

Internet Addiction, Insomnia and Psychological Distress Among University Students

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Abstract

The present research aimed to explore the relationship between Internet Addiction, Insomnia and Psychological Distress Among University Students. Study variables were also compared along the demographic variables of age, monthly family income, daily internet usage hours, gender, student residential status, university type and family system. Data were collected from university students ($N=300$) was collected using convenient sampling. Chen Internet Addiction (Chen, Weng, Su, Wu, & Yang, 2003), Insomnia Severity Index (Morin et al., 2003) and Kessler Psychological Distress (Kessler et al., 2002) were used to collect data from the sample. The result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation revealed that Internet Addiction was positively related with Insomnia, Internet Addiction was positively related with Psychological Distress while Insomnia was positively related with Psychological Distress. No significant relationship was found between Internet Addiction and age. Age had a significant negative relationship with Insomnia and Psychological Distress. Furthermore, Monthly Family Income had a significant positive relationship with Internet Addiction and Insomnia and no significant relationship was found between Psychological Distress. Correlational analysis revealed that Daily Internet Usage Hours was positive relationship with Internet Addiction. No significant differences were found between men and women on Internet Addiction and Insomnia. In addition to this, significant gender differences were found between men and women on Psychological Distress with women scoring higher than men. Significant Students Residential Status was found between Day Scholar and Hostelite Students. Hostelite Students score higher on insomnia as compared to Day Scholar Students and Day Scholar Students scored high on Psychological Distress. Furthermore, Psychological Distress was higher in Government Universities as compared to Private Universities. Moreover, no significant differences were found between Internet Addiction and Family System. Implications and limitations of the study as well as suggestions for future research have been discussed.

Background

Internet plays a substantial role in shaping people's life in different manners. People use it to communicate, get entertained, and perform academic activities. Usage of internet can affect its consumers' life in both negative and positive ways. The optimistic role of internet has been admired by everyone, but it is unappreciated by various researchers as its overuse can be detrimental (Beard, 2005). Unnecessary usage of internet has addicted different age groups. Occurrence of insomnia is mostly found in college and university students. Insomnia is a mental health problem in which the person who is suffering unable to get enough sleep (Lam, 2014; La et al., 2020) Psychological distress is a public health problem globally, affecting the younger generation more and more. While mental health issue impacts society as a whole, but university students have a higher rate of psychological disorders as compared to general population (Kumar, Shaheen, & Rasool, 2016).

Objective

- To examine the relationship between internet addiction, insomnia and psychological distress among university students.
- To compare the demographic variables along study variables among university students.

Hypothesis

- Internet addiction will have a positive relationship with insomnia and psychological distress among university students.
- Insomnia will have a positive relationship with psychological distress among university students.
- Age will have a negative relationship with internet addiction among university students.
- Daily internet usage hours will have a positive relationship with internet addiction.
- Monthly family income will have a positive relationship with internet addiction among university students.
- Monthly family income will have a negative relationship with insomnia and psychological distress among university students.
- Men will score higher on internet addiction as compared to women among university students.
- Women will score higher on insomnia and psychological distress as compared to men among university students.
- Students belonging to nuclear families will score higher on internet addiction as compared to those from a joint family.

Method

- Sample: 300 University Students
- Gender: Men and Women
- Convenient sampling technique

Measures

Sr.#	Scale Title	No of items	Subscales	No of Scores	Response Option	Alpha Reliability
1	Chen Internet Addiction Scale (Chen, Weng, Su, Wu, & Yang, 2003)	26	1. Compulsive Symptoms 2. Withdrawal Symptoms 3. Tolerance Symptoms 4. Time Management Symptoms 5. Interpersonal Health and Problems	5 Subscale Scores Total Score	4-point likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 4= Strongly Agree)	.94 (Ko et al., 2009)
2	Insomnia Severity Index (Morin et al., 2003)	7	_____	Total Score	5-point likert scale (0= no problem, 4= very severe problem)	.90 (Morin et al., 2011)
3	Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler et al., 2002)	10	_____	Total Score	5-point likert scale (1= none of the time, 5= all of the time)	.91 (Pereira et al., 2019)

Procedure

- Formal permission from authors of questionnaires.
- Informed consent was taken from the students (i.e ensuring confidentiality of their identities and information, ensuring willingness and informing them about the purpose of the study).
- Confidentiality of data also ensured that data would not be shared with irrelevant person.
- Respondents were right to quit at any time.
- Students were encouraged to seek clarification in case of any ambiguity and questionnaire were administered individually.
- Verbal and written instructions were given to respondents.
- Individual questionnaires were administered.
- Respondents were provided with the questionnaire booklet that included a demographic sheet and three questionnaires.
- In the end, the respondents were appreciated for their participation in the study.
- After the data collection from participants the data was entered into the SPSS-23 for statistical analyses.

Results

- Internet addiction had a significant positive relationship with insomnia and psychological distress.
- Insomnia had a significantly positively associated with psychological distress.
- Age had a significant negative relationship with both insomnia and psychological distress.
- Both internet addiction and insomnia had a significant positive relationship with monthly family income.
- Internet addiction, insomnia and psychological distress have a significant positive relationship with number of daily internet usage hours.
- Significant negative relationship had found between age and number of daily internet usage hours.
- Women scored significantly higher on psychological distress as compared to men.
- Hostellites scored significantly higher on insomnia as compared to day scholars.
- Day scholars scored significantly higher on psychological distress as compared to hostellites.
- Government university students had significantly higher psychological distress as compared to students from private university students.
- Nuclear family students had significantly higher psychological distress as compared to students from joint family system.

Conclusion

Internet addiction is a common problem in Pakistan and affect many aspect of students life and performance. Identifying students with internet addiction is important because this addiction often coexists with other psychological problems.

Implication

The study will be significant for educational institutions in a sense that they must understand and spread the guidelines about the use of internet and in case of more internet usage how the mental health is affected.

Study also provides the ground for the developing programs to reduce the use of internet and to make people, especially university students, aware that how much the quality of sleep is important for mental health.

Limitation

The sample was limited to the few universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad therefore it is not possible to generalize the sample to the all university students across the country. Correlation technique has been used in current research, so the statement supports the correlation rather than causalities.

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