

Gossiping: Between Social Interaction and Behavioral Addiction

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Abstract

Objective: Gossip is an understudied topic in addiction research. Our aim was to investigate current available information on gossip as a behavioral addiction through a scoping review, anchoring the search to two different conceptualizations of addiction.

Method: We searched PubMed, PsycINFO as well as Google Scholar for empirical data and extended our search to Google to include non-academic mentions. We identified 593 total records with 28 fitting within our inclusion criteria that were included for this scoping review, 6 records from academic journals and 22 records from social media websites.

Results: Gossip may provide an appetitive effect and involves preoccupation and loss of control constituents of a behavioral addiction. In addition, a list of potential harms of gossip addiction were identified (e.g., relational aggression, loss of productivity, broken relationships, anxiety, and depression). Among self-reports of gossip addiction, celebrity gossip was most prevalent. However, it is likely that gossip transcends many different settings of social interactions (e.g., workplace, social relationships) and could be augmented through social media. Features of gossip addiction have been studied through other related behavioral addictions. While some websites offer help with gossip addiction for both gossipers and victims of gossip, as well as being subcategorized within broader, more established behavioral addictions that mostly concern the social media and communication in general, gossip addiction needs to be recognized as its' own entity for adequate prevention and treatment models to be developed.

Conclusion: Future research is needed to better understand gossip as a standalone addiction and the mediating role of the social media and other related behavioral addictions. Thereafter, gossip addiction assessment instruments to facilitate diagnosis and treatment may be developed.

Introduction

Cicero (106-43BC) wrote that gossiping was an intrinsic part of Roman political and social life, and it remains rooted deeply within everyday life [1]. Gossip may be defined in different ways; however, it means more than its most common description as “idle talk” [2]. Unlike regular social conversation between a sender and a receiver of information, gossip is understood to feature a target, who is not directly involved in the conversation and likely absent as well as unaware, at least at some point, of what is being exchanged between the sender and the receiver [3]. Gossip serves many different functions [4]. Among others, gathering information, social bonding, and social monitoring are common applications of gossip [5-7]. There are many ways in which gossiping could be considered as harmful, though, both for the gossipers and the victims of gossip. As examples, extensive gossip can cause mistrust and division, lower morale and productivity, lead to bullying and stigmatization, facilitate adverse psychosociological experiences, may involve defamation and slander, and can cause remorse or guilt among those who excessively gossip, and anxiety or depression among victims of gossip. People vary regarding the extent to which they gossip, and some persons may gossip excessively. Under certain conditions, excessive gossip may qualify as an example of a behavioral addiction [8]. A behavioral addiction operates through associating recurrent participation in a behavior with appetitive need satiation (i.e., involving the reward system) such that elicitation of an appetitive effect becomes reliant on engaging in the behavior [9]. At the point in which one's quality of life is impacted negatively (e.g., financial, social loss; emotional pain), the behavior could be considered an addiction (as opposed to a passion) [8-10]. It might be useful to examine models of behavioral addiction to see how gossip might

plausibly be considered one example.

Gossip and models of behavioral addiction

There are at least two popular, somewhat related models of behavioral addiction, by Griffiths and by Sussman [10, 11]. In Griffiths' model, *salience* describes the point at which the activity becomes the central part of the individual's life, dominating thinking, feelings, and behavior [11]. Gossiping can preoccupy one's thoughts and feelings, even when the individual is not willingly engaged in the behavior [12]. The mere thought of hearing about the private life of someone else, such as a celebrity, might elicit excitement and create an urge to share information. People could become preoccupied with gossip such that it makes it hard for them to focus on other things in life. People could feel a sense of arousal or “buzz” when gossiping with others, which would be described as a mood modification. Griffiths explains that addictions are used as a “reliable and consistent shift in their mood state as a

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coping strategy to self-medicate and make themselves feel better in the process”. Indeed, one might engage in gossip to distract themselves from their own life, or to make themselves feel better by putting others down [13]. Thereby, people who are dissatisfied with aspects of their own life might seek improvements of their mood by comparing themselves to more misfortunate people, which also complies with the downward comparison principles in social psychology by Wills [14]. Over time, individuals might develop a tolerance towards their gossiping behavior; that is, they may need to increase the amount of time they engage in this activity (e.g., talking with more and more people) to achieve the same appetitive effects as before. Withdrawal symptoms are psychological or physiological effects that are experienced when persons are not able to engage in the addictive behavior. It may be difficult to envision a situation where someone is not able to gossip (i.e., one can always create a social media post), though if needing responses to one’s gossip is part of the addictive process then withdrawal symptoms might be experienced. For example, to avoid withdrawal, the person may post late at night, or craving might be experienced if one is alone and away from locations with active internet access. Gossipers might initially experience withdrawal as boredom, which can lead them to go out of their way to obtain new gossip to get a “buzz” or seek distraction. Griffiths mentions conflict as another essential component of addictive behavior. Gossipers might experience conflicts with others in their social environment. This could be people that are the subject of their gossip or people not approving of gossiping. Such conflict may manifest as broken relationships because of mistrust among couples, or at a workplace setting, as examples. Finally, *relapse* is described as the tendency to fall back on old patterns of behavior after a period of abstinence or control. This phenomenon can be observed among many addictive patterns and is plausible among persons experiencing gossip addiction. In contrast to the Griffiths model, Sussman conceptualizes addiction within a more compact model featuring five components of addiction: appetitive need and satiation (together describing an appetitive effect), preoccupation, loss of control and negative consequences [10, 15]. Within this conceptualization of addiction, a recurring appetitive effect (appetitive need and satiation), is partially comparable to salience and mood modification elements in Griffith’s model. However, in the Sussman model, while the subjective effect might be mood improvement; it might also be arousal (increase or decrease) or cognitive (expansive or contractive) modification. Someone may come to rely on gossip as a behavior to achieve a subjective sense of satiation, a more optimal affect, level of arousal, or working cognition.

Sussman’s *preoccupation* constituent subsumes tolerance, withdrawal, and aspects of salience. One may place an excessive focus on engagement in gossip and feel boredom or a feeling of emptiness when not gossiping, craving more and more gossip, thinking about, or engaging in gossip and become distracted when trying to do other things. Loss of control subsumes Griffith’s relapse component and pertains to a lack of control when engaging in the behavior, including when it begins and its duration. For gossip addiction, loss of control could include losing track of time, being unproductive and finding it hard to stay away from gossip. The fifth and final constituent of the Sussman model, negative consequences, includes Griffith’s conflict component as well as other harms such as financial, legal, role or physical consequences, all which can impact quality of life. Conceptualizing gossip addiction within Griffiths’ or Sussman’s models stresses the plausibility of addictive features of gossiping [10, 11, 15]. In the present study, we attempted a scoping review about gossip addiction. We examined any research or popular literature that conceptualized gossip as an addiction. We attempted to discern the

topography of gossip addiction, explored whether there exist any case studies of gossip addiction, and speculated on potential prevention and treatment strategies.

Methods

We utilized PRISMA criteria for a scoping review [16, 17]. We conducted searches on the databases PubMed, PsycINFO and as well as Google Scholar. We searched the terms “gossip addiction”, “gossip dependence”, “gossip compulsion”, “gossip obsession”, “gossip” and “loss of control” with “gossip disorder” which yielded a combined 102 entrees on PubMed, 185 entrees on PsycINFO and 28 entrees on Google Scholar for all search terms. We extended the search to Google, as a fourth search engine, so as to include non-academic sources such as blog entries and journalistic articles. We searched the first 150 Google links for every search term. A total number of 269 additional entrees were found on Google, and another 17 records were found via citation searching. As shown in Figure 1, a total of 594 records were found across the four search engines; 28 entrees were retained with 6 being from academic and 22 from non-academic sources. To achieve relevant results, our inclusion criteria limited retained results to articles that focus on gossip as an addiction, or discussed gossip as a harmful, obsessive, or toxic behavior. Our criteria allowed for the inclusion of academic as well as non-academic entries to investigate gossip and gossip addiction both in research and popular media. Articles mentioning gossip and addiction unrelatedly or mentioning gossiping about other types of addiction were excluded from the review. All included articles are listed and sorted into academic and non-academic sources in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively.

Results

Topography of gossip and gossip addiction

Utilizing six search terms across four search engines yielded only 28 results, 22 of which were from non-academic sources. This search underlines the likelihood that gossip, although recognized within other, related behavioral addictions, is yet to be acknowledged as its

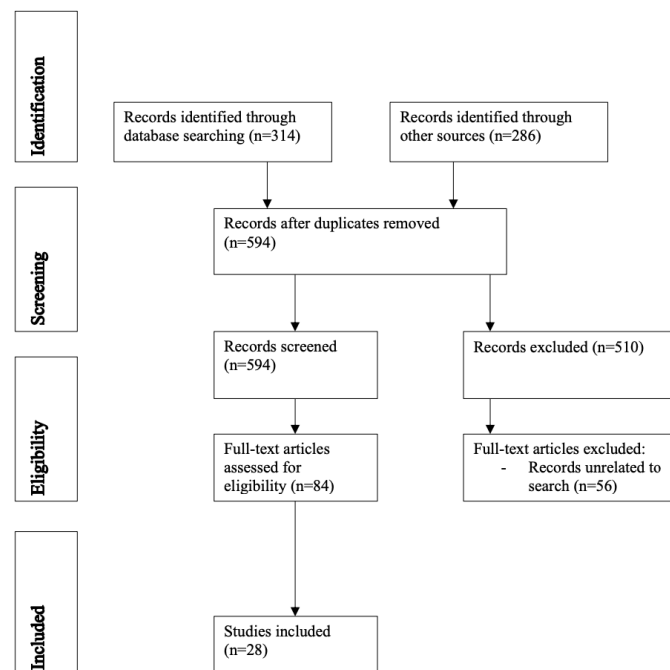


Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram.

Table 1: Academic papers included in the review.

Academic sources	Authors	Number of subjects	Type of study or report	Findings
Hassanzadeh R, Rezaei A (2011) Effect of sex, course and age on SMS addiction in students. Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research 10:619-625 [38].	Hassanzadeh, Ramazan; Rezaei, Abbas	N=345	Questionnaire	The authors find gossip to be a common subject among SMS and texting addicts
Hellman M (2012) Mind the gap! Failure in understanding key dimensions of a drug user's life. Substance Use & Misuse 47:1651-1657 [8].	Sussman, Steve	NA	Commentary	The author subcategorizes gossip within another, broader addiction
Dhaha ISY (2013) Predictors of Facebook addiction among youth: A structural equation modeling (SEM). Journal of Social Sciences (COES&RJ-JSS) 2:186-195 [34].	Dhaha, Ismail Sheikh Yusuf	N=309	Online survey	The author lists celebrity gossip as a motive for Facebook addiction
Griffiths MD, Kuss DJ, Demetrovics Z (2014) Social networking addiction: An overview of preliminary findings. Behavioral addictions:119-141 [35].	Griffiths, Mark; Kuss, Daria; Demetrovics, Zsolt	NA	Book chapter	The authors mention gossip as part of social networking sites addiction
Dwyer R, Fraser S (2016) Addicting via hashtags: How is Twitter making addiction? Contemporary Drug Problems 43:79-97 [37].	Dwyer, Robyn; Fraser, Suzanne	NA	Review of social media data	Similarities between addiction to the social media platform Twitter and celebrity gossip website addiction are found
Lian SL, Sun XJ, Zhou ZK, Fan CY, Niu GF, et al. (2018) Social networking site addiction and undergraduate students' irrational procrastination: The mediating role of social networking site fatigue and the moderating role of effortful control. PloS one 13:e0208162. [36].	Lian, Shuai-lei; Sun, Xiao-jun; Zhou, Zong-kui; Fan, Cui-ying; Niu, Geng-Feng; Liu, Qing-qi	N=1085	Questionnaire	The authors found gossip of a common subject among SNS addiction

Notes: NA = Not applicable, NR = Not recorded*

Table 2: Non-academic results included in the review.

Place of origin and link	Authors	Year of publication	Number of subjects	Type of study or report	Findings
Beyondthekillingfields.com/ New York Newsday https://www.beyondthekillingfields.com/we-want-to-be-titillated-with-sex-and-gossip/	Schanber, Sydney	1986	NA	Newspaper Article	The author talks about an example of celebrity gossip and explains what "gossip addiction" might stem from
Webblog.medienwissenschaft.de https://webblog.medienwissenschaft.de/archives/2266	NR	2008	NA	Blog article	Mentions gossip addiction and talks about celebrity gossip
Huffpost.com https://www.huffpost.com/entry/gossip-detox-part-1_b_85613	Gates, Erin	2008	NA	Blog article	Talks about her own celebrity gossip addiction
Allaboutromance.com https://allaboutromance.com/why-i-quit-tmz/	Granville, Jane	2009	NA	Blog article	Reports on the harms of gossip addiction and how she tried to overcome it
Yogajournal.com https://www.yogajournal.com/yoga-101/philosophy/6-ways-to-stop-yourself-from-gossiping-and-why-it-matters/	Kempton, Sally	2009	NA	Blog article	Offers tips on how to identify and stop harmful gossiping
Mrsodie.com https://mrsodie.com/2010/06/30/the-roots-of-my-celebrity-gossip-addiction/	Odie, NR	2010	NA	Blog article	Reports on the origins of her self-diagnosed celebrity gossip addiction
Powerpoetry.org https://powerpoetry.org/poems/gossip-addict	Nicholle, Justine	2012	NA	Poem	A poem about the addictive features of gossip addiction as well as personal and social harms of gossiping
Ellecanada.com https://www.ellecanada.com/culture/is-our-obsession-with-celebrity-gossip-unhealthy	Counter, Rosemary	2013	NA	Newspaper Column	The author reports on celebrity gossip addiction and tips on how to deal with obsessive gossiping
Psychology Today https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/in-excess/201608/addicted-gossip	Griffiths, Mark	2016	NA	Blog article	Despite a lack of empirical data, some authors state addictive features of gossip that is widespread and serves multiple functions in society; the author of the article itself is skeptical if gossip can hold up to psychological or clinical definitions of addiction
Fatherscall.com https://fatherscall.com/2016/04/15/overcoming-gossip/	Leigh, Sylvia	2016	NA	Blog article	Talks about gossip and gossip addiction and how to deal with it in a religious context
Repeller.com https://repeller.com/celebrity-gossip-addiction/	Alderton, Dolly	2017	NA	Blog article	The author talks about how she overcame her self-diagnosed celebrity gossip addiction
The New York Times https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/12/fashion/fashion-industry-gossip-addiction-paris-fashion-week.html	Friedman, Vanessa	2017	NA	Newspaper article	Comments on the excessive gossiping culture in the fashion industry
Sermons.logos.com https://sermons.logos.com/sermons/266077-addiction	Alves-Areias, Andre	2018	NA	Blog article	Mentions gossip addiction and talks about addictions in a religious context

Upgradewithdawn.com http://upgradewithdawn.com/blog/tag/gossip	Wilson, Dawn	2020	NA	Blog article	Offers help on how to deal with gossip addiction in a religious context
Opera News https://ng.opera.news/ng/en/health/9a26b22dcc31c707f25f61d2e0c9c5d6	NR, anonymous	2020	NA	Blog article	Offers tips on how to deal with gossip addiction
Ford Taylor Talks https://fordtaylortalks.com/gossip-addiction/	Ford, Taylor	2021	NA	Blog article	Talks about the harms of gossip at the workplace
Rich Woman Magazine https://richwoman.co/the-intriguing-psychology-behind-our-cultural-obsession-with-celebrity-gossip/	NR	2023	NA	Blog article	Investigates the psychological aspects behind obsessive gossiping, state signs of gossip addiction and offers tips on how to deal with gossip addiction
Quora.com https://www.quora.com/Im-addicted-to-gossiping-and-its-affecting-my-relationships-What-should-I-do	NR, anonymous	NR	NA	Thread on Q&A Blog	The author asks for help on how to stop his gossip addiction that has affected his relationship; receives tips and insights from other users on the forum
Redlasso.com https://www.redlasso.com/why-do-people-gossip/	NR	NR	NA	Blog article	Defines gossiping, reports on psychological effects, and offers tips on how to deal with gossip addiction
Boston Globe/ Aish.com https://aish.com/celebrity-gossip-is-making-our-culture-sick/	Jacoby, Jeff	NR	NA	Newspaper column	The author talks about the harms of celebrity gossip addiction
Academia.edu https://www.academia.edu/6875183/Running_head_GOSSIP_ADDICTION_Gossip_as_an_Addiction	Perna, Kathrine	NR	N=50	Survey, unpublished manuscript	Almost all participants (n=49) reported ever engaging in gossip, 68% reported negative feelings after gossiping, 26% reported losing contact with a friend or family because of what they said and 44% reported that gossip had negatively affected their job
Ncd.solution.com https://ncdsolution.com/blog/gossip-its-just-like-sugar	Wonson, Beth	NR	NA	Blog article	The author describes gossip in different settings of everyday life and gives tips on how to identify and deal with gossip addiction

Notes: NA = Not applicable, NR = Not recorded

own harmful behavior with addictive potential in the current field of addiction research. Still, the entrees we found on academic sources as well as journalistic articles, blogs and social media indicate that gossip is viewed as a severely harmful and toxic, and potentially serious addictive behavior [13, 18-22]. Considered across all 28 sources, it appears that gossip transcends many different settings of everyday life, such as at the workplace, following celebrities on social media or tabloids, as well as among friends or family [23-28]. One research pilot study suggested that gossip plausibly could occur addictively. Responses to a 16-item online survey among a small US sample aged 13-60 (n=50) revealed that almost all (n=49) of all participants have ever engaged in gossip and 41 of them planned to continue the behavior; [29] 38% of participants reported initially feeling “content” and another 14% felt either “interested”, “excited” or “relieved” when gossiping. Interestingly, 68% reported negative feelings after engaging in gossip (e.g., bad, guilty, regret, angry, sad, or annoyed). Along with an apparent appetitive effect while gossiping followed by feelings of remorse among subjects after gossiping, several subjects also reported negative consequences of gossiping commonly reported with other behavioral addictions. Twenty-six percent of participants reported losing contact with a friend or loved one because of gossiping about that person, and 44% reported that gossip had negatively affected their job. One other study about conversational gossiping suggested gender differences, stating that women spent more time gossiping and were more likely than men to engage in (excessive) gossip about friends and family[30]. A study published in 2008 among 2,064 high school students concluded that subjects who committed acts of relational aggression (which included assessment of negative gossip along with excluding others from a group), predicted future alcohol and hard drug use with relational aggression being most prevalent among females [31].One may speculate that gossip is a behavioral addiction which may interplay with substance addictions as a concurrent or substitute

addiction. Recently, gossip-related neurotransmission was investigated using fMRI [32]. Participants showed an increase of activity in the reward system upon hearing negative celebrity gossip. Thus, specific forms of gossip may be associated with addiction-related (reward) circuitry (e.g., gossiping about public figures).

Gossip as part of other established behavioral addictions

One reason explaining the attentional gap between gossip addiction in scientific versus non-scientific pieces might stem from the fact that gossip addiction has thus far only been investigated as part of other, more established behavioral addictions (e.g., internet addiction, social networking sites addiction, voyeurism) [33,34]. One highly prevalent example of such, among others, pertains to social media websites including social networking sites addiction (SNSs addiction) [35]. Herein the authors find clear patterns that fall in line with Griffiths’ six component model in which the sufferer displays clear signs of preoccupation by only thinking about information and gossip on Facebook, which is used as a tool of mood modification. The sufferer’s behavior is causing her conflicts in many domains of her life, and she has shown a history of withdrawal symptoms. Similar to Griffiths’ model, this example of SNS addiction, within which gossip addiction is embedded, also complies with Sussman’s model of addiction. In a paper on SNS addiction, Griffiths et al. display a case vignette of a young woman that is addicted to gossip on Facebook [35]. Similar findings were published by Lian et al., who discuss gossip as a common subject among SNS addicts [36]. In another study discussing addiction and Twitter, the authors draw similarities to the findings of Tiger (2015), who found a link between celebrity gossip blogs and constituents of addiction through the interaction in comment sections [37]. Gossip has also been found to be a common subject of SMS texting addiction [38].Given that, with these few examples alone, patterns of gossip addiction have already been acknowledged and subcategorized as part

of four related forms of behavioral addiction (electronic/social media). These results may warrant further investigation of gossip addiction as a manifestation of other addictions (the modality in which it operates, on the internet), or as a standalone behavioral addiction.

Anecdotal self-reported cases of gossip addiction: examples of colloquial use of the term

In a testimonial-like article, a writer explained how she felt the urge to start her day by anxiously checking six different websites and tabloids in the hope of finding more sensational news with each article she read. She mentioned that she practiced this behavior for several years and looked forward to checking the news the first thing in the morning and exchanging gossip with friends. She stated how she tried to play down her addictive behavior by comparing it to other, more blatantly harmful activities, but ultimately found it harder to justify her addiction as she felt like it took control over her life and described her own behavior as “toxic”. She challenged herself to quit her gossip addiction in hope of an improvement of her own well-being and to spend more time with her family. She reported that abstaining from the behavior was harder than imagined, thus fearing a relapse [39]. In a similar self-report, another person described how her addiction made her feel angry. Yet, she obsessively kept checking her preferred source of gossip several times a day and experienced relapse of old habits when trying to abstain from the behavior [40]. Other lay articles reported perceptions of addiction-like gossip but were not in a testimonial format, but in an observer-like style. One article depicted the author noticed that people identify with the celebrities they follow, affecting their mood and preoccupying them throughout the day [41]. Another article stated how engaging in gossip (i.e., by reading or sharing) stimulates the release of endorphins and dopamine, which ultimately reinforces the potentially addictive behavior [42]. A third article depicted observing that gossip addiction involves craving mood modification, which leads to a temporary happiness after engaging in the behavior, that is followed by a low mood and ultimately results in a repetitive cycle [43]. The author of that article further noticed that gossip addicts tend to be feel preoccupied and exhausted, and are prone to relationship conflict and breakup as a consequence of their addiction. Finally, one website claimed that harmful gossip is widespread. Further, the website identified gossip as an unconscious addiction, and suggested that gossiping can lead to negative effects of psychosomatic nature (i.e., tight shoulders or stomach) or inflict feelings of depression or loss of energy after engaging in the behavior [4, 43].

Discussion

As children, one might hear relatives talking behind each other's backs, thus familiarizing youth with the how to gossip in early stages of development. Gossip may serve as a form of social grooming, as it helps to establish and maintain social norms [44]. However, once engaged in excessively, including suffering from preoccupation and loss of control, gossip may become one type of behavioral addiction. Gossip is yet to be recognized as a behavioral addiction, except for the few scholarly and popular articles reviewed herein [3, 16]. Gossip addiction plausibly fits well into Griffiths' or Sussman's models of behavioral addiction. Our findings suggest that gossiping about friends, family or at work occur and may become negatively consequential. However, celebrity gossip addiction was the most prevalent focus among our findings [28, 40, 45, 46], with a total of seven entries including three self-reports in the form of blog entries, with most of them stating phenomena in accordance with the models of addiction that were established above (i.e., feeling excited, finding it hard to quit, being preoccupied, negatively consequential). This is concerning, as it can be argued that

gossip about celebrities or influencers are more easily accessible than ever using social media. Moreover, gossiping about celebrities and influencers distances the gossipers from any immediate retaliation and could be viewed as more tempting, as it might be associated with less harm and is often socially more accepted than gossip within one's own social network. To the extent that gossip about celebrities interferes with the quality of one's life (e.g., time spent with family, getting work tasks completed), such behavior may become negatively consequential. Similar concerns have already been raised through similar behavioral addictions that are related to gossip and warrant further investigation, especially concerning the role of the social media and related addictions.

Speculation on prevention and treatment

Given the recent rise in technology, and widespread use of the social media, it is possible that increased prevalence gossip addiction may be occurring [15, 47]. Thus, counteracting harmful gossip and gossip addiction may be laudable goals. There are several websites containing tips on how to deal with gossip addiction and offer insights into what consequences gossip addicts face [4, 43, 48]. Tips include self-monitoring to become more aware of the behavior, distancing oneself from other people engaging in gossip, and trying to cut ties with all sources of gossip. Such tips could serve preventive and treatment functions. There are no empirical research data on possible prevention and treatment strategies for gossip addiction. However, given that features of gossip addiction have been studied within related behavioral addictions, prevention and treatment plans might not differ much. Development of assessments to address the severity of gossip addiction could be introduced to help facilitate diagnosis, prevention, and treatment. Tentatively, one may consider using prevention and treatment strategies employed with these related behavioral addictions. Prevention programming might include social media literacy to recognize when gossip is being promoted so that one is not seduced by such messaging and, as the tips mention, avoidance of contexts or others who tend to gossip excessively. Behavioral treatment programs could include a mixture of individual and group counseling (e.g., involving Dialectic Behavior Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and meditation) [10]. However, concerns should be raised about the possibility of gossip addicts sharing information of other patients within group therapy-type treatment to avoid potential deviancy training.

Limitations and future directions

This review is limited by a paucity of empirical data. The databases that were searched for gossip addiction initially yielded only a small number of entries; thus, the search was extended to further search terms and included a description of gossip addiction in the social media to gather more information. This highlights a potential gap in behavioral addiction research and stresses the need for more empirical studies. For example, formal assessment of gossip as an addiction should be completed to ascertain its prevalence. Also, *future research should be completed in different countries to explore potential cultural differences in gossip and gossip addiction. Furthermore, there are no studies that we are aware of that have examined gossip addiction control and cessation.* Conversely, one may argue that gossip addiction may be very uncommon, since there is so little written on the topic. Clearly there is more research to be completed on discerning the prevalence, etiology, harms, prevention, and cessation of gossip addiction.

Conclusions

Although gossip addiction has not yet been recognized as a

standalone addiction, our findings suggest that gossip addiction has already been studied and subcategorized as part of related, but broader behavioral addictions and is already recognized as an independent type of addiction and prevalent among non-academic sources. Features of gossip addiction fit well within established definitions of behavioral addiction and an extensive list of harms of the behavior that transcend many facets of both personal and social life seem plausible. It is plausible that the social media is a decisive factor in the development of gossip addiction as well as the other related addictions (e.g., SNS addiction). The importance of social media in the development of gossip addiction is highlighted especially considering the rapid development of the social media and partial detachment from social harms when engaging in celebrity gossip as opposed to other, more personal topics. Future research may need to identify and discern gossip addiction from other, broader behavioral addictions to develop adequate means of prevention and treatment, as well as monitor its' relationship with the social media.

This scoping review serves as a foundation to pioneer future research and raise awareness on an otherwise undermeasured research arena. Future research must further identify patterns of gossip addiction within other, established behavioral addictions, discern gossip addiction from these possibly related addictions and investigate the role of the social media as the mediating factor among these related topics. Thereby, adequate prevention and treatment plans may be developed.

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