

A Comparative Study of Mental Health among College Students Using the Internet

Chirag P. Sarvaiya

Study of Mental Health among College Students Using the Internet

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Abstract- The present study was conducted to examine the differences in the mental health of college students who use the internet. A total sample of 60 students was selected for the study, which included 30 male and 30 female students who were internet users. These students were selected from the Arts Department of Shri Maruti Vidyamandir College, affiliated with Maharaja Krishnakumarsinhji Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar. For data collection, the Mental Health Inventory developed by Dr. A. K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1982) was used. This original Hindi questionnaire was translated into Gujarati by Bhavnaben Thummar (2009). The collected data were used to measure the mental health of the participants, and the *t*-test was applied for statistical analysis. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in the mental health of male and female college students who use the internet.

Key Words: Mental health, male internet users, female internet users

I. INTRODUCTION

In earlier times, people used the internet only to search for information, but today the internet has become widespread. Through the internet, people can communicate with one another, exchange information, and most importantly, obtain various types of information. In the present time, the use of the internet has increased to a great extent. With the help of the internet, we can easily obtain any information from anywhere in the world. In addition, email, that is, the exchange of messages, can also be done. E-commerce, that is, the buying and selling of various goods, can also be carried out. What is the Internet? "The internet is the largest computer network in the world that connects millions of computers with one another." What is a Network? "A network is the connection of two or more computers."

In the present time, individuals mostly use the internet through mobile phones, and through mobile phones they obtain various types of information via the

internet. Through mobile devices, individuals receive many different kinds of information. In modern times, the use of mobile phones is also increasing. In today's 21st century, there is hardly any person who is unfamiliar with names such as mobile, computer, or internet. In the present situation, it is observed that no individual can live without the use of the internet as a medium. At present, the use of the internet appears to have become a kind of addiction.

1.1 What is Mental Health?

In the present time, the issue of mental health is one of the most prominent concerns. In today's world, it is necessary to cultivate the skill of how to remain mentally healthy, especially if one wishes to become happy and successful. A person who is mentally healthy is able to understand and recognize oneself. Moreover, before performing any task, such a person can understand whether it is good or bad and, on that basis, can anticipate the future consequences.

"Health is not merely the absence of disease, infirmity, or weakness; rather, it is a state that arises from complete physical and social well-being. WHO (1950), "Mental health is a systematic and planned effort to prevent mental problems, resulting in the development of a healthy personality."

Coleman (1962), "A mentally healthy person is one who has the ability to understand one's shortcomings through self-examination and to comprehend willpower. Bernhart (1989), "Mental health refers to a systematic and scientific effort aimed at the development of a healthy personality and the prevention of attacks of mental illness."

J. C. Coleman (1962).

1.2 Review of Related Literature

"A Comparative Study of Occupational Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction, and Mental Health among Private

and Government Secondary School Teachers of Junagadh District”

— Meghaben Andhariya

The objective of the present research was to conduct a comparative study of occupational satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental health among private and government secondary school teachers of Junagadh district. For this purpose, 1,200 teachers from private and government secondary schools of Junagadh district were selected as the sample using the stratified random sampling method. The results of the study revealed that female teachers had higher occupational satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental health compared to male teachers. Furthermore, the interaction of teachers' gender, type of school, and marital status showed a significant effect on their occupational satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental health.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(1) Objectives

- To study the mental health of college students who use the internet.

(2) Hypothesis

- There will be no significant difference in the mental health of college students who use the internet.

(3) Variables

(a) Independent Variables

- Male college students who use the internet
- Female college students who use the internet

(b) Dependent Variable

- Mental health scores obtained from college students who use the internet

(c) Controlled Variables

- Only students of the Arts Department of Shri Maruti Vidyamandir College, Bhavnagar
- Selection limited to only 60 students, including 30 male and 30 female students

(4) Sample

According to the present objectives, a total sample of 60 students was selected, which included 30 male students and 30 female students who use the internet.

These students were selected from the Arts Department of Shri Maruti Vidyamandir College. The selection was carried out using the purposive sampling method.

(5) Research Design

Keeping the present objectives in view, this research included a total of 60 students who use the internet, comprising both male and female students. Out of these, 30 were female students and 30 were male students who use the internet. The selection of the sample was done using the purposive sampling method.

(6) Tools for Data Collection

To collect the relevant data, the following tools were used:

(a) Personal Information Schedule:

The main purpose of this schedule was to collect certain important information related to the variables of the study. Information such as gender, age, and level of education was collected through this schedule.

(b) Mental Health Inventory:

This inventory was used to measure mental health. It was developed by Dr. A. K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1982). The original Hindi inventory was translated into Gujarati and standardized by Bhavna Thummar (2000). This inventory consists of a total of 56 items covering six important dimensions of mental health. For each item, four alternatives are provided. The response frequency categories are “Always,” “Mostly,” “Sometimes,” and “Never.” After data collection, the respondents were required to select one of the alternatives for each item. Thereafter, the responses were analyzed and results were obtained.

(c) Reliability

To determine the reliability of this inventory, Dr. A. K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1982) examined the reliability of the Mental Health Inventory using the split-half method. According to the split-half method, the reliability coefficient was found to be $r = 0.73$ ($N = 600$). The original Hindi inventory was translated into Gujarati by Bhavna Thummar (2009). She determined the reliability of this inventory using the split-half method on a sample of 100 respondents. The

reliability of the dimensional Mental Health Inventory was found to be $r = 0.74$.

(d) Validity

To determine the validity of this inventory, Dr. A. K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1982) adopted the construct validity method. The validity of the Mental Health Inventory was found to be $r = 0.57$ ($N = 600$). The original Hindi inventory was translated into Gujarati by Bhavna Thummar (2009). During the process of translation, the help of language experts as well as subject experts was taken, and the final Mental Health Inventory was prepared keeping the content in mind. In addition, this test was administered to a sample of 100 respondents. Through construct validity, the validity of the Mental Health Inventory was found to be $r = 0.68$, and the obtained correlation was found to be significant.

(7) Procedure

The Mental Health Inventory consists of six dimensions: (1) Positive Self-Evaluation, (2) Perception of Reality, (3) Integration of Personality, (4) Environmental Mastery, (5) Autonomy, and (6) Group-Oriented Attitude. This inventory is used to measure mental health. The respondents are asked to mark (✓) the most appropriate option for each item from the four alternatives provided. The response options are: "Always," "Often," "Sometimes," and "Never." The inventory includes both positive and negative items. For positive items, scores of 1, 2, 3, and 4 are assigned, whereas for negative items, scores of 4, 3, 2, and 1 are assigned. The maximum possible score on this inventory is 224 and the minimum possible score is 56. According to the interpretation, a higher score indicates better mental health, whereas a lower score indicates poorer mental health.

III. RESULT

t-value of Mental Health of College Students Using the Internet

No	Group	N	M	SD	df	t	Leave of Significant
1	Male college students using the internet	30	181.9	11.3	58	2.31	Significant
2	Female college students using the internet	30	188.33	10.23			

IV. INTERPRETATION

From the *t* table, it can be stated that the calculated *t* value between the two groups—male and female college students using the internet—is 2.31. When *df* = 58, the table value at the 0.05 level of significance is 2.00. Since the calculated *t* value is greater than the table value, the hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that a significant difference is observed between the two groups.

The internet has a direct and profound impact on mental health. Continuous exposure to social media, online content, and notifications reduces the ability to concentrate, and constant comparison with others leads to a decrease in self-confidence, as well as the emergence of problems such as anxiety and depression. Excessive use of the internet also affects the quality of sleep, as the blue light emitted from

screens interferes with the brain's natural processes. As a result, fatigue, stress, irritability, and a decline in decision-making ability are observed, and individuals may experience social isolation.

However, if the internet is used in a balanced and conscious manner, it can prove to be beneficial for mental health. Online counseling, mental health-related information, support groups, and services such as meditation help increase awareness and provide access to support. Therefore, avoiding excessive use of the internet and using it within appropriate limits is extremely essential for maintaining good mental health. In today's digital age, the internet has become an integral part of human life. It has played a significant role in areas such as education, communication, information, and entertainment. Especially among college students, the extensive use of the internet for studies, social media, online games,

and entertainment is commonly observed. However, excessive and improper use of the internet has a direct and serious impact on mental health.

Excessive use of the internet can be a major cause of increased anxiety and stress in individuals. Continuous notifications, online messages, and an overload of information put pressure on the brain, leading to mental fatigue. Prolonged screen time reduces concentration and negatively affects memory. This condition directly impacts an individual's efficiency and academic performance. Social media platforms have a particularly strong effect on mental health. People usually present only the positive aspects of their lives on social media, which leads others to compare their own lives with them. Such constant comparison gives rise to feelings of low self-esteem, inferiority, and jealousy. Especially among young people, this situation can lead to frustration and depression. Another significant negative effect of internet use is on sleep. Excessive use of mobile phones or laptops at night reduces the quality of sleep. Blue light suppresses the secretion of the hormone melatonin, resulting in the problem of insomnia. Lack of adequate sleep leads to irritability, fatigue, and emotional imbalance in individuals.

V. CONCLUSION

A significant difference is observed in the mental health of college students who use the internet.

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