you