

## The effect of Instagram addiction on quality of life among undergraduate students in Mysuru

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### ABSTRACT

Instagram is a booming social media platform where members can share photographs and videos over the internet. There have been individuals who have been using social media platform pathologically and this has affected over their mental health such as depression, anxiety and stress which has led to poor levels of quality of life. Since there has not been many studies done on Instagram addiction, this study focuses on undergraduates and the influence of Instagram addiction on their quality of life. This study included 162 subjects from the various disciplines of Arts, Science and Commerce. The age of the students varied from 17 to 26. The Test for Instagram Addiction (TIA) and WHOQOL-BREF was used in this study. Chi-square tests and Pearson's product moment correlations were applied for data analysis. Results revealed that an alarming 27.8% of the students were addict prone and definitely addicted to Instagram. It was also found that students who were studying in commerce/management course were more addicted to Instagram than students pursuing Arts and Science courses. From the results we find that the rate of students getting addicted to Instagram are only increasing and it is having limited influence over Quality of life of the students.

**Keywords:** *Instagram Addiction, Quality of Life, Undergraduate students*

Social media addiction is a term that is frequently used to refer to a person who spends ample time on social media or on social networking sites like Facebook, Tik-Tok & Instagram. Internet addiction disorder is the overuse of the internet with stress manifestation of signs of anger, tension, and anxiety. Internet addiction disorders (IAD) is growing at a fast rate and becoming a prevalent mental health problem around the world (Goldberg, 1995).

There is no formal Medical recognition that social media addiction is a disease, however, the negative practice of intemperate use of social media has become a matter of Global discussion and research. Addiction purely refers to a 'compulsive behavior' that ushers to

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negative effects. These negative effects may include effect on physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships and on the environment (Freedom, Physical safety, etc.). Nevertheless, in this case, social media addiction is referring to individuals who have a compulsive use of 'Instagram'. Our study is an attempt to contribute to the knowledge that is building up in relation to this phenomenon by examining the relationships between "Instagram addiction and Quality of Life."

Quality of life is a highly subjective measure of happiness that is an important component of many financial decisions. Quality of life is a non-financial component associated with job and life satisfaction. When used in a work-related way, quality of life often refers to the time and ability to do anything you enjoy (Kagan, 2010).

Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking app that is owned by Facebook. It was launched in the year 2010 and has over a Billion monthly active users worldwide as of June 2018. It is the most popular Social networking app at present. This app enables its users to edit and upload pictures and short videos, it also permits users to add a caption to their posts and also use hashtags and location-based geotags to give a clear indication to these posts and make it possible for other users to view these 'Tags'. One study found that people often posted images with the hashtag# funeral, which often communicated a person's emotional circumstances and also the shifts in commemorative and memorialization practices (Gibbs, Meese, Arnold, Nansen & Carter, 2015).

Present-day studies have promulgated that Instagram addiction has adversely affected the sleep quality (D'Souza, Samyukta & Tejaswini, 2018), and has also reduced the psychological wellbeing of adolescents (Mahadevaswamy & D'Souza, 2017a). Few studies have proven that those individuals who engage in social media (Instagram) use in excess go through consequential changes in the way they communicate and interact with their loved ones and as well as the public. A review of online social networking and addiction has found that extroverts use social networking sites for social enhancement whereas introverts for social compensation (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). However, internet addiction did not affect subjective wellbeing of adolescents (Mahadevaswamy & D'Souza, 2017b). A study by D'Souza and Ranganath (2018) has revealed that those who are shyer they might end up in Instagram addiction. A recent article in the Times health newsletter clearly revealed that Instagram is the worst social media application for mental health and wellbeing, based on a study on almost 1500 subjects between the ages of 14 to 24 years ([time.com/4793331/Instagram-social-media-mental-health/2018](http://time.com/4793331/Instagram-social-media-mental-health/2018)). D'Souza and Meenakshi (2018) reported that among dental students as the addiction on Instagram escalated the sleep quality of the students diminished linearly and significantly. It was also established that 'Lack of control' and 'Excessive use' factors of Test for Instagram addiction were the major predictors of sleep quality.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Sample*

Students pursuing their undergraduate courses in the city of Mysuru were hand-picked for this study. A total of 162 students were randomly selected from the various disciplines of Arts, Science, Commerce, Vocation and Hotel Management. The age of the students varied from 17 to 26.

### *Tools Employed*

**TEST FOR INSTAGRAM ADDICTION (TIA). D'SOUZA, SAMYUKTA & BIVERA (2018):** TIA is an Instagram Addiction tool developed by D'Souza, Samyukta and Bivera in the year 2018. It consists of 26 statements, which statistically measure Instagram addiction

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of subjects in 6 included components such as Lack of control, Disengagement, Escapism, Health and interpersonal troubles, Excessive use and Obsession. To be answered in 5-point Likert scale was used for scoring ranging from All the time (5), most of the time (4), sometime (3), occasionally (OW), 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.

**Quality of Life (WHO- BREF):** The WHOQOL- BREF is a condensed 26 item version of the WHOQOL- 100 which consists of items that were drawn from the WHOQOL- 100 field trial data. This tool was developed in the year 1991; The focus was to develop an International Cross-culturally equivalent quality of life assessment tool. It measures the persons discernment in the circumstance of their culture and value systems, their personal goals, standards and their concerns. This specific tool was refined collaboratively in many centres globally. This tool consists of one item from each of the 24 domains of QOL which is incorporated in the WHOQOL- 100, plus two 'benchmark' items from the general domain on overall QOL and general health.

It is a self-administered Questionnaire which is categorized into four extensive domains i.e., physical health, psychological well-being, social- relationships and environment. All these questions are rated on a 5- point scale; i.e., Completely (5), A great deal (4), Moderately (3), Not much (2), Not at all (1).

### Procedure

The first author personally visited colleges in Mysuru and collected the data. Permission was taken prior to administering The TIA and WHOQOL- BREF questionnaires. This tool was administered to a total of 162 students of the various colleges in Mysuru city, and before administering the questionnaire all students were assured of confidentiality. The students were asked to answer all questions. To make the understanding of the questions simple for the students, each question was made clear to them in their local language.

Once the data was collected, they were then systematically fed into the computer.

**Table 1 Distribution of the selected sample by course pursued and Instagram usage level and results of Chi-square test**

Usage levels		Course			Total
		Arts	Commerce/ management	Science	
Nil/Minimal	Frequency	-	-	-	-
	Percent	-	-	-	-
Low	Frequency	23	11	15	49
	Percent	37.7%	22.9%	28.3%	30.2%
Normal/ Average	Frequency	27	15	26	68
	Percent	44.3%	31.2%	49.1%	42.0%
Addict prone	Frequency	8	19	8	35
	Percent	13.1%	39.6%	15.1%	21.6%
Definitely addict	Frequency	3	3	4	10
	Percent	4.9%	6.2%	7.5%	6.2%
Total	Frequency	61	48	53	162
	Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Test statistics (overall)		Chi-square=44.173; p=.023			
Test statistics (association)		Chi-square=14.640; p=.001			

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On the whole among the selected sample, 6.2% of them were definitely addicts, 21.6% of them were addict prone, 42.0% of them had normal usage and 30.2% of them were in low usage category. Chi-square test revealed significant difference between groups of frequencies (Chi-square=44.173;  $p=.023$ ). Further, when associations were verified between course pursued and Instagram usage levels, a significant association was observed (Chi-square=14.640;  $p=.001$ ), revealing that students pursuing commerce/management were more addicted to Instagram compared students pursuing Arts and science courses.

**Table 2 Results of Pearson's product moment correlations between domains of QOL and components of TIA**

Components of TIA		Domains of QOL				Total QOL
		QOL1	QOL2	QOL3	QOL4	
		Physical health	Psychological	Social relationships	Environmental	
Lack of control	Correlation	-.159	-.066	-.114	-.054	-.136
	Significance	.043	.405	.149	.492	.084
Disengagement	Correlation	-.128	.004	-.094	-.040	-.092
	Significance	.105	.956	.236	.612	.244
Escapism	Correlation	-.093	.022	-.101	-.113	-.111
	Significance	.242	.785	.202	.152	.158
Health & Interpersonal troubles	Correlation	-.050	.118	-.041	.075	.036
	Significance	.532	.135	.604	.340	.653
Excessive use	Correlation	-.167	.025	-.068	-.003	-.071
	Significance	.034	.757	.387	.973	.373
Obsession	Correlation	-.021	.064	.017	.035	.035
	Significance	.796	.422	.827	.658	.657
Total TIA scores	Correlation	-.127	.033	-.088	-.024	-.075
	Significance	.106	.681	.263	.758	.345

From the table it is evident that except for lack of control and QOL (physical health), all the obtained correlation coefficients were found to be non-significant. The obtained correlation coefficient between lack of control and physical health was found to be  $-.159$  with the significance level of  $.043$ , higher the lack of control more negative was the physical health and vice versa. Rest of the correlation coefficients between domains of QOL and components of TIA were found to be non-significant.

## DISCUSSION

### Major findings

1. An alarming 27.8% of the students were addict prone and definitely addicted to Instagram.
2. Students pursuing commerce/management course were more addicted to Instagram than students pursuing Arts and Science courses.
3. Instagram usage had limited influence on quality of life of students.

It is clear that Instagram is an application that everyone has easy access to, and the results show that as the undergraduate students find themselves using more and more Instagram, the quality of life also proportionately decreases in physical health indicating the ill effects of excess use of Instagram on the respondents. Even though there is very little literature on Instagram addiction, few of the studies done on internet addiction have led to many conclusions. A research conducted by Chathoth *et. al.* (2013) in Mangalore city on medical students found that there were no severe addicts whereas in present study there are

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significantly more respondents with definite addicts. A research led by Chaudhari, *et.al* (2015) on the issue of addiction in internet among medical students found that 59% of the medical students were addicted to internet. About 51 % of the students were mildly addicted while 7.45% of the students were moderately addicted to the internet. This finding is comparable with the prevalence of 56.6% as reported by Duraimurugan *et.al.* (2015) in a study conducted among college students in South India. They found 41.3% to be mild addicts while 15.2% to be moderate addicts. In another study, Sharma *et.al.* (2014) reported that 42.7% prevalence of internet addiction, 35% was mild, 7.4% moderate, and 0.3% severe addict in the professional college students present in India.

Addiction towards Instagram has become a major issue among students pursuing not only professional courses but even among students pursuing non-professional courses. Instagram addiction lead to depression and anxiety (D'Souza, L & Hemamalini, 2018a,b). The addiction to Instagram has its own effect on the bio-psycho-social development of an individual. There is a pressing requirement to develop various strategies and therapies to help an individual come out of this threat to expose the ill effects of addiction towards Instagram and save individuals who are trapped in the silent prisons of Instagram addiction. Currently, the majority of research centers on Facebook, twitter, or general Social Networking Sites usage, and the effects on mental wellbeing, namely depression. Studies found positive correlations between depression and Internet addiction, (Benjanin et al, 2015; Morrison & Gore, 2010; O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011; Ryu, Choi, Seo & Nam, 2004) Facebook usage (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011) or problematic Social Networking Sites usage (Giota & Kleftharas, 2013). Similarly, Kross et al, (2013) found Facebook use predicts declines in two aspects of wellbeing: how people feel moment-to-moment and how satisfied people are with their lives. Further research by Pantic et al. (2012) investigated the relationship between social networking and depression, with findings highlighting that as time spent on SNSs increased, so did the scores for depression and lower levels of quality of life.

Research has already proven that social media is doing more harms then benefits specially on student community. One major threat media addiction is on academic grades of the students. There are lots of psychological effects too on the user community, which calls for effective controlling and limited use of social networking sites including gaming. Researchers have the opinion that use of internet must be alternatively replaced with less risky and healthy activities, which might include Yoga practising, exercising, meditation and involving in sports activities (Busari (2016). World statistics on media usage has clearly evidenced increased use of apps like Instagram, Facebook, Tik Tok etc. By changing their thought process from negative to automated positive thoughts for a better living, cognitive behaviour therapy may play a major role in reducing the addiction to internet/social networking applications. A structured and well informative psycho-education on negative effects of media addiction is the need of the hour along with strict regulations by the governments for usage of these, might be effective in creative use of the social media applications including online games.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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