

Instagram Addiction among Students Pursuing Medical and Non-Professional Courses: A Comparative Study

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ABSTRACT

This study attempted to compare the extent of Instagram addiction among students pursuing medical and non-professional courses. The sample consisted of 323 students (123 students from medical and 200 students from non-professional courses) comprising of 167 male and 156 female students. The students completed Test for Instagram addiction (TIA) developed by D'Souza, Samyukta and Bivera (2018) in one session. Test for Instagram addiction measured addiction in 6 factors— Lack of control, Disengagement, Escapism, Health and interpersonal troubles, Excessive use and Obsession. Chi-square tests were applied to find out the association between levels of Instagram addiction and student groups, gender, domicile and stay. Results revealed students pursuing non-professional courses used more Instagram application during week days and weekends. On the whole, 4.0% of them were definitely addicts, 59.1% of them were prone for addiction, 16.7% of them were average users, 18.3% of them used on a low and remaining 1.9% of them had no/minimal addiction towards Instagram. Students pursuing non-professional courses were found to be more addicted to Instagram than students pursuing medical courses. Gender and domicile of the students studied did not have significant influence over extent of Instagram addiction. Students who were staying in other places apart from home, hostel and paying guest facilities had higher addiction to Instagram.

Keywords: *Instagram addiction, medical students, non-professional courses.*

Modernization and globalization have brought lot of changes in human lives. Internet has taken control over all the spheres of individual's life. People in all age groups irrespective of their status and culture rely on the various forms of technology for their basic tasks. They are connecting many more people and making the world a smaller place. Since there is easy accessibility and economy, internet usage is prevalent everywhere, more so in Indian scenario. This has led to addiction towards it, especially in younger generation. Around 20% of the adolescents have been reported to have addiction towards internet (Ko et al., 2005), and around 45% of school going students have been reported by their wards on the issue of having at least one type of sleep problem (Gau, 2006).

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Though, there are many advantages of internet being explored, there are several disadvantages too. The addiction towards internet leads to various psycho-social issues including physiological problems. Addiction-related sleep problems and addiction are prevalent, and contribute to an important size of issue in the psychological and neurological diseases in the current scenario (Fineberget et., 2013). A recent study by D'Souza, Samyukta and Tejaswini (2018) revealed that as the internet addiction increased, sleep quality of the female students decreased linearly and significantly. 'Neglect work' and 'excessive use' of Internet were found to be the best predictors of sleep quality. In another study, it was found that peer stress factor of academic stress was found to be the major predictor of internet addiction (D'Souza, Manish & Raj, 2018). Mahadevaswamy and D'Souza (2017) in their study revealed that internet addiction negatively influences psychological wellbeing of adolescents. Even personality of an individual may also prone to Internet or Facebook addiction (D'Souza, Ravi, Lakshmeesh & Singh, 2018). Chen and Gau (2016), highlighted in their study the students who are addicted to internet have a greater chance of suffering from problems in their sleep.

As the internet community is growing in an alarming rate, there are several applications in the internet which attract the younger generation rapidly like Instagram, Tinder, TikTok etc. Instagram, is one of the such applications has taken over many other such social networking applications. The app is launched in the year 2010, has more than one billion monthly active users worldwide as of June 2018. It has high levels of user engagement and one of the fastest growing social networking sites at present. This media provides a platform for sharing photographs videos and messages in private and public way. Sheldon and Bryant, (2016), found out that there is a positive relationship between using Instagram to be cool and for surveillance.

Today there are millions of students are pursuing their education in both in professional and non-professional courses. Present study attempts find out the extent of Instagram addiction among students pursuing medical and non-professional courses. There are no studies found on comparison of extent of addiction to Instagram between students pursuing medical and non-professional courses. It is hypothesized that students pursuing medical and non-professional courses do differ in their level of Instagram addiction.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Three hundred twenty three students (167 male and 156 female) pursuing their courses in medical and non-professional were randomly selected from the city of Mysuru and Mandya. A total of 123 students pursuing medical course and a total of 200 students pursuing their course in Arts, science and commerce/management were selected randomly from few colleges.

Tools employed

Test for Instagram Addiction (TIA): D'Souza, Samyukta and Bivera (2018): To measure extent of Instagram addiction, TIA, developed by D'Souza, Samyukta and Bivera in the year 2018 was employed, consisting of 26 statements. TIA measures Instagram addiction of the individual in 6 components, which included components like Lack of control, Disengagement, Escapism, Health and interpersonal troubles, Excessive use and Obsession. TIA has to be answered in 5 point Likert scale, like all the time to rarely/never. The scores range from 5 to 1, assigned like -All the time (5),

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most of the time (4), sometime (3), once in a while (2), and rarely/never (1). To find out the reliability, the Cronbach's reliability test was done and the alpha value obtained for the total inventory was 0.931 and for various components varied from 0.680 to 0.863. Further, when item to total scores correlations were performed; all the correlation coefficients obtained through Pearson's product moment correlation techniques were found to be highly significant, indicating that the TIA has high reliability and validity. Even the correlation coefficients obtained between components were found to be highly significant. High scores on the TIA indicate higher addiction to Instagram.

Procedure

After taking the permission from the respective authorities, Test for Instagram addiction was administered to a total of 123 medical and 200 students pursuing Arts, Commerce and Science students. Before administrating the questionnaire, they were assured of confidentiality. They were asked to answer all the questions. The instructions were read out and each item in the questionnaire was explained in case of difficulty in understanding the item/s, in order to get good response. Once the data were collected, they were scored and fed to the computer. The data obtained thus were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included frequency and percentages. Independent samples 't' tests were applied to find out the significance of mean difference in Instagram usage hours during weekdays and weekends between students pursuing medical and non-professional courses. Chi-square tests were applied to find out the association between frequencies of extent of Instagram addiction and groups, gender, domicile and stay. Table 1 presents mean usage of Instagram by students pursuing medical and non-professional courses, during weekdays and weekends with test statistics. Table 2 presents the extent of Instagram addiction by groups, gender, domicile and stay and results of chi-square tests.

RESULTS

Table 1 Mean Instagram usage of students pursuing medical and non-professional courses during weekdays and weekends and results of Independent samples 't' test

Variable	groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	't' value	P value
Weekdays	Medical	1.80	2.51	3.235	.001
	Non-professional	2.66	2.19		
Weekend	Medical	2.42	2.38	5.054	.001
	Non-professional	4.10	3.20		

Note: df= 311

It is clear that on an average students pursuing non-professional courses engaged more (mean 2.66 hours) than students pursuing medical education (mean 1.80 hours). This is further confirmed by a significant t value of 3.235 with the significance level of .001.

During the weekend also, it was found that on average students pursuing non-professional courses engaged more (mean 4.10 hours) than students pursuing medical education (mean 2.42 hours). This is further confirmed by a significant t value of 5.054 with the significance level of .001.

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Table 2 Distribution of the selected sample by education, gender, area, and stay by levels of Instagram addiction and results of Chi-square tests.

Variable			Levels of Instagram addiction					Test statistics
			Nil/minimal	Low	Average	Addict prone	Definitely addict	
Overall		F	6	59	54	191	13	X ² =343.92; p=.001
		%	1.9%	18.3%	16.7%	59.1%	4.0%	
Education	Medical	F	6	56	38	16	7	X ² =187.30; p=.001
		%	4.9%	45.5%	30.9%	13.0%	5.7%	
	Non-professional	F	0	3	16	175	6	
		%	0.0%	1.5%	8.0%	87.5%	3.0%	
Gender	Male	F	4	31	32	90	10	X ² =6.71; p=.152
		%	2.4%	18.6%	19.2%	53.9%	6.0%	
	Female	F	2	28	22	101	3	
		%	1.3%	17.9%	14.1%	64.7%	1.9%	
Domicile	Urban	F	4	45	42	132	6	X ² =13.51; p=.095
		%	1.7%	19.7%	18.3%	57.6%	2.6%	
	Rural	F	1	8	10	51	5	
		%	1.3%	10.7%	13.3%	68.0%	6.7%	
	Semi-urban	F	1	6	2	8	2	
		%	5.3%	31.6%	10.5%	42.1%	10.5%	
Stay	Home	F	0	9	13	95	3	X ² =59.25; p=.001
		%	0.0%	7.5%	10.8%	79.2%	2.5%	
	Hostel	F	6	50	36	70	7	
		%	3.6%	29.6%	21.3%	41.4%	4.1%	
	Paying guest	F	0	0	5	20	2	
		%	0.0%	0.0%	18.5%	74.1%	7.4%	
	Others	F	0	0	0	6	1	
		%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	85.7%	14.3%	

Overall Instagram addiction: On the whole, it was found that among the selected sample, 4.0% of them were definitely addicts, 59.1% of them were prone for addiction, 16.7% of them were average users, 18.3% of them used low and remaining 1.9% of them had no/minimal addiction towards Instagram. Chi-square test revealed a significant difference between these groups of frequencies (X²=343.92; p=.001) having the frequencies of addict prone very high.

Education and Instagram addiction: From the table 1 it is clear that the addiction to Instagram was found to be more for students pursuing non-professional courses than medical students. Among students pursuing non-professional courses there were 3.0% of them were definitely addicts as against 5.7% of the students pursuing medical courses. 89.5% of then students pursuing non-professional courses were addict prone as against 13.0% of the students pursuing non-professional courses. Chi-square test revealed a significant association between student groups and their levels of Instagram addiction (X²=187.30; p=.001)

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Gender and Instagram addiction: A non-significant association was observed between gender and Instagram addiction ($X^2= 6.71$; $p=.152$), revealing that pattern of Instagram addiction was same for male and female students studied.

Domicile and Instagram addiction: Domicile of the students did not have significant influence over their extent of Instagram addiction. Chi-square value of 13.51 was found to be non-significant ($p=.095$). From the table it is clear that pattern of Instagram usage was same for students hailing from urban, rural and semi-urban areas.

Stay and Instagram addiction: A significant association was observed between stay and levels of Instagram addiction, ($X^2= 59.25$; $p=.001$), revealing that those who were staying in other places apart from home, hostel and paying guest facilities had higher addiction to Instagram.

DISCUSSION

Major findings of the study

- Students pursuing non-professional courses used more Instagram application during week days and weekends.
- Of the selected sample, 4.0% of them were definitely addicts, 59.1% of them were prone for addiction, 16.7% of them were average users, 18.3% of them used on a low and remaining 1.9% of them had no/minimal addiction towards Instagram.
- Students pursuing non-professional courses were found to be more addicted to Instagram than students pursuing medical courses.
- Gender and domicile of the students studied did not have significant influence over extent of Instagram addiction.
- Students who were staying in other places apart from home, hostel and paying guest facilities had higher addiction to Instagram.

From the results it is clear that an alarming 63% of the students selected had proneness to definite addiction towards Instagram. This estimate is significantly high with the an estimate done by Kircaburun and Griffith (2018) on university students found that 26.5% of the selected sample was mildly addicted, 6.1% were moderately addicted, 0.9% were severely addicted to Instagram and overall, 33.5% of the participants were risky Instagram users. Studies indicated that Instagram is the worst social media network for mental health and wellbeing, based on a research on almost 1500 individuals aged between 14 to 24 years (time.com/4793331/instagram-social-media-mental-health/2018). Further, it was found that Instagram addiction is associated with high levels of depression, anxiety, bullying and fear of missing out phenomenon (FOMO). In other words we find more addiction to Instagram by students of medical and non-professional courses than other countries.

Results also revealed that students pursuing medical courses were less addicted to Instagram than students pursuing non-professional courses. The possible reasons could be that students pursuing medical education may be more involved in the academic activities like clinical visits, interaction with clients, seminars and other related issues, which may not be so severe for students pursuing non-professional courses. They may not get enough time to be on social media.

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Addiction to Instagram has its own toll as it affects sleep quality too (D'Souza, & Meenakshi, 2018) and other ill effects. It is high time now to think seriously on preventing the ill effects of social networking applications like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Tinder etc., on psychological issues and mental health. Research has already highlighted how mental health is affected due to these social media addictions. Educationists, psychologists and policy makers have to bring out a clear cut policy regarding curbing ill effects of social media addictions.

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