



# Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Asian American Male Adolescents

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## INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a widely studied topic, but within this community, there are gaps in the understanding of how social media affects student wellbeing. When the suicide clusters occurred, a number of the victims were Asian American males. Connecting these two points sparked a desire to study how social media affects this population. The purpose of this research project is to learn about the impact of social media on adolescent wellbeing by seeing the role it plays in the lives of a demographic who fell victim to the tragedies that occurred nearly a decade ago (Chawla, 2016).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

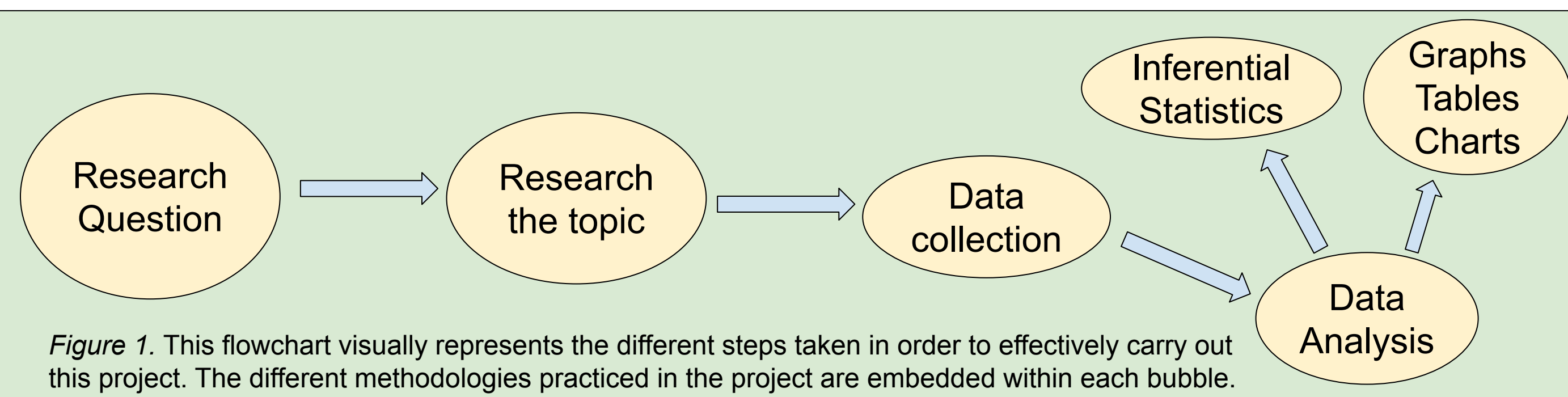


Figure 1. This flowchart visually represents the different steps taken in order to effectively carry out this project. The different methodologies practiced in the project are embedded within each bubble.

The methodologies used in this project were needs assessment, action research, and descriptive and inferential statistics. The needs were determined by reviewing prominent studies (Hunt et al.) that found that social media plays a large role in impacting adolescent wellbeing. The data was gathered in a survey and interpreted through coding and making inferences based on the results.

## DATA AND FINDINGS

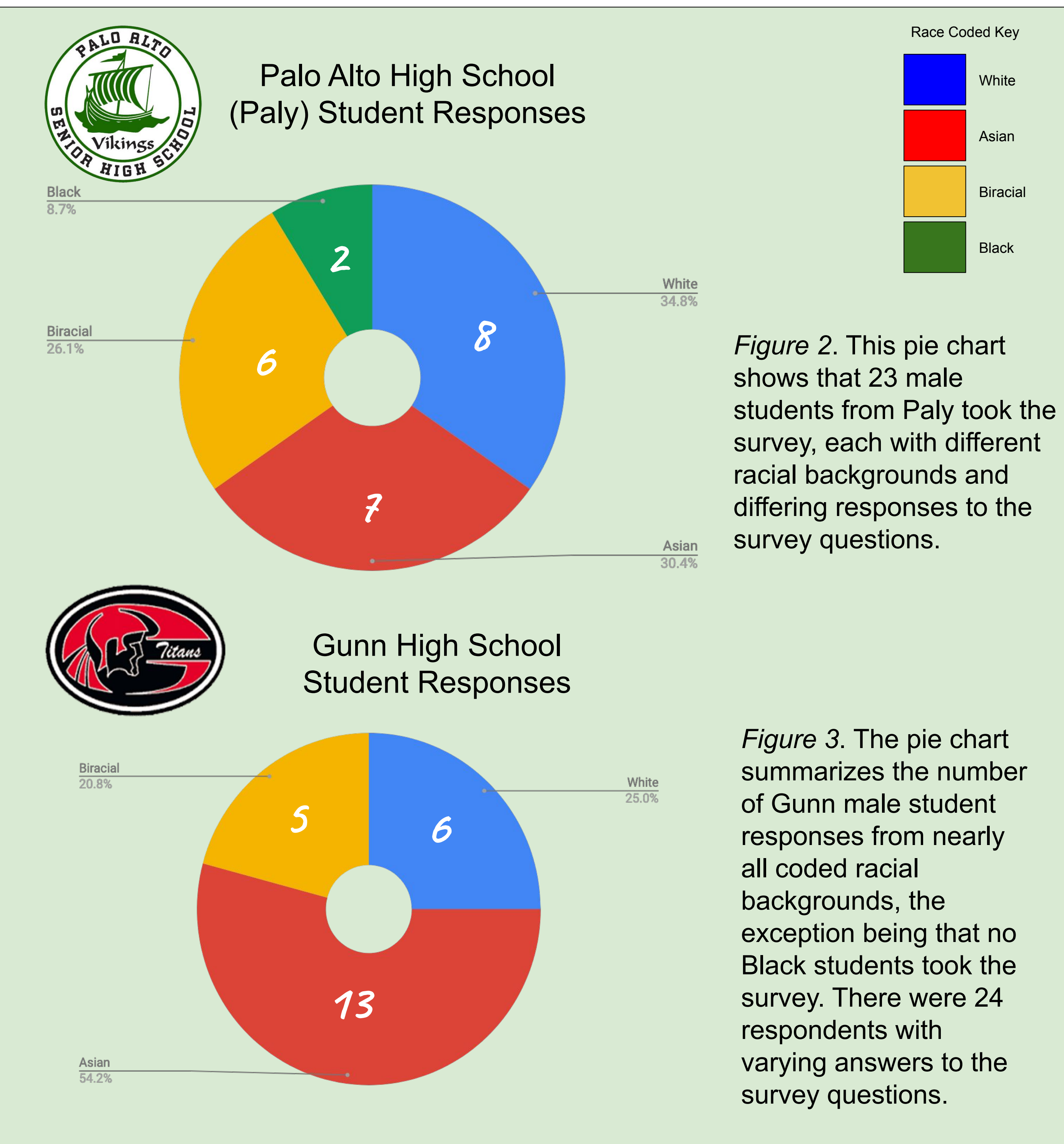


Figure 2. This pie chart shows that 23 male students from Paly took the survey, each with different racial backgrounds and differing responses to the survey questions.

Figure 3. The pie chart summarizes the number of Gunn male student responses from nearly all coded racial backgrounds, the exception being that no Black students took the survey. There were 24 respondents with varying answers to the survey questions.

## CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

After evaluating survey responses, Asian students demonstrated the most interest in using Instagram as their primary social media app, much like peers of other racial groups. The response to a question relating to the impact of social media on their wellbeing was also similar to the other three groups, see Figure 4. The data reveal that this particular pocket of Asian students may have had a better experience with social media, which prompted them to have more positive self-esteem in this particular regard.

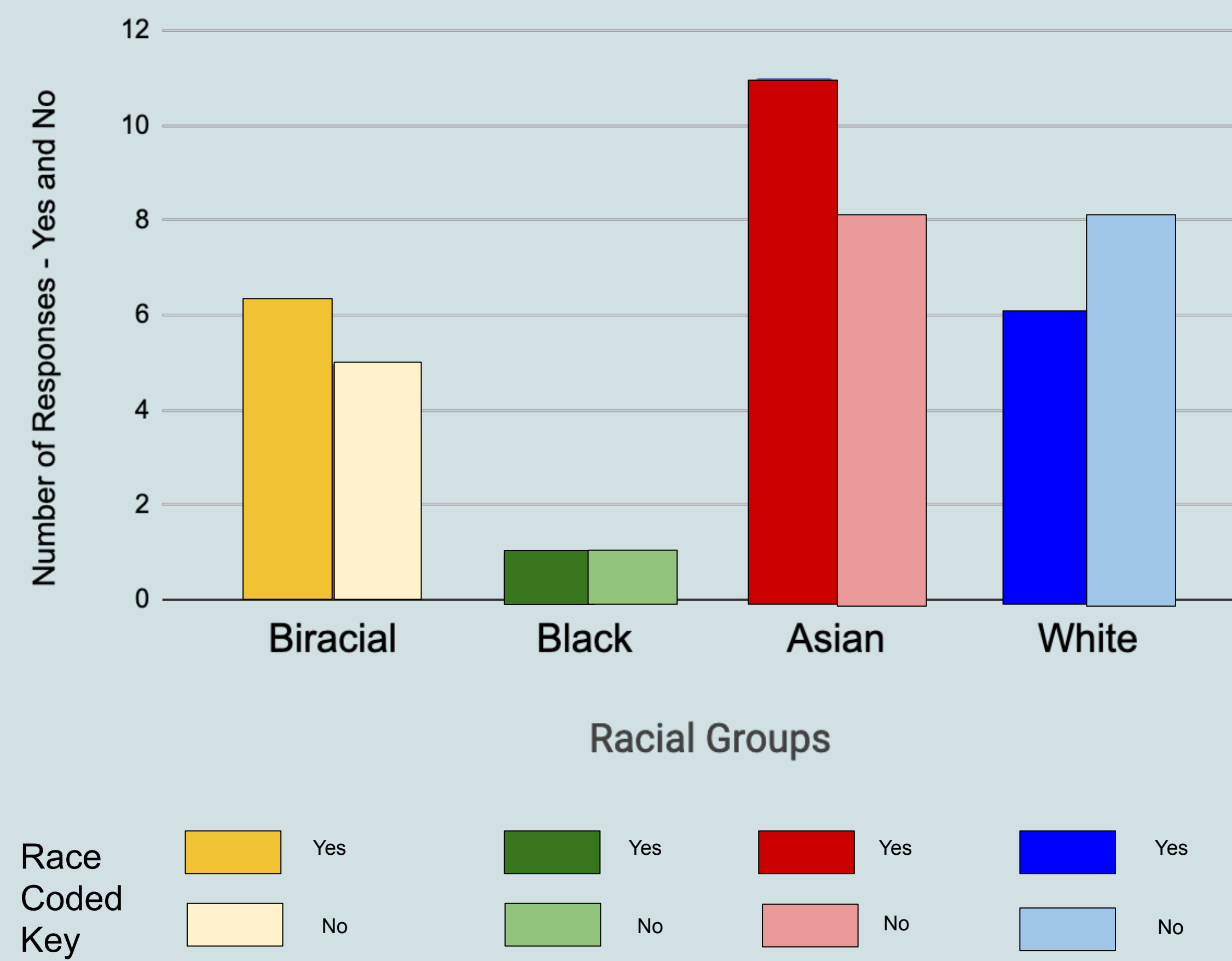


Figure 4. The bar graph above summarizes the data from students who responded to the question, "Does the content you see on social media make you feel more happy with yourself?" The bars are placed next to one another to see the difference in the number of "Yes" and "No" responses within each respective racial groups.

In response to whether or not the student sees themselves as a social person, the majority of Asian students said that "Yes" they do. This discovery brings to light that there may not be a correlation between how the content on social media affects a student's "social persona."

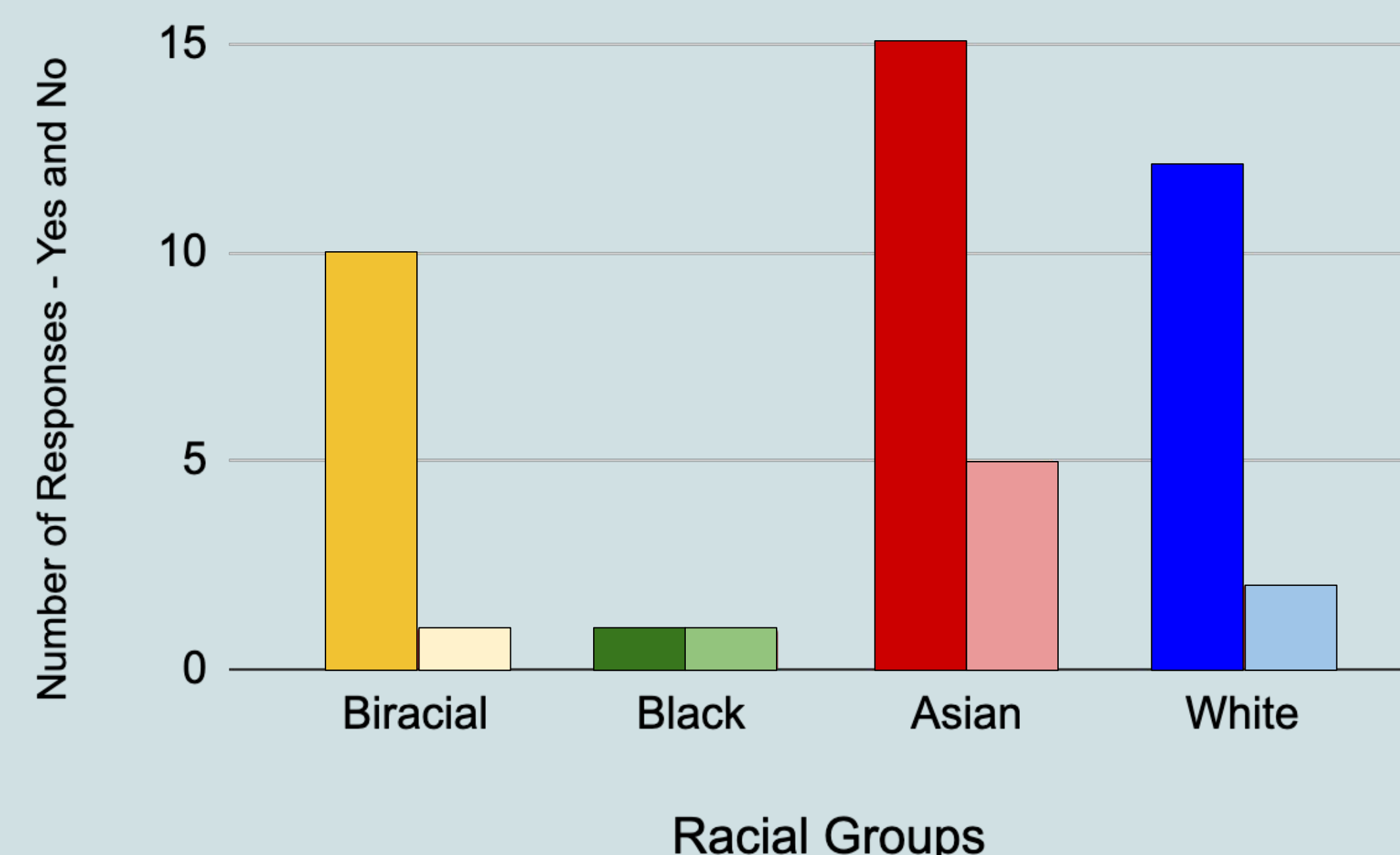


Figure 5. The bar above summarizes the data from students who responded "Yes" and "No" to the question, "I am someone who sees myself as a social person."

## IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The survey findings, coupled with data from other studies relating to this topic, have been used to generate inferences that provide a better understanding of how social media impacts the wellbeing of Asian American male adolescents. Many respondents claimed they saw themselves as social people, and there is a possibility that in seeing Social Networking Site (SNS) postings, they experience FOMO, or the Fear Of Missing Out. To prevent FOMO-related problems from arising, screen management and app time usage settings can be adjusted on teens' devices.

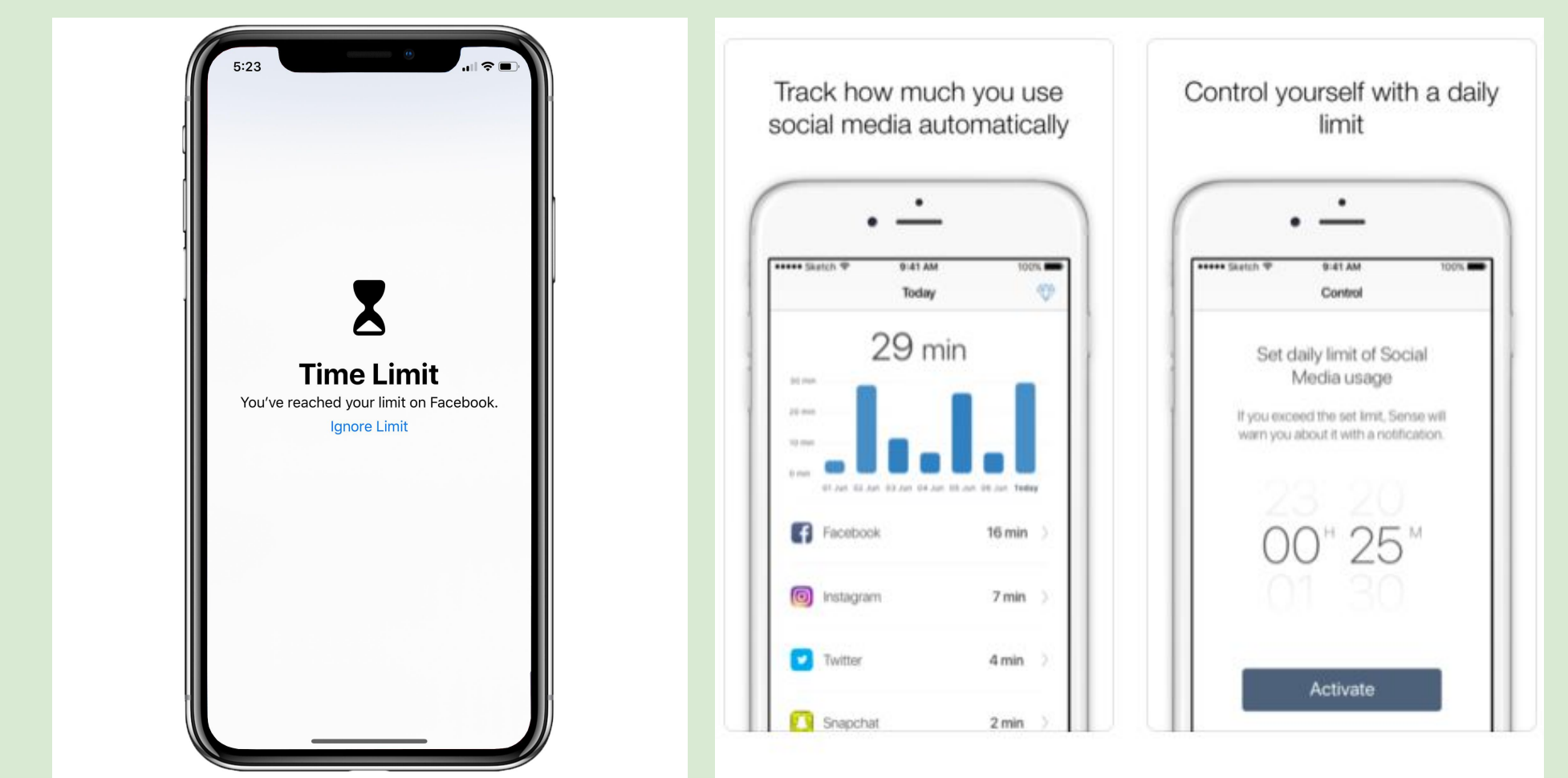


Figure 6. These two images show how to track how much time a person has spent on social media. The one on the left helps people set limits on the amount of time they are permitted to use a certain app. The image on the right shows the amount of time that a person has spent on an app.

A study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania (2018) offered the following solution: instead of cutting out social media usage entirely, reduce the amount of time spent on SNSs, to enhance wellbeing and minimize feelings of FOMO. This allows young people to spend more time partaking in healthier activities that in turn lower their chances of feelings upset by the content seen on SNSs.

Future research would benefit from including questions in a survey about specific screen time data, such as more quantitative values. This helps provide more concrete evidence that can lead to the execution of productive, meaningful solutions. Additionally, surveying a larger sample would ensure that the data can be used for making more informed generalizations about adolescent social media usage habits.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

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### Works Cited:

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