

# Internet Addictive Behaviours and Subjective Wellbeing among College Students

Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat\*

---

## ABSTRACT

---

*Remarkable increase of internet use in recent many years has cultivated internet addictive practices, particularly in youthful grown-ups. In India, students using internet go through enormous distressing circumstances and are at a great risk. The aim of the present study was to study the subjective happiness of college students and their using of internet. The present study was conducted on five college students of Bhopal district of Madhya Pradesh. The sample of the present study consists of 180 college students, energetically reported their responses on Internet Addiction Test and Subjective Happiness Scale respectively. Present study was descriptive in nature and different statistical methods were used like t test, chi square and analysis of variance. The results of the study revealed that 45.3% college students experiencing below average subjective happiness, 36.7% experiencing average happiness and 18% students had above average level. It was also found that 34.2% students had no internet addiction, 29.5% had mild level while as 36.3% had moderate level of internet addiction. The present study also revealed that students who had higher level of using internet possess low subjective happiness.*

---

**Key Words:** *Internet addiction; college students; subjective wellbeing.*

## INTRODUCTION

Internet has played a significant role in our life and it made its users or customers so busy that they now became its

---

\* Research Scholar, School of Education, Barkatullah University Bhopal Email:[bsameer877@gmail.com](mailto:bsameer877@gmail.com)

patients (Kuss, Griffiths, Karila 2014). Habit of consuming more and more time on internet has been perceived from the previous two decades, and in this way, measures have been taken to avoid such habit, because of its wild and destructive impacts on college students. (Young, 1998 & Beard, 2005) Harmful impacts of unreasonable use of internet particularly for playing games were found in different Asian nations and were subsequently discovered to be available across different societies and populaces (Ho RC, Zhang, Tsang, Toh, Pan, Lu, *et al* 2014). Addictive examples are seen in different spaces like gaming, sexual requirements, music, dancing, message etc. The different parts like unreasonable use, loss of control, withdrawal highlights, resistance and other addictive problems have additionally been discovered with addictive internet utilization goes from hereditary elements, natural weaknesses, mental issues and social issues (Cash 2012, Dalal & Basu 2016).

At one side it is the need of an hour to introduce internet facility in the classroom but at another side it creates various psychological problems among its users. (Heo, et al., 2014, Prakash 2017) Internet affords various chances to its users by providing rewards and gift vouchers which in turn motivates them to consume more and more time on internet. (Prakash 2017) has been shown from various studies that using of internet has mild levels of addictive behaviour among its users but possess more psychological problems like depression, anxiety etc. (Prakash, 2017).

As per few studies conducted at various places revealed that the long period of course duration puts number of worrying and tense situations on students which in turn

affects their various dimensions like academic performance, financial matters, communication gap etc. (Nath, Chodhari 2016). Personal or subjective well being of the students is a main concern in schools and colleges which leads them addictive behaviour by consuming using more and more time on internet, which in turn affects their interaction, emotional stress, low grades in academics, poor mental health and other related issues. It has been also revealed that the students who possess anxiety and depression have more addictive internet behaviour (Nalwa, Anand, Panchu 2003) There are few students who are not happy and comfortable in their personal or subjective life, wants to spare their precious time on internet so as to get entertainment and in this way releases their psychological problems (Prasad, *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, it is the need of an hour to assess subjective or personal of students and their internet addiction levels.

### **SAMPLE**

The sample consists of 180 students selected from five colleges of Bhopal district Madhya Pradesh. Two types of tests were administered on students namely Youngs Internet Addiction Test (IAT), a reliable tool which measures internet usage of students. It consists of 20 items. Similarly Subjective Happiness Scale developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) consists of 4 items.

### **ANALYSIS**

For data analysis, different statistical methods were used like mean, analysis of variance, S.D, t- test.

## RESULTS

The present study revealed that 45.3% students experiencing subjective happiness below average, 36.7% experiencing average level while as 18% college students possess above average scores.

Of the total sample selected (N=180), 41.66% of students reported of experiencing subjective happiness below the average, 40.55% had average happiness levels, and only 17.77% had scores above the average. The below table shows the gender distribution as compared to SHS. In this study, 41.17% of males and 42.10% of females were below the average happiness score, whereas only 23.52% of males and 12.63% of females were above the average. Of the study group, 35.29% of males and 45.26% of females were in the average range of happiness. However, there was no significant difference ( $P = 0.508$ ) between gender and subjective happiness.

Table 1: Subjective happiness scale (SHS) distribution according to gender of students

	SHS		Gender
	Male %	Female %	Total %
<b>&lt;4.4</b>	35(41.17)	40(42.10)	75(41.66)
<b>4.5-5</b>	30(35.29)	43(45.26)	73(40.55)
<b>&gt;5.6</b>	20(23.52)	12(12.63)	32(17.77)
<b>Total</b>	85(100)	95(100)	180(100)

The below fig. indicates that 14.8% of students possess normal internet addiction, 60.2% possess mild level of internet addiction, 22% possess moderate level of internet addiction and 3% students possess severe addiction level.

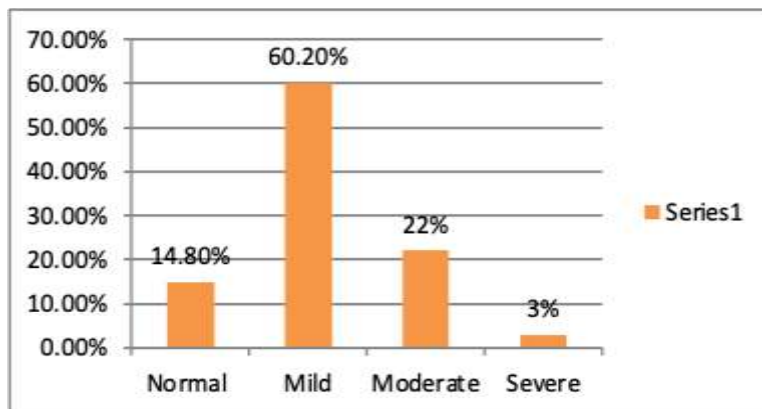


Fig. 1 Comparison of internet addiction test (IAT) with SHS

## DISCUSSION

In the present study, overall subjective happiness scores of college students showed that only 17.77% reported above-average happiness. Overall, 41.66% reported of lower than average range happiness, which is a matter of concern. It has also been found that the female students possess high level in case of their subjective happiness as compared to males. (Lyubomirsky S, Lepper 1999). The present study also revealed that the overall students possess 41.66% score lower than average happiness, if this trend continues females tend to report higher level of happiness than males. So, it is a matter of great concern hence should be focused. There is a deficit in the treatment of internet addictions, due to incomplete understanding of the phenomenology and associated behaviours, lack of diagnostic criteria, and treatment algorithms and guidelines. Strategies for psychological perspective are suggested through cognitive-

behavioural therapy techniques such as setting goals, abstinence to certain behaviours, cutting reinforcements, and strengthening of support systems. Motivational interviewing to build motivation from within oneself, with learning of new behavioural skills and coping techniques, including support groups, community and family, reality therapy, and acceptance and commitment therapy helping the clients to take responsibility of their actions and time management have all been suggested and found to be helpful, but larger studies are lacking. College students should be considered as a vulnerable group. Healthy internet usage behaviours, social skills training, strengthening positive coping styles, identifying pathological behaviours, and modes of seeking help should be included in their training. Moreover, screening of students to identify addictive behaviours should not only be restricted for those who report psychological distress. As seen in this study, they may have decreased in subjective happiness without overt psychological disturbances but are still prone to have addictive patterns. This should be considered during screening and while providing health education to the students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Internet usage has become an important tool for academics, communication, entertainment, and various other activities among medical students. However, along with its benefits, addictive usage patterns have emerged in them. This likely to rise among students, especially those who are pursuing in colleges. In this study, we have focused on how addictive patterns can decrease their happiness or how decreased happiness may foster addictive patterns. This

will help us to understand the interplay between addiction and psychological status as this study shows that addictive patterns can emerge even in students who although not psychologically distressed but experience decrease in happiness. Thus, irrespective of their psychological status, all medical students who join the medical course should be informed about healthy internet usage patterns and should also be sensitized regarding addictive patterns. This will also guide in the development of appropriate screening methods and subsequent interventions. Thus, it becomes a primary preventive step, to nip internet addiction in the bud.

## REFERENCES

- Beard, K. W. (2005). Internet addiction: A review of current assessment techniques and potential assessment questions. *Cyberpsychology Behav.* 8:7-14.
- Block, J. J. (2008). Issues for DSM-V: Internet addiction. *Am J Psychiatry.*165:306-7.
- Cash, H., Rae, C. D., Steel, A. H., Winkler, A. (2012). Internet addiction: A brief summary of research and practice. *Curr Psychiatry Rev.* 8:292-8.
- Dalal, P. K., Basu, D. (2016). Twenty years of internet addiction quo vadis? *Indian J Psychiatry.* 58:6-11.
- Das, A., Sharma, M. K., Thamilselvan, P., Marimuthu, P. (2017). Technology addiction among treatment seekers for psychological problems: Implication for screening in mental health setting. *Indian J Psychol Med.* 39:21-7.

- Heo, J., Oh, J., Subramanian, S. V., Kim, Y., Kawachi, I. (2014). Addictive internet use among Korean adolescents: A national survey. *PLoS One*.9:e87819.
- Ho, R. C., Zhang M. W., Tsang, T. Y., Toh, A. H., Pan, F., Lu, Y., *et al.* (2014). The association between internet addiction and psychiatric co-morbidity: A meta-analysis. *BMC Psychiatry*.14:183.
- Kuss, D. J, Griffiths, M. D, Karila, L., Billieux J. (2014). Internet addiction: A systematic review of epidemiological research for the last decade. *Curr Pharm Des*. 20:4026-52.
- Lyubomirsky, S., Lepper, H. S. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Soc Indic Res*. 46. 137-55.
- Nalwa, K., Anand, A. P. (2003). Internet addiction in students: A cause of concern. *Cyberpsychology Behav*. 6. 653-6.
- Nath, K., Naskar, S., Victor, R. (2016). A Cross-Sectional Study on the Prevalence, Risk Factors, and Ill Effects of Internet Addiction Among Medical Students in Northeastern India. *The Primary Care Companion for Cns Disorders*. 18.
- Panchu, P., Bahuleyan, B., Vijayan, V. (2017). An analysis of the factors leading to stress in Indian medical students. *Int J Clin Exp Physiol*. 4. 48.
- Prakash, S. (2017). Internet addiction among junior doctors: A cross-sectional study. *Indian J Psychol Med*. 39:422-5.



- Prasad, M., Patthi, B., Singla, A., Gupta, R., Saha, S., Kumar, J. K., *et al.* (2017). Nomophobia: A cross-sectional study to assess mobile phone usage among dental students. *J Clin Diagn Res.* 11. 4-9.
- Young, K. S. (1998). Internet addiction: The emergence of a new clinical disorder. *Cyberpsychology Behav.* 1:237-44.