

Evaluation of Anxiety in Excessive Use of Social Sites amongst Medical and Dental Students

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ABSTRACT:

Background: decreased face to face interactions and social isolation has increased psychiatric morbidity in the society like such as increased depression, anxiety, compulsive behaviour, loneliness and narcissism. **Aims and Objectives:** The purpose of the study was to find out the use of social media sites by college students and its impact on their social relationships. **Materials and Method:** Cross sectional study was conducted at tertiary care hospital sample for 508 students between the ages of 17 to 26 years for more than 6 months. . The study was conducted using purposive sampling technique. The socio-demographic data and anxiety were assessed using a self-constructed tool and Zung Self-rating Anxiety Scale respectively. The scores obtained through the administration of the questionnaire were subjected to statistical analysis in the statistical package for social science, version 17. **Results:** Maximum percentage (38.6%) of respondents' daily internet usage was 2 hours . 2.6% students used internet even up to 10 hours/day. 9.1% respondents had moderate internet addiction. Out of 229 students who had used internet for 1-4 years, 17.6% respondents had anxiety symptoms. Also, out of 141 respondents who used internet for 5-8 years, 15.6% students exhibited anxiety symptoms. **Conclusion:** when tested for internet addiction, the group that had moderate internet addiction was more likely to have anxiety (23.9%) as compared to the counterparts who either did not have internet addiction or had only mild internet addiction. This correlation was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). These findings point out that there is a relation between excessive use of social sites and anxiety and those spending more time on internet have more chances of having anxiety.

INTRODUCTION:

Due to decreased face-to-face interaction and addiction to a virtual world of relationships, social networking users run a serious risk to their health. Their focus shifts to immediate gratification and needs. Users spent an average of 7 hours per month on Facebook, according to data from the U.S. Internet activity collected in January 2010 by Nielson Online. Facebook is now the biggest time waster online as a result. 53 percent of Americans check their Facebook profile before getting out of bed, and 35 percent do so multiple times a day (people's addiction to, 2010). Social networking sites have significantly contributed to people

feeling more alone, according to Aric Sigman, a fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine. Absence of face-to-face interaction may alter how genes function, interfere with immunological responses, disrupt hormonal levels, affect how arteries function, and affect mental functioning. The risk of illnesses like cancer, strokes, heart disease, and dementia would rise as a result ("online networking harms," 2019). He was well connected in his research. The biological implications of social networking, which was published on *Biologist*, shows that since 1987, the rise in the usage of electronic media has resulted in a substantial decline in face-to-face social interaction. It has revealed the first proof that changes in the transcription of human genes are connected to social isolation. According to DNA research, individuals with significant levels of social isolation had distinct expression patterns for 209 genes (Sigman, 2009).

Facebook addiction is the third most common addiction problem in the world, behind addiction to narcotics and alcohol. According to a study, those under the age of 25 are more prone to have insomnia from monitoring their friends' posts. A man in his late thirties named Jerry's addiction to social networking sites caused him to lose his family, his career, and his life. When his wife tweeted him, "She wants divorce," he then realised how hurt he was. The Social Media Addicts Association was founded by him in the present (SMAA). It enables them to discuss their personal experiences with SNS addiction and helps them get well.

Speculations and recent research Numerous studies link social media use to unfavourable effects like increased depression, anxiety, compulsive behavior, loneliness, and narcissism. Concerns about these potential harmful effects of social media use are raised by the growing use of it by young adults. If using social media can be linked to negative outcomes, researchers need to focus more on figuring out what contributes to negative mental health and how to treat these outcomes.

It's not novel to think that using the internet too much could be harmful to one's welfare. The Homenet Project gave 93 households with no prior internet experience access to the internet and a computer in 1995, and over the next several years, it monitored their psychological well-being (Kraut et al., 2002). The researchers came to the conclusion that more internet use was linked to more indicators of loneliness and despair after the first year of usage. The term "id disorder" was first used by Rosen, Cheever, and Carrier in 2012 to describe the detrimental correlation between technology use and psychological health. 1143 college-age students were investigated by Rosen et al. in 2013 regarding their Facebook usage. One or more Facebook usage characteristics (overall use, number of friends, and use for image management) were found to be predictive with major depressive illness, dysthymia, bipolar disorder, mania, narcissism, anti-social personality disorder, and obsessive behaviour, according to the researchers (Rosen et al., 2013).

Numerous research have also connected social media to compulsive behaviour and anxiety. According to a recent poll, 45% of British adults said they get frightened or uncomfortable when they can't access their email or social networking accounts (Fitzgerald, 2012).

MATERIALS AND METHOD:

Cross sectional study was conducted at tertiary care hospital, Uttar Pradesh and a sample from 508 students of the hospital who had internet access for more than 6 months was collected. The study was conducted using purposive sampling technique.

The purpose of the study was to find out the use of social media sites by college students and its impact on their social relationships. The socio-demographic data was collected by using a self-constructed tool. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part was designed to elicit general information such as name, age, type of social networking sites used, profile created, frequency, etc. the second part was designed to collect specific information using Zung Self-rating Anxiety Scale.

The data was obtained for the selected population between the ages of 17 to 26 years. The scores obtained through the administration of the questionnaire were subjected to statistical analysis in the statistical package for social science, version 17.

The research has made use of survey method. Survey was conducted among randomly selected social networking sites users with a sample size of 508 between age group of 17 and 26 years who were college students. The age group (17-26yrs) was chosen since they are the heavy users of social networking sites and also early adopters of advanced technological applications.

Students not having internet access or having internet access for less than 6 months were excluded from the study.

The study was conducted after approval from the ethical committee.

RESULTS:

The largest percentage of respondents (48.4%) was below 20 years of age followed by nearly the same percentage of respondents (47.2%) in the age of 21-23 years. Only 4.3% respondents fell in the age between 24-26 years (cumulative percentage-100).

Total sample comprised of 56.3% females and 43.7% males (cumulative percentage 100).the largest percentage of the respondents were using internet for 1-4 years(cumulative percent-54.7) while, Only 12.4% (cumulative percentage-100) were using internet for 9-12 years .

Fig.1

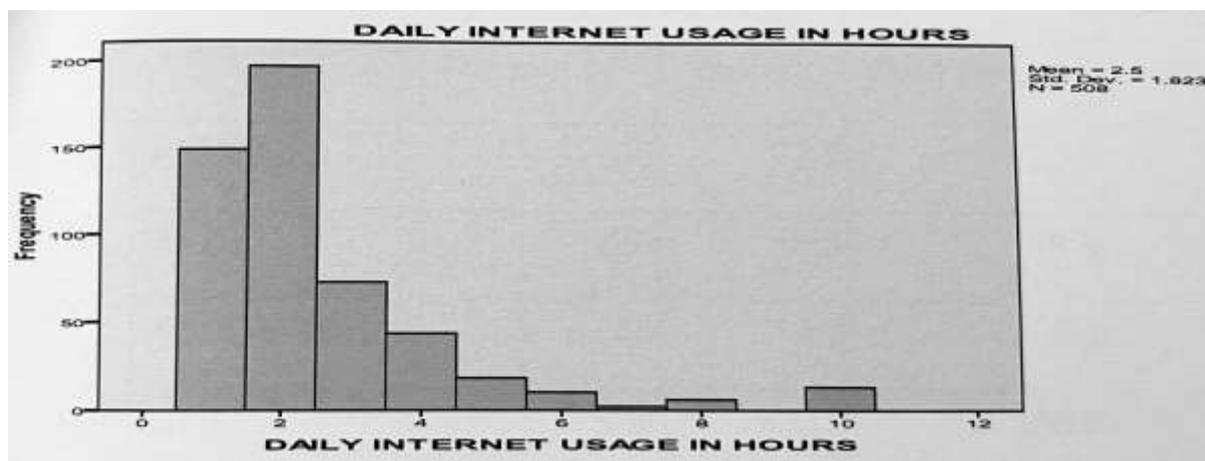


Fig.1.0

Maximum percentage (38.6%) of respondents’ daily internet usage was 2 hours followed by 29.1% who used internet for one hour and 2.6% students used internet even up to 10 hours/day (cumulative percentage -100).The cumulative percentage for the respondents who used internet for 4-7 hours/ day ranged between 90.4- 97.4 which was much higher than those who used internet for 1-2 hours/day. (Fig.1)

Scores of internet addiction test indicated that 58.3% suffered from mild internet addiction (cumulative percentage-90.9) while, only 9.1% respondents had moderate internet addiction (cumulative percent-100).

TABLE 1.0

		RANGE OF ZUNG SELF-RATING ANXIETY SCALE		TOTAL	
		NORMAL	ANXIETY		
RANGE OF DURATION OF INTERNET USE IN YEARS		COUNT	229	49	278
	1-4 years	% WITHIN RANGE OF INTERNET USE IN YEARS	82.4%	17.6%	100.0%
		COUNT	141	26	167
	5-8 years	% WITHIN RANGE OF INTERNET USE IN YEARS	84.4%	15.6%	100.0%
		COUNT	55	8	63

	9-12 years	% WITHIN RANGE OF INTERNET USE IN YEARS	87.3%	12.7%	100.0%
		COUNT	425	83	508
Total		% WITHIN RANGE OF INTERNET USE IN YEARS	83.7%	16.3%	100.0%

The range of Zung Self-rating Anxiety Scale was divided into two groups. Out of the total sample 425 students (cumulative percentage-83.7) exhibited no anxiety issues while, 83 participants (cumulative percentage-100) were in the anxiety group.

Out of 229 students who had used internet for 1-4 years, 17.6% respondents had anxiety symptoms. Also, out of 141 respondents who used internet for 5-8 years, 15.6% students exhibited anxiety symptoms. Table 1

TABLE 2.O

			RANGE OF ZUNG SELF-RATING SCALE		Total
			NORMAL	ANXIETY	
		Count	150	16	166
RANGE OF INTERNET ADDICTION TEST	NORMAL	% within RANGE OF INTERNET ADDICTION TEST	90.4%	9.6%	100.0%
		Count	240	56	296
	MILD	% within RANGE OF INTERNET ADDICTION TEST	81.1%	18.9%	100.0%
		Count	35	11	46
	MODERATE	% within RANGE OF INTERNET ADDICTION TEST	76.1%	23.9%	100.0%
		Count	425	83	508

TOTAL		% within RANGE OF INTERNET ADDICTION TEST	83.7%	16.3%	100.0%
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Out of 362 students who used daily internet for 1-3 hours/day, 13% respondents had anxiety symptoms. Besides, out of 49 respondents who used internet for 4-6 hours/day, 31% revealed anxiety issues. Total 240 students fell in the range of mid internet addiction (table 2). Amongst them, 18.9% respondents indicated anxiety. Also, 35 respondents had moderate internet addiction. In this category, 23.9% respondents exhibited anxiety.

DISCUSSION:

In this study, it was observed that the students who were using internet since 1-4 years were most likely to have anxiety symptoms as compared to their counterparts. But this correlation was not found to be significant ($p > 0.05$).

Those who were spending excessive time on social networking sites were found to be having significantly higher scores of anxiety using ZSRAS ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, when tested for internet addiction, the group that had moderate internet addiction was more likely to have anxiety (23.9%) as compared to the counterparts who either did not have internet addiction or had only mild internet addiction. This correlation was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). These findings point out that there is a relation between excessive use of social sites and anxiety and those spending more time on internet have more chances of having anxiety. This result corroborates with the results of existing studies. A study conducted by Anxiety UK in July 2012 reported that more than half (53%) of the respondents said use of social media sites had changed their behaviour, with half (51%) of those saying the impact had been negative (Fitzgerald, 2012). In 2011, a study conducted by Lenhart et al reported that those who use internet excessively have views less positive than those of nominal social media-using adults (Lenhart et al., 2011).

Thus those who were spending excessive time on social networking sites are more likely to suffer from anxiety.

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