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TOPIC

**INTERNET ADDICTION, PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND SLEEP
DEPRIVATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

AUTHORS

Dr Saleem Abbas

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology, UMT, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan.

saleemabbas2011@yahoo.com

Ayesha Rafiq

Department of Psychology

Riphah International University of Faisalabad Campus, Punjab, Pakistan.

Kalsoom Yasin

Research and information officer

Din Industry, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

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INTERNET ADDICTION, PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND SLEEP DEPRIVATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Dr Saleem Abbas

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology, UMT, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan.

saleemabbas2011@yahoo.com

Ayesha Rafiq

Department of Psychology

Riphah International University of Faisalabad Campus, Punjab, Pakistan.

Kalsoom Yasin

Research and information officer

Din Industry, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Abstract

The main objective of the present study was to explain the relationship of internet addiction, sleep deprivation and psychological distress among university students. After a detailed literature review, it was hypothesised that 1). there is a remarkable association between internet addiction, sleep deprivation and psychological distress among university students. 2). Internet addiction predicts sleep deprivation and psychological distress among university students. For this study, 400 students, including 200 males and 200 females, were designated randomly from the diverse government and private universities. In order to measure the variables, the internet addiction scale, sleep quality scale and Kessler psychological distress scale were used. Data was analysed through the SPSS-26 version by applying Pearson correlation and linear regression analysis. Findings of the current research have shown that there is a significant relationship between prevailing internet addiction, sleep deprivation and psychological distress in university students $<.05$ While it has also been approved that internet addiction is a strong predictor of sleep deprivation and psychological distress in university students ($P<.05$). At the end of the article, implementation and limitation of the current study, the recommendations for future studies, have been discussed in detail.

Keywords: Internet Addiction, Psychological Distress, Sleep Deprivation.

Introduction

The excessive and unhealthy use of the Internet causes many physical and psychological problems (Fumero et al., 2018). The word internet addiction is frequently used to explain that type of internet use which results in issues with a person's mental health, relationships, education, or work. The Internet offers a quick and easy means to connect with people and

learn the information required for global conversation (Zhang et al., 2018). It has been noted that the internet's growth has significantly increased globally as the digital industrial revolution reaches its highest point. As technology develops, new problems and circumstances are bound to develop (Bener et al., 2019).

Internet addiction can be explained as a use that is risky and unrestricted in nature that leads to unfavourable consequences, including a practical, public, emotional, or disability. Academics refer to this issue as excessive use of internet dysfunction, or habitual use of the internet, classifying it as a particular sort of behavioural addiction. Similar to drug addiction and other forms of dependency, internet addiction is a true reliance and has been termed "the modern addiction" by researchers (Mohamed & Bernouss, 2020). The term internet addiction refers to compulsive online behaviour that disrupts daily life and stresses out social connections. It seems that the Internet can be considered a dominant medium in our culture, given that young people make up most of the population and that many educated young people utilise it (Lin et al., 2018).

Teenage life is becoming increasingly influenced by computers, and internet addiction has a severe impact on public health, family relationships, and academic achievement. The internet must be used to teach adolescents (Huang et al., 2020). There are many dangers associated with excessive internet use. The internet is associated with a high frequency of mental health comorbidities, such as anxiety and mood disorders, in addition to maintaining a foundation for the indication of psychiatric disorders. These investigations found a connection between internet addiction and both severe distress and functional impairment (King et al., 2020).

It further claims that studies investigating its health impacts, such as back pain, migraines, weight problems, poor sleep, and psychomotor abnormalities, have been conducted. Internet addiction can also cause problems in terms of a person's bodily needs by lowering the quality of sleep, which is essential for health. Insomnia and other sleeping issues are also impacted by internet addiction (Kocas & Sasmaz, 2018). Insomnia and other sleep disorders are also impacted by internet addiction. Additionally, according to other studies, those who use the internet a lot experience more cases of insomnia since it significantly disrupts their sleep and waking cycles. This, however, also demonstrates how little is known about how internet addiction and sleep are related (Jain et al., 2020).

The best way for individuals to chill out is to go to sleep. After getting a good night's sleep, people feel rejuvenated and prepared for the following day. Sleep quality is an essential component in determining mental wellness. Internet addiction is one of the greatest problems, particularly for young folks. It is crucial that this study shed some light on how internet

addiction impacts college students' ability to sleep because of this. Lack of sleep weakens the body and mind, leading to behavioural issues. It typically indicates oncoming psychological problems. Changes in sleep physiology may accompany several sleep disorders. One factor that impacts the quality and amount of sleep is pathological internet use, commonly referred to as excessive internet use (Wang et al., 2019).

As it has been frequently discussed, university students suffer from sleep deprivation, problematic use of the internet, and mental health-related issues. The use of the internet now is necessary; if it were not for the internet, the world might not have survived. Due to the nature of their work, students frequently utilise the internet, and it is helpful to them when they are completing assignments, reading books online, and conducting research. Overuse of the internet can lead to many issues, such as sleep deprivation, psychological discomfort, and many other issues, in addition to the good and helpful uses of the internet that help students become more effective.

Rationale

The research will close the information gap and make it easier for people to determine how internet use impacts their mental and physical well-being. The use of the internet is widespread all over the world, as we described in the introduction chapter. However, people are still becoming mindful of the negative impacts of unnecessary or problematic use of the internet. There have been numerous studies on problematic use of the internet and mental health-related issues, but there are still gaps in the literature on issues with stress and sleep. This study will fill these gaps.

A person's personal and social lives are impacted by excessive internet use in addition to sleep. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct a study to determine what kinds of issues internet addiction results in. This project will make students, parents, professors, and other university faculty members more aware of the negative impacts of excessive internet use as well as its causes and origins. Additionally, this study aids in establishing a link between problematic internet use and sleep deprivation as well as psychological discomfort. The excessive use of the internet, which is growing daily, is the primary motivation behind choosing this issue. Thus, my goal in this study is to examine how internet addiction affects college students.

Hypotheses

The following are the study's hypotheses:

- There would be a strong significant association between student's internet addiction, lack of sleep, and psychological distress.

- Internet addiction would be a predictor of sleep deprivation and psychological distress among university students.

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher utilised a correlational research design for the present study.

Participants

The current study's population is 400(n=200male, n=200female) university students studying in universities of Faisalabad were selected randomly.

Inclusion / Exclusion Criteria of the Sample

Inclusion Criteria

As an inclusion criterion, the characteristics of participants that were required for the research design are listed. Participants who satisfied with the following study requirements were included in order to prevent sampling error:

- The participants were chosen from Faisalabad's public and private universities.
- Students enrolled in universities between the ages of 18 and 30.

Exclusion Criteria

Any participant traits that might have an impact on the outcome are included.

The following criteria contributed to the exclusion of certain study participants:

- Emerging adults outside of the chosen age range.
- Students who are not enrolled in Faisalabad-based universities but rather at other educational institutions.

Instruments

The following tools are utilised in this study:

Demographic Sheet

The examiner created a personal information form with twenty-two items.

Chen Internet Addiction Scale

The Chen Internet scale consisted of 26 items, which measures the five domains of internet-related symptoms and related issues. This scale has very high reliability and validity (Chen et al., 2003).

Sleep Quality Scale

This is a 28-item scale that measures six facets of the quality of sleep: difficulty waking up, daytime symptoms, recovery from sleep, trouble falling asleep and remaining asleep, and sleep satisfaction (Yi et al., 2006).

Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler et al., 2003)

This scale consists of 10 items that depict various emotional states when answered on a five-level scale from one to five.

Procedure

After approving the summary, the psychology department of Riphah International University Faisalabad authorised permission to gather data. Participants in the study were randomly selected. Participants were only included if they matched the criterion for inclusion. They will be assured that the answers they provide will remain confidential and that they can leave the research at any moment without being charged. Following the administration of the questionnaire to the participants,

Research Site

A sample of 400 students from several Faisalabad government and private universities (200 males and 200 women) participated in this study. Students' information was gathered by contacting the universities selected for data collection.

Data Analysis

The proposed research hypotheses will be assessed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and t-tests using SPSS version 26.

Ethical Considerations

The participants' welfare, rights, and dignity were protected throughout the research process. The following ethical considerations are kept in mind as this research is conducted:

- Authors' permission will be asked for the evaluation tools.
- The necessary institute authorities approve the grant.
- After being made aware of the study's goal, the participants' informed consent was obtained before distributing the questionnaire.
- Additionally, it was made clear to study participants that participation was entirely up to them and that they had the right to withdraw their consent at any moment.
- Confidentiality will be ensured for this research work, and permission to use the data will be requested.

Results

This chapter provides a survey analysis of 400 complete responses from university students to find the relationship among the variables. With the help of the SPSS, results were obtained.

Several investigations were done to verify the connection. There are several sections in this chapter. The correlations between the variables are evaluated in each section in a specific way.

Table No. 1: *The demographic table has prevailing important data regarding the participant's characteristics (N=400).*

Variable	%	M	SD
Gender			
Male	50		
Female	50		
Age			
Socioeconomic status		21.76	2.168
Lower	1.5		
Middle	91.0		
Upper	7.5		
Education			
BS	68.19		
BSc	.11		
DPT	.3		
LLB	.1		
MPhil	27.1		
M.A	.3		
M.Sc	1.5		
PhD	.3		
Religion			

The demographic data included gender, age, socioeconomic level, education, and religion in the current study.

Table No. 2: *This table shows the correlation among variables of the study, i.e. internet addiction, sleep deprivation and psychological distress in university students (N=400).*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
Internet Addiction	61.70	12.654	-----	.345**	.308**
Sleep Deprivation	38.38	0.412			.317**
Psychological Distress	26.94	6.467			

P<.05.

Significant correlations between internet addiction, sleep deprivation, and psychological distress are indicated in Table 4.2, with P values of .345** and .308**, the corresponding means are 61.70, 38.38, and 26.94, and the corresponding standard deviations are 12.654, 10.412 and

6.467. There is a significant relationship between sleep deprivation and psychological distress, with a P value of .317**.

Table No. 3: An overview of the 400 university students' (N = 400) linear regression study with internet addiction that predicted lack of sleep and psychological distress.

Predictors	R	R ²	Adj-R ²	F	Df	P
Internet Addiction	.404	.163	.159	38.6	397	.000

* $p < .05$

According to data in Table 3, internet addiction is a significant predictor of sleep deprivation and psychological distress in university students, with a $P < .05$, which is .000.

Table No. 4: An overview of linear regression research with 400 university students (N=400) found that internet addiction was a significant predictor of sleep deprivation and psychological distress.

Model	df	Sum of Square	Mean Square	f	Sig
Regression	2	10410.143	5205.072	38.636	.000 ^b
Residual	397	53483.857	134.720		
Total	399	63894.000			

Independent Variable: Internet Addiction

Dependent Variables: Sleep Deprivation and Psychological Distress.

Table No. 5: Using online addiction as a predictor of sleep deprivation and psychological discomfort among university students (N=400), a linear regression analysis was conducted.

Model	Un-Standardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	P
	β	SE	B		
Constant	37.222	2.881		12.921	.000
Psychological distress	.433	.095	.221	4.570	.000
Sleep deprivation	.334	.059	.275	5.675	.000

*** $p < .05$

The findings shown in Table No. 5 indicated that internet addiction is a significant predictor of psychological distress and sleep deprivation, with $P < .000$.

Discussion

The investigation findings are discussed and evaluated in the current chapter (Discussion). The findings have been incorporated with those from past research. The topic of discussion will be the underlying causes of university students' increased risk of sleep deprivation and psychological distress as a result of problematic internet use. Numerous studies have comprehensively documented numerous powerful causes and influences that permeate the prevailing culture and

contribute to problematic internet use. By emphasising these, we can better understand the findings of the current study about sleep deprivation and psychological suffering in college students.

One of the underlying reasons why college students use the internet so much is possible to be internet addiction. Researchers have dubbed internet addiction "the modern addiction" since it is a true reliance, just like drug addiction and other forms of dependency (Bisen & Deshpande, 2020). Internet addiction refers to the overuse of the internet and the problems it results in. However, incorrect and excessive Internet use can have a variety of negative impacts, with sleep deprivation and psychological distress being the two most significant ones. The present research focuses on the consequences of awkward internet use, namely how it affects personal relationships, academic or professional performance, and the user's physical and mental health. This chapter also offers suggestions and outcomes for aspiring scholars. A few other findings from the study are also given for the readers' curiosity and because they require further debate.

The first prediction of our research has been approved $P < .05$ which is .000. There are a number of causes for this phenomenon of the outcomes, and the most prevalent of these causes will be briefly reviewed below. Due to its uses and opportunities, the internet has become a crucial part of our lives. However, unsuitable and extra internet use can cause several negative effects, and these negative effects are caused by internet addiction. People of all ages can experience negative consequences from internet addiction, but young adults, such as university students, are the most at risk (Tomczyk et al., 2020).

Numerous research has supported the link between heavy internet use, restful sleep, physical activity, and improved physical and mental health. Everyone, but especially younger generations, needs to sleep. Compulsive use of the internet has a significant impact on sleep patterns, sleep cycles, insomnia, and other sleep-related problems. Students who use the internet excessively often experience sleep deprivation, and this phenomenon may also occur in reverse, with students using the internet more frequently when their sleep cycle is disrupted. The quality of sleep, which is essential to human health, can be harmed by internet addiction (Koças & Saşmaz, 2018).

Finally, the initial hypothesis of our study that there would be a strong association between variables of the present study has been confirmed, and this prediction was also supported by several of the research stated above. We can, therefore, the conclusion that there is a strong correlation between problematical use of the internet, lack of sleep, and psychological discomfort among the targeted population. The current study's findings are consistent and confirmed by previous studies. The second prediction of our study that internet addiction is a significant predictor of sleep-related issues and psychological distress among the students studying in different universities in Pakistan was also confirmed ($P < .05$) with $P < .05$. The new study's findings are combined with those from earlier studies.

The rapid growth of the internet is the primary cause of the significant findings. It has been observed that the quick development of the internet has a detrimental effect on daily life and leads to a number of issues. Additionally, it has been noted that individuals who use the internet problematically are more likely to engage in violent behaviour, exhibit high levels of anxiety and depression, and exhibit psychological distress, all of which are major contributors to sleep deprivation (Alam et al., 2014).

Although research has indicated that Problematic use of the internet affects sleep dispossession and psychological distress in university students of both sexes equally, many of these studies have also suggested effects of internet addiction that have not been confirmed in the current study, necessitating further investigation of this phenomenon in future studies.

Implications

This study will help to realise the occurrence of existing psychological complications and sleep deprivation due to internet habits among university students.

Furthermore, this study will also help parents and teachers to identify the major underlying factors that are behind this internet addiction so that they can pay attention and control their timings of internet use. By controlling their habit and time on the Internet, they can pay more attention to their studies.

Limitations

- The current study identifies some shortcomings that, if corrected in further investigations, will be helpful.
- Only undergraduates were chosen. The study's findings cannot, therefore, be applied to all age groups.
- Furthermore, we have solely gathered information from Faisalabad-based universities.

Recommendations

- Due to limited time, we were only able to include university students in the current study; however, we must consider persons of all ages.
- For this study, we only included students from Faisalabad universities; still, the population of Pakistan as a whole has to be examined.
- The results of the current study have made it easier to comprehend how common sleep deprivation and psychological disturbance are as a result of excessive internet use. To examine further effects, we must include more factors.

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