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## IMPACT OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA ON PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS.

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### ABSTRACT:-

**B**ackground: Use of electronic media nowadays has more attention seeking aspect in the planet. The young adolescents are more prone towards using electronic media because of the technology development, peer pressure, societal issues and so on. Using of electronic media in high rate will be affected on the mental health issues. Hence the present study tries to find out the psychological aspects which would be affected by the using electronic media more. **Objective:** To study the impact of Electronic Media on Psychological Distress and Psychological Well-being among Adolescent students. **Sample & Methods:** Survey research method was carried out with the total sample of 600 adolescent students (300 Boys, and 300 Girls). They were assessed psychological distress, which was measured by using Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale developed by Lovibond, & Lovibond, (DASS, 1995), and Psychological well-being which was measured by using Psychological Well-being Scale developed by Sudha Bhogale and Indira Jai Prakash (PWB Scale, 1995). **Results & Conclusions:** In the study it was hypothesized that Technology use increases psychological distress and decreases psychological well-being or inversely and proportion. The study has shown that adolescents who use technology at high rate will be having high psychological distress compared to adolescents who use technology at very low rate. And also the level of psychological well-being is low in adolescents who use technology or electronic media at high rate compared to adolescents who use electronic media at low rate.

**KEYWORDS:** Electronic Media, Psychological Distress, Psychological Well-being, Adolescents.

### INTRODUCTION:

The advancement in Information Technology (IT) led to the emergence of social networking. It is currently being used regularly by millions of people in the world. The usage of social networking has been so widespread that it has caught the attention of academics throughout the globe. The usage of social networking is evidently increasing, particularly among the college students. The term social networking has been defined by different authors in different ways. There are many social networking websites, with various technological aspects, which supports all range of interests and practices. These social networking websites are becoming much popular among students and professionals which help them in connecting with each other, locally and globally. The internet has given us the ability to connect with students from around the globe with a few clicks of a button. And we can easily send or get information. Social network sites such as My Space, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Skype etc., have



attracted millions of users. Students are nowadays always online at any given second for chatting, playing, watching movies, research works (Maria . Paramo et al., 2014).

The social networking support from family and friends have been found to maintain mental health among students. The social networking helps students to cope with everyday life stress and lighten the burden of academic workload in most cases. Without enough encouragement from family and friends, they would be in trouble and also will face psychological problems (Gorely T, Marshall SJ, Biddle, 2004). College students are often viewed as an honored population, but they are not resistant to the suffering and disability associated with mental illness (West, Lewis, & Currie, 2009; Moreno, 2010).

The mental health of students who do social networking is a growing concern. But, this helps to research large number of people during an important period of life. Proportion of relationships with the same characteristics. In addition, a network analysis can involve a core individual and their social relationships or a set of individuals and the relationships that exist among them. The second domain captures the functional aspects of a social network. Social support is the provision of resources from network members as well as a sense of connection and affirmation of value (Stratton, Conn, & Smallacombe, 2005). Social incorporation refers to the extent to which a human being is entrenched in a social community by being involved in a wide range of relationships. Research studies have been conducted assessing maternal social networks directly by describing network members and their relationships to the mother; in addition, mental health research has investigated social networks more indirectly by addressing the better social context and by measuring social support derived from the social network (Md Aris Safree Md, Yasin & Mariam Adawiah Dzulkifli, 2010).

## **METHOD:**

### **Objectives**

1. To study the levels of electronic media used by the college students.
2. To study the level of psychological distress (depression, anxiety and stress) among college students.
3. To study the level of psychological well-being of college students.

### **Hypotheses:**

- Hypothesis 1. Use of electronic media increases depression.  
Hypothesis 2. Use of electronic media increases anxiety.  
Hypothesis 3. Use of electronic media increases stress.  
Hypothesis 4. Use of electronic media reduces psychological well-being.

### **Participants**

Seven hundred adolescent students from different Pre University colleges and undergraduate colleges in Bengaluru and Mysuru, Karnataka, were administered Technology used index with DAS Scale (Psychological Distress) and Psychological Well-being questionnaire. Finally, 600 adolescents (N=300 with High technology used, N=300 with low scores on technology used index) were selected who scored high and low on Technology used index. Further their psychological distress and level of Psychological well-being were measured. And finally they were compared in psychological distress and level of psychological well-being.

### **Measures**

**DAS Scale:** The DAS scale was developed by Lovibond, S.H. & Lovibond, P.F. (1995). The DASS is a 42-item questionnaire which includes three self-report scales designed to measure the negative emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress. Each of the three scales contains 14 items, divided into subscales of 2-5 items with similar content. The Depression scale assesses dysphoria, hopelessness, devaluation of life, self-deprecation, and lack of interest/involvement, anhedonia, and inertia. The Anxiety scale assesses autonomic arousal, skeletal muscle effects, situational anxiety, and subjective experience of anxious affect. The Stress scale (items) is sensitive to levels of chronic non-specific arousal. It assesses difficulty relaxing, nervous arousal, and being easily upset/ agitated, irritable/ over-reactive and impatient. Respondents are asked to use 4-point

severity/ frequency scales to rate the extent to which they have experienced each state over the past week.

**Psychological well-being scale:** This PWB scale used in the study was developed by Sudha Bhogale and Indira Jai Prakash (1995). This scale consists of 26 items and measures PWB in 12 dimensions such as meaninglessness, somatic symptoms, self-esteem, positive affect, daily activities, life satisfaction, suicidal ideas, personal control, social support, tension, wellness, and general efficiency. The respondent has to go through all the items one by one and give the responses in terms of ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ form. For positively keyed items if the response is ‘Yes’ it carries ‘1’ weightage and for ‘No’ the weightage is ‘0’. The scoring is visa-versa for negatively keyed items. Further dimension wise and overall scores calculated from these weightages. The split of reliability co-efficient is 0.91, and test retest co-efficient is 0.71. The obtained con-current validity co-efficient of the scale is 0.62. (By correlating it with subjective well-being questionnaire, developed by Nagpal & Sell) and 0.48(correlating with general well-being scale developed by Verma and Verma, 1998).

**Procedure:**

A total of 600 participants were selected for this study. They were drawn from different regions of Karnataka (N = 600, Males = 300 and Females = 300) who are studying undergraduate courses with the age range between 16 to 21 years.

Initially the investigator established rapport with the authorities and students and taken consent for their involvement in the proposed research. They were briefed about their participation and requested to fill up the bilingual research instruments under study. They were administered Electronic Media use index, DAS Scale, and Psychological Well-Being scale. During the process of administering the research questionnaires doubts were clarified.

After the data gathered from the participants, scoring was done according to the norms developed by the authors of the questionnaires. Later, comparison was done between the students of different groups in Electronic Media use index (High and low Technology users), level of Depression, anxiety and stress; level of Psychological Well-Being.

**Analysis of Results:**

The data collected have been analyzed using descriptive statistics such as Total, mean, and Standard Deviation. Independent t tests were used to examine the significance of the difference between the two groups (High technology users and low technology users). Effectiveness of technology use on Psychological Distress and Psychological Well-being was examined by applying independent sample t-test.

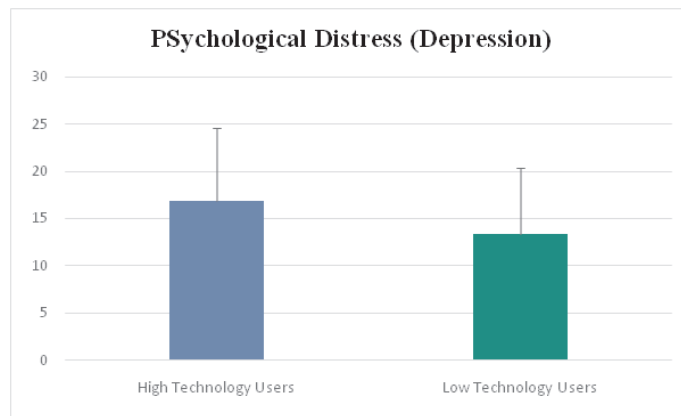
**Table1. Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value of Psychological Distress (Depression) of high technology users and low technology users.**

Variable	Groups	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Psychological Distress (Depression)	High Technology Users	16.83	7.78	5.837	.001
	High Technology Users	13.30	7.04		

Significant @ 0.05

As shown in table 3.1, the data was analyzed to examine the difference between high technology users and low technology users in their depression scores. The mean and standard deviation scores of high technology users are 16.83 and 7.78 respectively. The low technology users has the mean and standard deviation scores of

13.30 and 7.04 respectively. Independent t test was used to find out the difference between these two groups. It has found significant difference between the high technology users and low technology users ( $t = 5.837, p = .001$  which is greater than 0.01) in their level of depression. The result is displayed graphically in the Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Showing mean and standard deviation scores of high technology users and low technology users- Depression.**

**Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value of Psychological Distress (Anxiety) of high technology users and low technology users.**

Variable	Groups	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Psychological Distress (Anxiety)	High Technology Users	15.29	7.55	4.244	.001
	High Technology Users	12.82	6.69		

Significant @ 0.05,

As shown in table 3.2, the data was analyzed to examine the difference between high technology users and low technology users in their anxiety scores. The mean and standard deviation scores of high technology users are 15.29 and 7.55 respectively. The low technology users has the mean and standard deviation scores of 12.82 and 6.69 respectively. Independent t test was used to find out the difference between these two groups. It has found significant difference between the high technology users and low technology users ( $t = 4.244, p = .001$  which is greater than 0.01) in their level of anxiety. The result is displayed graphically in the Figure 2.



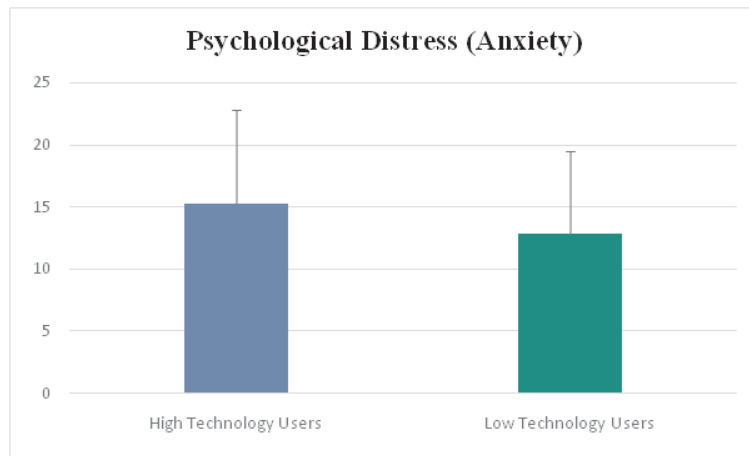


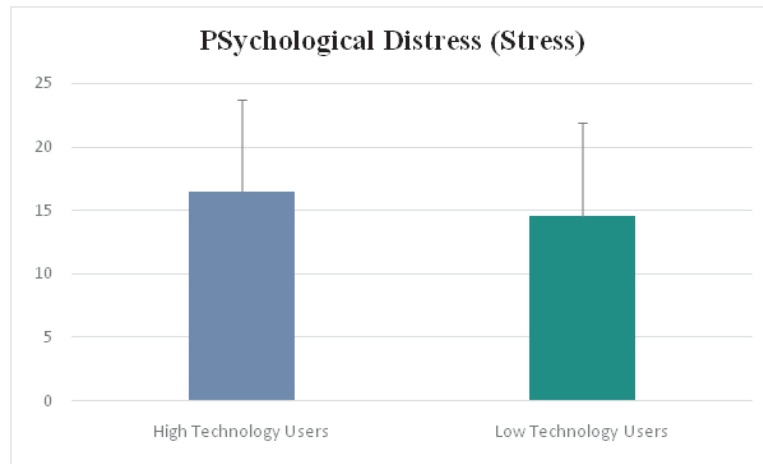
Figure 2. Showing mean and standard deviation scores of high technology users and low technology users in Psychological distress-Anxiety.

**Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value of Psychological Distress (Anxiety) of high technology users and low technology users.**

Variable	Groups	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Psychological Distress (Stress)	High Technology Users	16.42	7.29	3.171	.001
	High Technology Users	14.53	7.35		

Significant @ 0.05,

As shown in table 3, the data was analyzed to examine the difference between high technology users and low technology users in their stress scores. The mean and standard deviation scores of high technology users are 16.42 and 7.29 respectively. The low technology users has the mean and standard deviation scores of 14.53 and 7.35 respectively. Independent t test was used to find out the difference between these two groups. It has found significant difference between the high technology users and low technology users (t = 3.171, p = .001 which is greater than 0.01) in their stress. The result is displayed graphically in the Figure 3.



**Figure 3. Showing mean and standard deviation scores of high technology users and low technology users in Psychological distress-Stress.**

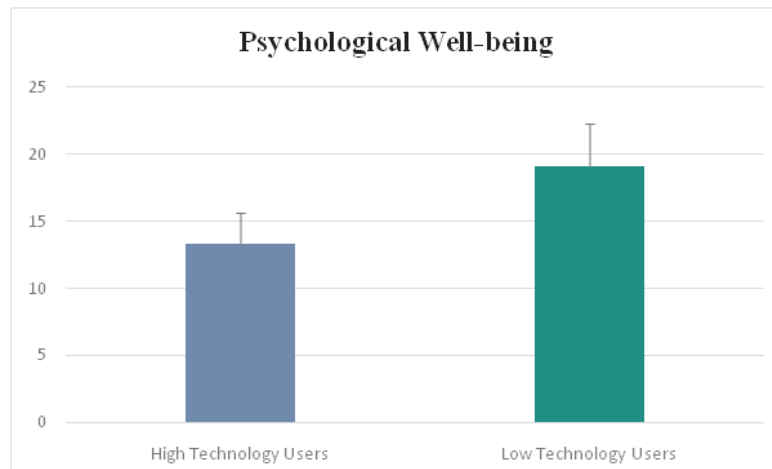
**Table 4. Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value of Psychological Well-being of high technology users and low technology users.**

Variable	Groups	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Psychological Well-being	High Technology Users	13.33	2.34	5.837	.001
	High Technology Users	19.07	3.23		

Significant @ 0.05,

As shown in table 4, the data was analyzed to examine the difference between high technology users and low technology users in their psychological well-being scores. The mean and standard deviation scores of high technology users are 13.33 and 2.34 respectively. The low technology users has the mean and standard deviation scores of 19.07 and 3.23 respectively. Independent t test was used to find out the difference between these two groups in their psychological well-being. It has found significant difference between the high technology users and low technology users ( $t = 24.909$ ,  $p = .001$  which is greater than 0.01) in their psychological well-being. The result is displayed graphically in the Figure 3.6.





**Figure 4. Showing mean and standard deviation scores of high technology users and low technology users in Psychological Well-being.**

### DISCUSSION:

This section discusses, how the findings of this research work differs from other findings already established in different studies. The present study was conducted to examine the impact of electronic media on psychological distress and psychological well-being of college students. 600 college students both males and females were selected as participants in this study. The variables tested were technology used index (Independent variable), psychological distress (Depression, anxiety and stress) and psychological well-being. Usage of technology was tested for two dimensions (Psychological distress and psychological well-being).

The results of the present study has shown that high usage of technology increases psychological distress in college students (Kappos, 2007). When we compared the scores of both groups, such as high technology users and low technology users, in their psychological distress scores, high technology users have high level of psychological distress in terms of depression, anxiety and stress compared to low technology users (Lee et al 2010, Kessler et al 2005). These findings of the study has shown that high usage of electronic media increases the psychological distress in college students (Pempek., Yermolayeva., & Calvert, 2009).

The result of the present study also has shown that use of technology more decreases the psychological well-being in college students. When we compared the level of psychological well-being of the high technology users and low technology users, high technology users have shown low level of psychological well-being than low technology users. This might be due to high level of psychological distress they have (Eggermont., 2006; Bulck, 2007). The previous findings of the study has shown students who use technology more their distress level also be at high level. This in turn effects on the well-being of the students.

### CONCLUSIONS:

In this present study it is concluded that the highly use of electronic media has a negative impact on adolescent college students and it has increased the symptoms of psychological distress and decreasing psychological well-being. The main goal of this research was to facilitate insight about how highly usage of technology affected negatively on adolescents' mental health, so that future researches could more focus on controlling the psychological distress and enhancing the psychological well-being by applying the therapeutic strategies. Moreover, therapists and mental health professional need to develop treatment approaches like CBT and offer a sympathetic and non-judgmental space which would allow the adolescents or college students to off load the negative thoughts and feelings and enhance their positive attitude towards their lives.

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