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RELATIONSHIP OF WELL-BEING WITH INTERNET ADDICTION

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ABSTRACT:

Internet addiction is a new psychological disorder, rapidly increasing both mainstream and proficient acknowledgement. This exploratory research endeavored to examine the relationship between Well-being and Internet Addiction. The sample for this study comprised of 200 internet addicts (100 males & 100 females) with age-range of 20-28 years, recruited from different parts of Punjab. Friedman Well-being Scale (Friedman, 1992) and Internet Addiction Test (Young, 2014) were employed to test the proposed hypothesis. Further, the data was analyzed using Co-relation, t-test and stepwise multiple regression to study the relevant relationships, gender differences and contribution. Results showed significantly inverse relationship between Internet addiction and Well-being. Findings of t-test indicated that Male young adults were higher on Internet Addiction than female young adults. While female young adults outnumbered their male counterparts on different levels of Well-being. Stepwise Multiple Regression output indicated that two components of Well-being i.e. Emotional Stability and Sociability were found to be the significant predictors of Internet Addiction. Further, the present study demands an awareness of one's well-being among the young adults and track the conceivable pathways from initially mild overuse to inevitable neurotic enslavement.

Key Words: Internet Addiction, Well-being, Emotional Stability, Sociability.

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INTRODUCTION:

Internet conveys some useful strategies such as stimulation, shopping, social sharing applications, together with physical and mental damages like fatigue (Akin and Iskender, 2011). The Internet has changed the ways individuals' work and invest their recreation energy. Though, uncontrolled Internet utilization may adversely affect social, work-related, scholastic, conjugal and interpersonal alteration (Tsai, et al., 2009). Extreme Internet utilization is talked about by numerous specialists with various synonymous terms. Internet Compulsion, Internet enslavement, Web misuse, Cyber dependence, Problematic Internet Use (Davis, 2001) are some examples of these. Addiction is characterized as individual's sentiment need for something (for example, substance, web, sex, and so forth) keeping in mind, the expected goal to maintain her/his reality and proceed with her/his method for presence as she/he yearns for (West, 2005). According to DSM-V, Internet dependence is not yet perceived as a specific disorder, however, has been considered as an important topic seeking further investigation.

Anecdotal audits indicated somewhat higher incidence rates among college students as compared to the general community of Internet users. In the Western countries portable Internet utilization is developing at the rate of about 85% every annum, with almost 75% of apprentice use being given for excitement. Worldwide prevalence rates for Internet fixation on the Internet Addiction Test vary from 1.5% to 8.2% (Wolfling, et al., 2009). In Germany, an expected 1.5 million individuals, i.e., 3% of the German population is accepted to be at danger of Internet compulsion (Peterson, et al., 2009). There are constrained quantities of studies assessing how basic the issue of Web compulsion is in India. Chandra, et.al (2005) reported that the number of Internet addicts in India has grown five-fold since 2005. Another study conducted by Razieh, et al. in 2012 revealed similar results i.e. University males were more prone to Internet compulsion rather than female addicts.

The term "well-being" is the most commonly utilized for particular assortment of goodness. Included in wellbeing are, living in a decent domain, feeling worthwhile for the world, having the capacity to get adapted to every phase of life, living the life to full

extent and so forth (Singh and Shyam, 2007). Generally, Well-being is considered as a disposition. Well-being includes the feeling of good, more frequent positive emotions. Lesser the negative emotions, and lower the frequency of negative affect, greater is the level of satisfaction. As viewed by Deci and Ryan (2008), " Well-being is the typical combination of psychological experiences, positive and negative affects and optimal psychological functioning". Well-being is a complex, multi-faceted build that has managed to escape analysts' endeavors to portray and measure it (Pollard & Lee, 2003). Excessive use of internet or computer makes the emotional regulation dull and reduces the ability of thinking. Thus, it hinders individual well-being, both physically, psychologically and socially.

Due to the expanded familiarity that Internet fixation as a genuine concern, endeavor is being made to deeply explore relationship between Well-being and Internet Addiction. Mistry, et al. (2009) explored that an excessive exposure to social media leads to sleep problems, low emotional reaction and poor well-being. Ha et al., (2006) showed that three psychological health indicators including poor self-rated health, subjective unhappiness, and depressive symptoms were significantly related with Internet addiction in boys and girls. Girls with emotional difficulties such as subjective unhappiness or depressive symptoms had much higher risks of Internet addiction than boys with similar problems.

Regardless of the broad literature review, there is a deficiency of far reaching contemplates investigating the prognostic strength of Well-being on Internet Addiction. In this manner, our exploration makes an attempt to analyze these components together concerning Indian masses, with particular focus on the high hazard population of young adults.

AIM : To study the relationship between Well-being and Internet Addiction among Young adults.

METHOD:

The following ***objectives*** were to be explored in the present study:

1. To study the relationship of Internet addiction with Well-being among young adults.
2. To explore the gender differences in Internet addiction, and Well-being among young adults.
3. To assess the relative contribution of Well-being, in predicting Internet addiction among young adults.

Hypotheses:

On the basis of previous reliable audits, following hypothesis were formulated:

1. Well- being would be negatively correlated with Internet addiction.
2. Males would be higher on Well-being as compared to females young adults.
3. Dimensions of Well-being would significantly contribute to Internet Addiction.

Sample:

The inclusive criteria for sample selection for the present study was that the participant must score > 20 on Internet Addiction Test (IAT, Young, 1998). As per the criteria the chosen sample for the present study comprised of 200 participants (100 males & 100 females) with age-range of 21-27 years. These participants were recruited from different areas of Punjab. Prior consent of the participants was obtained. ***Table No. 01*** represents the detailed description of the sample involved in the current study.

Table No. 01 : Representing the detailed description of the sample involved in the present study.

Demographic variable	**Category**	**Number of students** (N=200)	**Demographic variable**	**Category**	**Number of students** (N=200)
Age	21 22 23 24 25 26 27	10 33 43 39 23 11 41	**Gender**	Males Females	100 100

Education	Graduation Post-graduation MPhil.	41 126 33	**Average Period of Internet use**	0-5 hrs 5-10 hrs	147 53
Login Status	Login/out Occasionally Login/out permanently	147 53	**Expenditure of Internet**	<300 =300-600 >600	115 47 38
Mode of Internet access	Wi-Fi Mobile- data Data card	99 100 01	**Gadgets Used**	Mobile Tablet Laptop Desktop	147 11 38 04

ASSESSMENT TOOLS:

a) Socio-demographic Datasheet :

It involved personal information, as well as socio-demographic details of the participants included in this study.

b) Internet Addiction Test (IAT; Young, 2014):

It is a reliable (rtt. = .87; Bayraktar, 2001) and highly valid (Ha et al, 2006) self- rating measure used for assessing three levels of Internet Addiction i.e. *Mild, Moderate and Severe Internet addiction.*

c) Friedman's Well-being Scale (FWBS; Friedman, 1992) :

It is a reliable (rtt. = .73, Friedman,1994) self-rating scale used to assess a level of well-being as perceived by the individual in different contexts. This scale comprises of Friedman's Well-being Composite scores and its five dimensions, that are: *Sociability Subscale* (FSOC), *Self-Esteem Subscale* (FSES), *Joviality Subscale* (FJOV), *Emotional Stability Subscale* (FES), and *Happiness Subscale* (FHAPP).

PROCEDURE:

In order to assess the desired purpose of the study, firstly, the researcher approached the participants from different areas of Punjab. Prior informed consent was obtained from the

participants. The researcher established rapport with the participants with an aim to elicit true and honest responses from the participants. Confidentiality of the information of the participants was assured by the researcher. After that, the questionnaires along with response - sheets were provided to the participants. Before administration of the questionnaires, the participants were provided with instructions as per the standard norms given in the respective manuals.

Each of the subject took 30-45 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Having done with their task, the participants were thanked by the researcher for their valuable contribution in her research and debriefing regarding the study and their respective scores was done at the end.

Further, the scoring of the results was followed by computation and interpretation of the results based on the analysis done using Pearson-Product Correlation, t-test for studying gender differences and Multiple - regression using SPSS. Later on, the computed results were discussed with reference to the review of related literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Internet Addiction is the excessive dependency on Internet, which results in maladaptive behavior such as emotional dysregulation, poor mental health, depression. It may even lead to the impairment of psychological, social and occupational functioning. The extensive review of literature depicts that Well-being plays a vital role in Internet Addiction in youngsters and adults. Thus, the present study was designed to assess the relationship of Internet addiction with Well-being. Additionally, the current study explores the gender contrasts in Internet Addiction, and Well-being among Young adults. Also, this study discovers the contribution of Well-being in Internet Addiction.

Results were analyzed using three statistical measures i.e. correlation analysis, t-test, and stepwise multiple regression. So, the interpretation of these results is divided into three sections, namely:

- Section A : Correlation Analysis
- Section B : t-test
- Section C : Stepwise Multiple Regression

Section – A : CORRELATIONAL ANALYSIS

Bivariate Correlations were used to assess relationship of Internet addiction with Well-being among Young adults. In the present study Well-being was an Independent Variable, and Internet Addiction was taken as Dependent Variable. Therefore, the co-relational output for studying the relationship of Internet Addiction with Well-being is shown using following table.

Table No. 02 : Correlation between Internet Addiction and Well - Being among young adults (N=200) .

		Internet Addiction
Dimensions of Friedman's Well-being Scale	FWBC	-0.71**
	FSOC	-0.46**
	FSES	-0.48**
	FJOV	-0.56**
	FES	-0.68**
	FHAPP	-0.51**

**p<.01

FWBC: Friedman's Well-being Composite Subscale, **FSOC**: Friedman's Sociability, **FSES**: Friedman's Self-Esteem , **FJOV**: Friedman's Jovial , **FES**: Friedman's Emotional Stability & **FHAPP** : Friedman's Happiness

Table No. 02 indicates the correlation results of Dimensions of Well - being and Internet Addiction. It was hypothesized that well-being would be negatively correlated with Internet Addiction.

As expected, different dimensions of Friedman's Well-being demonstrated statistically negative correlation with Internet Addiction. Negative Correlation here predicted that higher the degree of Internet Addiction, lower was the degree of the Well-being and its related dimensions and vice-versa. Initially, the Well-being Composite (FWBC) (r = -0.71, p<.01) was found to be strongly correlated with Internet Addiction. This elucidates that students with higher degree of Internet Addiction were found to have poor well-being. As, predicted in the above table, Sociability (FSOC) (r = -0.46, p<.01) yielded satisfactory results in relation Internet Addiction. Such results predicted that increase in Internet Addiction resulted in decreased sociability i.e. outgoing, neighborly and social behavior. Even, Self-esteem (FSES) (r = -0.48, p<.01) came out to be significantly related to Internet Addiction. It means students highly addicted to Internet Addiction were found to have low self-esteem. Interestingly, results based on correlation analysis explored moderate relationship of Joviality subscale (FJOV) (r = -0.56, p < .01) and Happiness (FHAPP) (r = -0.51, p < .01) with Internet Addiction. This means that internet addicts were found to have low self - confidence, absence or decreased humor, jovial attitude or moderately happy/unhappy. Based on the results in the above table, significant relationship was evident between Emotional Stability and Internet Addiction. This demonstrates that students addicted to internet addiction, failed to monitor their emotions and found it hard to regulate their emotions in different situations.

A recent review of literature assessing the relationship between Internet Addiction and well-being, provides evidence supporting our hypothesis. Kross et al., (2013) conducted a study to explore level of their feelings from moment-to-moment and level of their life-satisfaction. The result findings reported that life- satisfaction (subjective well-being) decreased with the repeatedly use of face-book on regular basis among the face-book users. In two-year follow-up study conducted by Ko et al; (2009), concluded low self-esteem, poor quality of life, and hostility, as the significant predictors of Internet Addiction. Kraut (1998), in his longitudinal study using a sample of 169 individuals, declared negative correlation between Internet Addiction and Psychological Well-being. Erwin et al; (2004), using correlation analysis explored that internet addicts were found to have poor psychological well-being.

Section B : t – test

The Paired Sample t –test was used to assess the gender differences in Internet Addiction, and Well-being among Young adults under study.

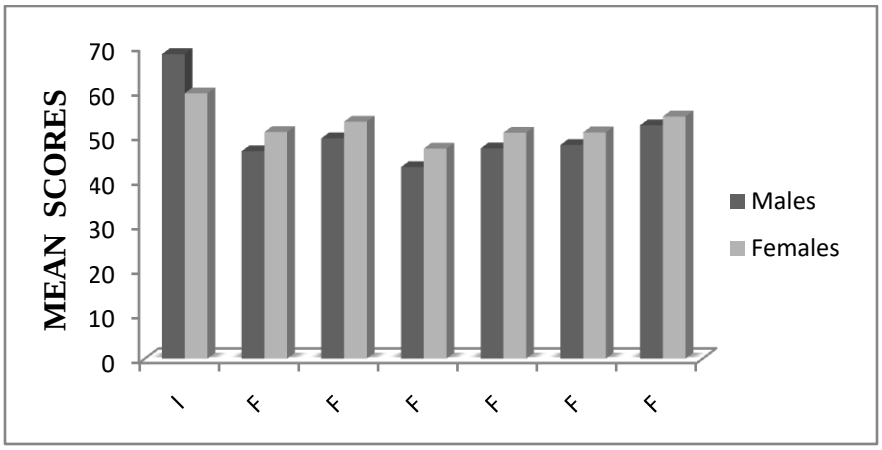
Table No. 03 : Showing the computed Mean, SD and t-values to depict the gender differences in Internet Addiction, and Well - being of Young adults (N=200).

	MEAN		SD		
	MALES N=100	**FEMALES N=100**	**MALES**	**FEMALES**	**t – value**
Total IA scores	68.39	59.59	22.20	20.17	**9.82****
FWBC	46.58	50.89	11.45	10.24	**-3.69****
FSOC	49.48	53.21	13.05	11.25	**-2.42***
FSES	43.01	47.17	12.30	12.03	**-2.58****
FJOV	47.22	50.74	10.90	11.72	**-2.70****
FES	47.98	50.81	10.55	9.71	**-2.56****
FHAPP	52.40	54.38	12.66	12.81	-1.28

***p<.05, **p<.01**

FWBC: Friedman's Well-being Composite score, **FSOC**: Friedman's Sociability, **FSES**: Friedman's Self-Esteem, **FJOV**: Friedman's Joviality, **FES**: Friedman's Emotional Stability, and **FHAPP**: Friedman's Happiness.

FIGURE NO. 01 : Graphical Representation of Mean Differences between males and females on Internet Addiction, Well-being Composite Scores and its Subscales.



The results of the Paired Sample t-test (Table no. 03) indicated consistency with respect to our hypothesis formulated earlier i.e. Males would be higher on Internet Addiction as compared to females. In the present study, there was significant difference between males and females on Internet Addiction ($t = 9.82$, $p < .01$). And as demonstrated in the above Figure (Fig. 01), Mean scores for males (M=68.39, SD=22.20) were found to be comparatively higher than females (M= 59.59, SD=20.17). Several previous studies supported our results. Epidemiological studies showed that males (12%) tend to be more vulnerable towards internet addiction as compared to the females i.e. 3% (Morahan-Martin, 2000). Weiser (2000) in his study entitled as "Gender differences in Internet use patterns and Internet Application Preferences: A Two - Sample Comparison", concluded that males outnumbered females in Internet addiction and visiting Social Networking Sites as compared to the females. Chou and Hsiao (2000) in their research explored males to be more prone to Internet addiction as they found just 3 females among the 54 internet addict cases. Durkee et al; (2012) conducted a study to examine the gender differences in Internet Addiction with a sample of 11,956 participants. The result findings of this study revealed that internet enslavement was common among men rather than women (5.2% versus 3.8%).

The results of our study showed significant gender differences for Well-being Composite Scores (t = -3.69, p<.01) and its dimensions namely, Sociability (t = - 2.42, p<.05), Self-esteem (t = -2.58, p<.01), Joviality (t = -2.70, p<.01) and Emotional Stability (t= -2.56, p<.01). For Happiness subscale, no significant gender differences were found. The negative t – values for Well-Being and its subscales indicate that females in our study scored higher on well-being as compared to their male counterparts. The Mean scores for males and females are depicted by Bar graphs in fig.01. Several studies provide strong evidence in favor of our research findings. According to Veira Lima (2011), " Women have higher levels of Well-being as compared to their male counterparts". Recently, Meisenberg and Woodley (2015) in their research paper entitled as " Gender differences in Subjective Well-being and their relationships with Gender Equality", reported that females were comparatively more satisfied with their lives i.e. subjective well-being than males. Geary et al; (2003) highlighted that females in his study were caring and higher on nurturance while their male counterparts were having high levels of Dominance. Another research carried out by Colarossi and Eccles, (2003) females were higher on sociability as they were greatly satisfied with their social relations and were frank with their peers. It is evident that with the modernization in socio-cultural setup in India, young adult females are getting comparable if not provided with the same opportunities and hence the feeling of empowerment has provided an impetus to their level of well-being. The current sample consists of females who are fortunate to have the freedom and opportunity for technological inputs as they are high on internet use; and having realized their advantage for the same, their satisfaction with their well-being is markedly more than that of their male counterparts, who maybe taking their privileges' for granted.

Section – C : REGRESSION ANALYSIS

A Step-wise Multiple Regression was employed in order to assess the contribution of Independent variables namely, Friedman's Sociability, Friedman's Self-Esteem, Friedman's Joviality, Friedman's Emotional Stability, Friedman's Happiness on Internet Addiction (Dependent Variable). Multiple regression analysis aids in establishing the overall fit (fluctuation discussed) of the model and relative contribution of each predictor to the overall fluctuation.

Table no. 04: showing results of Stepwise Multiple Regression, considering Internet Addiction as Dependent variable.

	Predictors	*R*	R^2	R^2 *Change*	*F*	*df*	*B*	*t -value*
INTERNET ADDICTION	Emotional Stability	.684[a]	.468	.468	174.28**	1/198	-1.29**	-10.27**
	Sociability	.696[b]	.485	.017	92.73**	2/197	-.26*	-2.53*

****p< .01, *p< .05**

Table no. 04 presents the summary of stepwise multiple regression for Internet Addiction in relation to the dimensions of Well-being. In the first step, Multiple correlation coefficient [R= .684; F (1/198) = 174.28; p<.01] and regression coefficient □ □ □ wt =.608) indicates that Lack of Emotional Stability is the highest significant predictor of Internet Addiction. As the direction indicated by obtained t-value was negative for emotional stability (t= -10.27; p < 0.01), it means that lack of emotional stability has negatively contributed in Internet enslavement. Value of change in R^2 caused by the entries of "Emotional Stability" dimension showed 46.8% of variance. It means "Emotional Stability" dimension of Friedman's Well-being Scale emerged as a significant negative predictor of Internet addiction. As indicated by the final step, in addition to " Lack of Emotional Stability", " Lack of Sociability" subscale of *Friedman Well-being Scale* was found to be another significant contributing factor of Internet Addiction, as reported by the Young adults under study. With the addition of "Sociability" variable, Multiple correlation coefficient (R) came out to be .696, which was significant at .01 level of significance [F(2/197) = 92.73]. Value of R^2 increased to .485, implying that both of these components: Lack of Emotional Stability and Lack of Sociability jointly explained

48.5% of variability in Internet Compulsion. Regression Coefficient □ □ wt of -1.50 with t-value of 2.53 ($p<.05$) elucidates that change caused by the addition of "Sociability" dimension, is negative and significant. The obtained R^2 change of .017 implies that contribution of " Lack of Sociability" in overall explained variability in Internet addiction is 1.7 %. This implies that Well-being is negatively significant predictor of Internet addiction. While, three variables namely, "Self-esteem", "Joviality", and "Happiness" were ***excluded*** as these variables won't have had a significant impact on model's ability to predict Internet addiction.

Few studies pertaining to the predictors of Internet addiction has supported our results obtained via stepwise multiple regression. Kuss et al; (2013) provided a strong support for contribution of emotional stability in Internet addiction. They conducted a review to evaluate the pervasiveness of clinically critical levels of Internet compulsion. This cross-sectional online study collected data from 2,257 subjects. The findings of this study showed that 3.2 % of the participants were found to be internet-addicts. The included identity characteristics such as emotional stability, and employment of online exercises accounted for 21.5% of the change in Internet dependence. Another study led by Butt and Phillips, (2008) reported that low emotional stability is the significant predictor of Internet addiction.

Notwithstanding of the fruitful ramifications, this review has couple of confinements. The sample for the present review is restricted to Punjab, and assessment was based on self-report measures. Thus, the subjective tools may add to certain bias in reporting. Yet, the fact that they reported the internet abuse reaching the required cut-off values is indicative that the problem may be even more than reported. On the same ground, well-being is a perceived phenomenon and hence, can only be assessed through self-report measures. Also, the present review laid accentuation on Internet addiction in general, rather than centering onto the reasons for web use.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, our findings indicate that there was a significant negative relationship between Well-being and Internet addiction. The results of current study were

contradictory to the review based hypothesis i.e. unlike reported in literature, females were found to be higher on overall well-being scores and it's dimensions (Sociability, Self-esteem, Joviality, and Emotional Stability) as compared to their male counterparts. The two genders did not differ on the "Happiness" dimension. The most essential finding through regression analysis in the current study is that the Well-being proved to be a major predictor of Internet addiction as it has accounted for 48.5% variance in Internet addiction. Thus, wrapping up our results, we could say that poor Well-being was the major cause-root of web enslavement among the young adults. Researchers need to focus on the Well-being as it has been the real benefactor of Internet fixation. It has rightly turned into a matter of incredible concern all over the globe. As reported by the participants of current study, young adults have deficits in emotional stability and sociability aspects of well-being pushing them towards internet addiction. Individual counseling as well family counseling ought to be devised to dispose off this issue and promote sociability and emotional stability which will not only enhance well-being but will lead to controlled use of internet as well.

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