

Facebook Addiction and Psychological Distress among Youth: An empirical study

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ABSTRACT

Youth is a time period of life where the dependent children become independent adult and it is the self awareness of oneself as an independent member of a community and the time between childhood and maturity. It is the most precious time of one's life where we make choices which will affect our life in future and addiction to facebook is increasing rapidly which is making an individual unable to control the use of facebook which further can lead to symptoms of psychological distress. The present study was therefore designed to study the relationship between facebook addiction and psychological distress through Facebook Addiction Scale by Andreassen (2012) and Psychological Distress Scale by Kessler (2002) were administered on 70 subjects (15-25 years) of both genders and there is not found a very high positive correlation but a weak uphill positive linear relationship exist in between these two variables.

1. Introduction

Youth is a time period of life where the dependent children become independent adult and it is the self awareness of oneself as an independent member of a community and the time between childhood and maturity (Konopka, 1973; Vappu, 2005; Labrague, 2014). This period of life is very happening period of life in which adolescence learn many things, habits and enjoy many exposure of life. Some give him more happiness and other lead to traumatic and stressful and problematic exposure of life (Selye, 1983; Mark, Gregory, Matheny, & Jonathan, 2006; Folkman, 2013). Stress is not bad all the time. If it is of moderate amount then it can make individual perform well under pressure and can motivate to give our best in the stressful situation. But if we are consistently in a stressful situation for long time, our mind and body has to pay off the price. The body has the ability to provide involuntary response to deal with the stress.

When an individual work properly to deal with the stressful situation, it makes the mind to stay focused, we feel energetic and highly alert. When someone is in an emergency situation, stress can act as a good indicator also i.e. it can save our life, provides the extra energy and strength to defend us from the emergency situation, for example, or spurring you to slam on the brakes to avoid a car accident. Stress also helps in dealing with the life challenges but it should be of optimal level. It keeps you focused while doing a presentation at work, it sharpens the concentration of the individual when one is attempting the game-winning free throw, or it gives a push to study during examination when you'd rather be watching TV. But if one is facing a stressful situation for long time then it has negative consequences on mental as well as on physical health i.e. it can decline the health of an individual, fluctuations in the mood, can decrease the quality of life and can make the relationship worse (Schneiderman, Ironson & Siegel, 2005). There are basically three major types of stress:

- ✓ Stress related to our daily life activities i.e. pressure of work, family and many other responsibilities.

- ✓ A sudden stress which is related to catastrophic events i.e. losing a financial health or job, getting divorced or becoming ill.
- ✓ Stress brought by some trauma which usually happens when we feel in danger of being seriously hurt or killed. For example, if we met with a major accident, war, assault, or a natural disaster. Such kind of stress can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

But now days, mass media have become the centre of attention, it is being used by everyone and the youth remains online all the time which changes their behavior quickly and affects the, badly (Konopka, 1973; Ryan, Reece, & Xeno, 2014). Facebook usage is becoming quite common these days which is affecting the people's lives badly. The majority of youths because of this have become alone, depressed, distressed and not doing proper communication to friends, family and society and not able to express their feelings properly in a direct way (Mark, Gregory, Matheny & Jonathan, 2006; Gul, Solmaz, Gul, & Oner, 2018).

Facebook addiction is defined as an inability of the individual to control his or her facebook use (Mahmood & Farooq, 2014). When someone is addicted to facebook usage, it leads to the impairment in the normal functioning of individual i.e. social withdrawal, instability in mood functioning, conflict and negative social repercussions, tolerance and many more. (Sörensen, 2003; Simandan, 2010). According to psychology, stress is a type of psychological pain and it is related to the feeling of strain and pressure (Herbert & Cohen, 1993). When the individual is not able to cope with the demand of environment factors, then they perceive stress (Gibbons, 2012) and it threatens the quality of life when the demand goes beyond the individual's capabilities (Selye, 1983; Folkman, 2013).

In the recent years, youth are very much influenced by social networking sites and it has gained lot of popularity

among youth. Some of the previous studies have concluded that 85 to 96 percent college going students are heavy users of facebook (Karakose, 2016). Due to the heavy use of facebook, the well being of the youth is decreasing. It has also been found from the studies that facebook is positively related with feeling of isolation, the individual who use excess of facebook are more prone to stress, and they also have "friend sickness," which is explained as the kind of distress one experiences at the loss of old friends (Jafri, 2015).

A study conducted by Yaman (2012) on 35 undergraduate students revealed that those who are highly addicted to facebook experience more negative emotions than positive emotions. Karakose (2016) conducted a study in which it was found that people who use excess of social media sites have lower mindfulness and they tend to use more emotion focused coping mechanism to deal with the stress. After studying the relating reviews, here is not found a precise answer so taking this perspective in mind for filling the gap the present study was conducting to fulfill the following purpose.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of conducting the study is to discover the relationship between facebook addiction and psychological distress. How the facebook addiction is related with distress and how it can influence the overall health of an individual.

Problem

The present study investigates the relationship between facebook addiction and psychological distress among youth.

Hypotheses of the study

There will be a significant relationship between facebook addiction and psychological distress.

Objective of the study

To study the relationship between Facebook Addiction and Psychological Distress among youths

Research design

The design used for present study is correlational design.

2. Method

Participants

The sample of present study consists of 70 (35 males, 35 females) students of MD university belonging to age group 15-25 years with their willingness and gave their consent to participate in the study.

Tools Used

Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale (Andreassen et al., 2012): The present scale includes six items which reflects the six core addiction elements. Every item of the scale is answered on a five point likert scale ranging from very rarely (1) to very often (5). It yields an overall score ranging from 6 to 30 all adhering to a time frame of one year. The Cronbach's alpha for the BFAS was found to be .86.

The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler et al; 2002): It contains 10 questions which are related to emotional states on a 5 point likert scale. The measure can be

used as a brief screen to identify levels of distress. Questions three and six do not need to be asked if the response to the preceding question was 'none of the time'. In such cases questions three and six should receive an automatic score of one. Each item is scored from one 'none of the time' to five 'all of the time'. Scores of the 10 items have a range of 10 and 50. Low scores indicate low levels of psychological distress and high scores indicate high levels of psychological distress.

3. Procedure

For the collection of the data, all the participants were contacted and the rapport was established with the participants by making them feel comfortable. After the establishment of the rapport, the questionnaires were handed over to the participants. Enough time was given to the participants for questionnaires to read and fill. After the completion of the questionnaires, questionnaires were taken back and the participants were thanked for their precious time devoted and for the cooperation. The data was analyzed with the help of Pearson product moment correlation.

4. Statistical Analyses

For attaining the objectives of the study, collected data was recorded for the statistical analysis. A Pearson product moment correlation was used for attaining the objectives of the study.

5. Results and Discussion

Table 1:
Descriptive Statistics and Correlation between Facebook Addiction and Psychological Distress

Variables	N	Mean	SD	1	2
1. Facebook Addiction	70	13.18	4.9	-	
2. Psychological Distress	70	16.38	7.3	.125	-

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and correlations between Facebook Addiction and Psychological Distress. In this table, we can see mean values of Facebook Addiction (Mean = 13.18; SD = 4.9) and for Psychological Distress (Mean = 16.38; SD = 7.3). To investigate the relationship between variables and to check whether the one variable is significantly related with other variable, Pearson correlation was applied. In the present study, we have found no significant relationship between the variables of Facebook Addiction and psychological distress. But still we can say that there is a positive correlation ($r=.125$) between Facebook Addiction and Psychological Distress. It means that if the time devoted in facebook usage increases, then the psychological distress also increases as it is positively related with facebook addiction. More we uses facebook, more we have the chances of becoming ill i.e. it causes the psychological distress as the individual suffer from the symptoms of headache. The person feels restless and found himself unable to stop using facebook and becomes addicted. It clearly mentions that facebook addiction is very much bad for the physical as well as psychological health.

Similar finding is in line with other research results which analyze facebook addiction and psychological distress (Błachnio, Przepiórkz, & EdD, 2012; Karakose, 2016).

However, some studies on this issue (Yaman, 2012; Ryan, Chester, Reece & Xenos, 2014; Mahmood & Farooq, 2014; Labrague, 2014; Gula, Solmazb, Gulc & Onerd, 2017) indicate that there is a significant relationship between time spent on Facebook and Psychological Distress. In conclusion, we can say that there is a positive relationships between Facebook Addiction and Psychological Distress but not significant. These differences can occur due to other variables and also due to the characteristics of the groups that are included in the sample.

6. Implication of the study

Although this study was done on a very small sample but has got a very important aspects in relation to overuse of

facebook that indicate the harmful symptoms of the psychological health and need to be do use of facebook in a controlled way. Results indicated that it's very dangerous and harmful for psychological health, relationship and our family environment and we need to be very careful to understand its negative effects before happen a big incident in our pleasurable life.

7. Limitations of the study

- ✓ It was a very small study conducted on a small sample.
- ✓ Some other variables like urban-rural or gender including the sample can do more robust the study.

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