

A Study on Internet Addiction and Psychological Well-being among Post-graduate Students

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ABSTRACT

In today's developing world students access communication and information through the medium of internet and stay connected with the world. However, with the remarkable growth of internet, excessive psychological issues have affected the students adversely. Many researches have been significantly supporting the finding that internet addiction can lead to low psychological wellbeing within an individual. To investigate this approach, research was conducted to study the effect of internet addiction on the psychological wellbeing of post graduate students studying in science stream belonging to the age group of 21-25 years, residing in Bangalore city. The research comprised of total 80 samples including both male and female research participants with an objective of discovering in-depth information and crucial findings on internet addiction and psychological wellbeing. This study shall help in developing intervention program and treatment for internet addiction which aims to enhance psychological wellbeing of post graduate students. The findings presented in this paper shall indeed serve as a framework for further researches.

Keywords: *Communication, Information, Internet addiction, Psychological Wellbeing, Post-graduate students.*

Addiction is defined as person's or being's feeling of necessity for something (like another person, substance, internet, sex, etc.) in order to sustain her/his existence and continue her/his way of existence as she/he desires (West, 2005). DSM IV codes contain the phrase "very strong need or compulsion towards criteria defined it as "very strong desire or urge for using the internet" (Aboujaoude et al 2006; Block 2008; Korkeila et al 2009). taking a substance" for addiction (American Psychological Association, 2013) Diagnostic Statistical Manual 5th edition.

Internet addiction is a phenomenon explained as the rigorous use of the internet, typically causes the user to get obsessively attached to the internet and therefore it is considered generally under compulsive behavior.

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Psychological wellbeing is known as a state of optimal mental and emotional health. Individuals who are psychologically healthy, stay immune from mental disorders and possess ability to manage their stress in an effective manner. This helps them to strike balance and lead a good life. At times, there are events when a person may not be mentally or emotionally at their best which makes them unable to cope with their problems effectively. Some stressors naturally cause people to become frustrated, emotionally weak, or disconnected from the people around them. There are many areas that deteriorate an individual's psychological wellbeing and to study that the researchers were keen to investigate the effect of internet addiction on the psychological wellbeing of post graduate students. The attitude of many countries towards Internet addiction is as a potential threat to public health. For example, China has reported that approximately 10 million citizens have scored high on Internet addiction tests (Block, 2008).

On the other hand, problematic or pathological users of internet (Milani 2009) are in excessive mental activity (thinking continuously about internet, dreaming about the activities done in the internet, thinking about the next planned activity in the internet, etc.) about internet (Greenfield, 1999; Koç, 2011; Young, 1998); feel the necessity for using the internet in an increased proportion in order to get the satisfaction they desire (Lee and Shin, 2004); fail in their attempts to control, reduce or give up their internet usage (Widyanto and Griffiths, 2007); feel uneasiness, exhaustion, anger when their internet usage is decreased or completely cut off (Petersen 2009).

- **Addiction:** Addiction is defined as person's or being's feeling of necessity for something (like another person, substance, internet, sex, etc.) in order to sustain her/his existence and continue her/his way of existence as she/he desires (Dunn, 2010)
- **Psychological wellbeing:** Psychological wellbeing refers to inter and intraindividual levels of positive functioning that can include one's relatedness with others and self-referent attitude that includes one's sense of mastery and personal growth. (Burns, 2016)
- **Compulsive behavior:** It is defined as functioning that is constant and repetitive without it necessarily producing benefited results or pleasure.
- **Internet addiction disorder:** Internet addiction disorder also known as problematic internet use or pathological internet use which is generally defined as problematic, compulsive use of the internet, that results in significant impairment in an individual's function in various life domains over a prolonged period of time.
- **Wellness:** It is defined as "an integrated method of functioning, which is oriented toward maximizing the potential of which the individual is capable." (Dunn 1950)
- **Self-esteem:** Smith and Mackie (2007) defined it by saying that " Self-esteem, is the positive or negative evaluations of the self, as in how we feel about it."

Objective

To check the significant relationship between internet addiction and psychological wellbeing among post graduate students of Bangalore district.

Hypothesis

H1 There is a significant relationship between internet addiction and psychological well-being among post graduate students of Bangalore district.

H2 There is significant difference in the psychological well-being between the male and female post graduate students of Bangalore district.

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H3 There is a significant difference in the internet addiction among male and female post graduate students of Bangalore district.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The population consisted of the post graduate students belonging to the age group (21-25) years, studying in science stream, at Bangalore city. The sample included 80 students where, 33 were male and 47 were female participants. The research required purposive sampling technique to collect the data. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling that is selected, based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. It is also called as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling. The adopted research design was a correlational design. It enabled the researchers to generate the data through the standardized collection procedure based on highly structured research instruments and well-defined study concept.

Instruments

Informed consent was a guiding tool used to give proper instruction to the participants involved in the research. It included major aspects such as confidentiality, participant's right and agenda of the research. Data was collected using Demographic Performa prepared by the researchers, which involved all basic essential information about the participants such as their name, age, gender, qualification, year of study, residential area etc. Bhogle and Jaiprakash, psychological wellbeing scale, 1995 involved 13 facets such as: meaningfulness, somatic symptoms, self-esteem, positive affect, daily activities, life satisfaction, suicidal ideas, personal control, social support, tension, wellness, general efficiency and satisfaction which was used in the research to measure the psychological wellbeing among post graduate student. Psychological well-being questionnaire by Bhogle and Prakash (1995) has test-retest reliability coefficient, 0.72 and internal consistency coefficient, 0.84.

Dr Kimberly Young's Internet Addiction Test, (IAT) measured the degree of involvement in online activities using responses on the 5-degree type scale and categorizes the addictive behavior into four categories: lack of addiction, mild signs of addiction, moderate signs of addiction, and severe addictive behavior. The test was further classified into six dimensions such as: excessive use, salience, anticipation, neglect work, lack of control, neglect social life. It has test-retest reliability is 0.82 with content and convergent validity of 0.88

Procedure

The present study was carried out over a period of eight months which was divided in two phases. The first phase- was focused on the assessment aspect of the study which involved evaluation, finalization of appropriate topic for the research and gaining adequate information and expertise to use psychological tools. In the second phase- subjects were invited to participate in a study, rapport was established and they were briefed about the research purpose. All the important information about the questionnaire was explained and participants were informed that the participation is voluntary, they can withdraw at any point of time and all the responses shall be kept confidential. After obtaining consent, personal details were collected and the scales were administered to individuals.

Initially, a pilot study was conducted on 20 samples, including 10 male and 10 female participants. The obtained scores were tabulated in MS excel and statistically analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistic version 21. After the completion of pilot study, the final study on 80 samples was conducted where, 33 were male participants & 47 were female participants and

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the data was statistically examined to obtain the relationship between the facets of psychological wellbeing and dimensions of internet addiction among male and female post graduate students. The assessment and the intervention procedure of the present study were consistent with the ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association (2002).

The ethical guidelines pertaining to informed consent, the communication of role expectation, rights and responsibilities of the researcher were adhered too. Voluntary participation was ensured, and the purpose, meaning and limits of confidentiality were clearly defined. Individuals were treated equitably and individual differences were respected. Descriptive statistics for the scales were computed, including mean and standard deviation. The Independent t-test which is also called as student's t-test was used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between male and female's mean score in both psychological wellbeing scale and internet addiction test. Pearson product correlation was conducted to measure the significant relationship between dimensions of internet addiction and facets of psychological wellbeing among post graduate students.

RESULTS

Table No. 1 showing Pearson's correlation between the dimension of internet addiction and facets of psychological wellbeing. (N=80)

Variables	Salience	Anticipation	Neglection of work	Lack of control	Neglection of social life	Excessive usage
Meaningfulness	-0.5(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.4(**)
Somatic	-0.5(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.5(**)
Self esteem	-0.4(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.1(NS)	-0.3(**)	-0.3(**)
Positive effect	-0.1(NS)	-0.1(NS)	-0.2(NS)	-0.2(NS)	-0.2(NS)	-0.3(**)
Daily activities	-0.4(**)	-0.2(*)	-0.3(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.4(**)
Life satisfaction	-0.42(**)	-0.2(NS)	-0.4(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.4 (**)
Suicidal	-0.2(NS)	-0.3(NS)	-0.1(NS)	-0.1(NS)	-0.3(**)	-0.2(*)
Personal control	-0.09(NS)	-0.03(NS)	-0.05(NS)	-0.1(NS)	-0.1(NS)	-0.1(NS)
Social support	-0.4(**)	-0.1(NS)	-0.3(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.3(**)
Tension	-0.4(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.5(**)	-0.3(**)
General efficiency	-0.4(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.1(NS)	-0.2(**)	--0.3(**)
Wellness	-0.5(**)	-0.3(**)	-0.5(**)	-0.4(**)	-0.5(**)	-0.5(**)
Satisfaction	-0.6(**)	-0.21(NS)	-0.5(**)	-0.5(**)	-0.5(**)	-0.5(**)

** Correlation value is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation value is significant at the 0.05 level.

NS: Not Significant

Table1 shows the Pearson correlation between dimensions of internet addiction and facets of psychological among post graduate students of Bangalore district. The dimension of internet addiction, salience has an inverse relationship at 0.01 level with facets of psychological wellbeing such as meaningfulness, somatic self-esteem daily activities, life satisfaction social support, tension, general efficiency, wellness and satisfaction with the 'r' value being -0.5, -0.5, -0.4, -0.4, -0.4, -0.4, -0.4, -0.4, -0.4, -0.5, -0.6 respectively. In the dimensions of internet addiction, anticipation has a significant inverse relationship at 0.05 level with that of psychological facets such as meaningfulness, somatic, self-esteem, tension, general efficiency and wellness with the 'r' value being -0.3, -0.3, -0.3, -0.3, -0.3, -0.3 respectively. The area of neglect of work shows inverse relationship at 0.01 level with the areas of meaningfulness, somatic, self-esteem, daily activities, life satisfaction, social support, tension, general efficiency, wellness and satisfaction with the 'r' value being -0.3, -0.3, -0.3, -0.3, -0.4, -0.3, -0.5, -0.5 accordingly.

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The lack of control area also shows a significant inverse relationship with that of meaningfulness, somatic, daily activities, life satisfaction, social support, tension, wellness and satisfaction of psychological wellbeing at 0.01 level with the 'r' value being -0.3, -0.3, -0.4, -0.4, -0.4, -0.3, -0.4, -0.5 respectively. The area of neglect of social life, shows a significant inverse relationship at 0.01 level with the areas of meaningfulness, somatic, self-esteem, daily activities, life satisfaction suicidal, social support, tension, general efficiency, wellness and satisfaction with the 'r' value being -0.4, -0.4, -0.3, -0.4, -0.4, -0.3, -0.3, -0.5, -0.2, -0.5, -0.5 accordingly. The area of excessive usage shows an inverse relationship with the areas of psychological wellbeing such as meaningfulness, somatic, self-esteem, daily activities, life satisfaction, social support, tension, general efficiency, wellness and satisfaction at 0.01 level with the 'r' value being -0.4, -0.5, -0.3, -0.3, -0.4, -0.4, -0.2, -0.3, -0.3, -0.3, -0.5, -0.5 respectively. There is seen an inverse relationship at 0.05 level with the facets of suicidal and excessive usage with 'r' being -0.2 value, daily activities and anticipation with 'r' being -0.2 value. This indicates that if one area increases or decrease the other area has an impact on its variation in post graduate students.

The area of personal control of psychological wellbeing do not show any significant relationship with that of the internet usage areas such as salience, anticipation, neglect of work, lack of control, neglect of social life and excessive usage with the 'r' value being -0.09, -0.03, -0.05, -0.1, -0.1, -0.1 respectively. The area of life satisfaction, suicidal, social support and satisfaction also do not show any significant relationship with the area of anticipation with the 'r' value being -0.02, -0.03, -0.1, -0.2 respectively. The psychological wellbeing area positive effect also do not show any significant relationship with the areas of internet usage such as salience, anticipation, neglect of work, lack of control, neglect of social life with the 'r' value being -0.1, -0.1, -0.2, -0.2, -0.2 accordingly. It indicates that these areas do not have any relationship with the other, so if one area increase or decreases it does not make any impact on the other areas of the post-graduation students.

Psychological wellbeing facets such as meaningfulness, somatic self-esteem, daily activities, life satisfaction, social support, general efficiency, personal control, wellness, satisfaction tension has significant inverse relationship with internet addiction dimensions such as salience, anticipation, neglect of work, lack of control, neglect of social life, which indicates that as one variable increases other significantly decreases.

Table No. 2 shows the Pearson Product Correlational value between the psychological wellbeing and internet addiction of post graduate students.

Variables	Internet Addiction	Sig (2-tailed)
Psychological Wellbeing	-.833(**)	.000

**** Correlation value is significant at the 0.01 level**

The above table no 2 shows the correlational value of internet addiction and psychological wellbeing of post graduate students. The obtained 'r' value is -.833 which indicates that there is an inverse relationship at 0.01 level. Thus, proving the hypothesis H1 stating that there is a significant relationship between internet addiction and psychological wellbeing among post graduate students of Bangalore district, indicating that less internet usage enhances the psychological well-being of the post

Table No. 3 shows the 't' value between male and female psychological wellbeing of post graduate students.

Variables	Male		Female		t value	Sig.
	M	SD	M	SD		
Meaningfulness	1.58	0.7	1.66	0.6	-.55 (N. S)	.326
Somatic	1.39	0.7	1.40	0.6	-.06 (N. S)	.452
Self-esteem	1.36	0.6	1.49	0.6	-.90 (N. S)	.657
Positive effect	1.21	0.8	1.47	0.7	-1.48 (N. S)	.299
Daily activities	1.55	0.5	1.72	0.5	-1.42 (N. S)	.121
Life satisfaction	.85	0.7	1.26	0.7	-2.25 (N. S)	.744
Suicidal	1.61	0.6	1.60	0.6	.074 (N. S)	.905
Personal control	1.09	0.7	1.5	0.6	-2.84 (N. S)	.752
Social support	1.52	0.8	1.5	0.6	-.22 (N. S)	.181
Tension	1.30	0.8	1.3	0.7	-.33(N. S)	.617
General efficiency	1.30	0.7	1.1	0.6	.68 (N. S)	.144
Wellness	1.33	0.8	1.6	0.6	-1.77 (N. S)	.007
Satisfaction	3.03	0.8	2.8	0.9	0.65 (N. S)	.791

NS: Not Significant.

Table 3 shows the significant difference of male and female post graduate students in psychological wellbeing facets. The obtained mean value for the facet of meaningfulness is 1.58 with SD being 0.7 for male and female is 1.66 with SD of 0.6 and 't' value is -.55, in the Somatic facet the obtained mean value is 1.39 with SD of 0.7 for male and female is 1.40 and SD is 0.6 with the 't' value of -.06, in the facet of Self-esteem the obtained mean is 1.36 with SD of 0.6 in male and 1.49 mean value with SD being 0.6 in female with 't' value of -.90. In the Positive effect the obtained mean is 1.21 with SD being 0.8 for male and mean value of 1.47 and SD 0.7 for female with the 't' value of -1.48, in the facet of daily activities the obtained mean value for male is 1.55 with SD being 0.5 and for female the mean value is 1.72 and SD being 0.5 with the 't' value of -1.42, in the life satisfaction facet the obtained mean score is .85 with SD being 0.7 for male and mean score of 1.26 with SD being 0.7 for female and 't' being -2.25.

In the Suicidal facet the obtained mean score for male is 1.61 with SD being 0.6 and 1.60 mean score with SD being 0.6 with 't' value .074. In the area of Personal control, the obtained mean score for male is 1.09 with the SD of 0.7 and 1.5 mean with the SD being 0.6 for female and the 't' being -2.84. In the facet of social support, the obtained mean score 1.52 with the SD being 0.8 for male and 1.5 mean score with SD being 0.6 with the 't' value of -.22. In the facet of Tension, the obtained mean score is 1.30 with SD being 0.8 for male and 1.3 mean with SD being 0.7 for female with the 't' value of -.33.

In the facet of General efficiency, the obtained mean score is 1.30 with SD being 0.7 for male and 1.1 mean with SD being 0.6 for female and the 't' value is .68. The obtained mean score in wellness facet for male is 1.33 with SD being 0.8 and 1.6 mean score with SD being 0.6 for female and the 't' value is 1.77. In the Satisfaction facets of psychological wellbeing the obtained mean score for male is 3.03 with SD being 0.8 and the mean score is 2.8 with SD being 0.9 for female with the 't' value being 0.65.

This reveals that there is no difference between male and female post graduate students in their well-being. Thus, rejecting the hypothesis H2 stating that "There is significant

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difference in the psychological well-being between the male and female post graduate students of Bangalore district.”

Table No. 4 showing significant difference between male and female Internet addiction levels

Variables	Male		Female		t value	Sig.
	M	SD	M	SD		
Salience	9.1	5.0	8.9	4.9	0.2 (N. S)	.93
Neglect of work	5.3	3.8	4.8	2.9	0.6 (N. S)	.03
Anticipation	3.7	1.8	3.7	1.7	-0.0 (N. S)	.79
Neglect social life	3.2	2.2	2.6	2.2	1.2 (N. S)	.67
Excessive usage	11.1	5.2	10.3	5.9	0.6 (N. S)	.65
Lack of control	6.1	3.3	5.2	3.0	1.1 (N. S)	.48

NS: Not Significant

Table 4 shows significant difference between male and female internet addiction levels. In the salience dimension the mean score of males were 9.18 with SD 5.0 whereas the mean score of females were 8.91 with SD 4.9 and t value of 0.23. The finding clearly indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female salience dimension. In the neglect of work dimension the mean score of males were 5.39 with SD 3.86 and the mean score of females were 4.8 with SD 2.9 and t value 0.6 which, stated no significant difference between male and female neglect of work dimension. In the anticipation dimension of internet addiction test, the mean score of males were 3.7 with SD 1.8 whereas the mean score of females were 3.7 with SD 1.7 and t value of -0.0 which showed no significant difference between male and female anticipation dimension.

In the Neglect social life dimension of internet addiction test, the mean score of males were 3.2 with SD 2.2 and whereas the mean score of females were 2.6 with SD 2.2 and t value 1.2 which showed no significant difference between male and female neglect social life score. Similarly, in excessive usage the mean score of males were 11.1 with SD 5.2 and whereas the mean score of females were 10.3 with SD 5.6 and t value 0.6 which showed no significant difference between male and female scores. Further, in lack of control dimension the mean score of males were 6.1 with SD 3.3 and whereas the mean score of females were 5.3 with SD 3.0 and t value of 1.1 which indicated no significant difference between male and female lack of control variable.

This reveals that there is no difference in the internet addiction between male and female post graduate students. Thus, rejecting the hypothesis H3 stating that “There is a significant difference in the internet addiction among male and female post graduate students of Bangalore district.”

CONCLUSION

There is a significant relationship between internet addiction and psychological well-being among post graduate students of Bangalore district.” From the finding, it is concluded that internet addiction has inverse relationship with the psychological wellbeing of post graduate students which indicates that as the usage of internet increases the psychological wellbeing of students decreases. However, the data does not support H2 that, there is significant difference in the psychological well-being of the male and female post graduate students of Bangalore district.” Likewise, H3 is also rejected as no significant difference in the levels of

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internet addiction among male and female post graduate students of Bangalore district was found.

IMPLICATIONS

Awareness can be generated to enlighten the students about the increasing effect of internet addiction on the psychological wellbeing of the individuals. Psycho-education workshops can be organized at colleges for teachers, students and non-teaching staff to generate a better understanding and coping mechanism to deal with Internet addiction effectively. Post graduate students can be elucidated with various ways and techniques to enhance their psychological wellbeing. Project such as psychological wellbeing development and internet addiction control management can be organized in affiliation with Indian government for planning and growth of better India. Further research can be done to generate findings that can support the developmental projects which can lead to preventive measures.

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Conflict of Interest

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