

Association for Information Systems

AIS Electronic Library (AISeL)

AMCIS 2023 TREOs

TREO Papers

8-10-2023

The prevalence of Internet and smartphone addiction: A growing digital dependency in the modern age

Saqib Nawaz

Swinburne University of Technology, saqibnawaz@swin.edu.au

Follow this and additional works at: https://aisel.aisnet.org/treos_amcis2023

Recommended Citation

Nawaz, Saqib, "The prevalence of Internet and smartphone addiction: A growing digital dependency in the modern age" (2023). *AMCIS 2023 TREOs*. 129.

https://aisel.aisnet.org/treos_amcis2023/129

This material is brought to you by the TREO Papers at AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). It has been accepted for inclusion in AMCIS 2023 TREOs by an authorized administrator of AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). For more information, please contact elibrary@aisnet.org.

The prevalence of Internet and smartphone addiction: A growing digital dependency in the modern age

TREO Talk Paper

Saqib Nawaz

Department of Computing Technologies
School of Science, Computing and Engineering Technologies
Swinburne University of Technology - Australia

saqibnawaz@swin.edu.au

Abstract

The increasing popularity and accessibility of the Internet and smartphones have prompted studies examining the potential adverse effects of excessive use. The researcher is investigating problematic smartphone use and dependence (PSUD) and its implications for individuals' wellbeing. PSUD, also known as Internet addiction or smartphone addiction, refers to the compulsive use of smartphones and the Internet, negatively impacting an individual's life. Considering smartphones' modern and advanced nature, they serve as versatile devices encompassing various internet uses, making them the most common technological devices used to access the internet. Therefore, when researchers address technology or internet use-related issues, they often focus on smartphones and examine PSUD, which can also cover other technology-related problems. This interchangeability of terminologies allows researchers to study a broad spectrum of technology use issues through smartphone analysis.

Research has shown that PSUD can lead to various negative consequences, including psychological, behavioural, and social problems. These issues encompass anxiety, depression, poor sleep quality, academic and occupational challenges, relationship difficulties, and impaired social and emotional functioning. The factors contributing to PSUD's development are complicated and involve personal, environmental, technological, and socio-demographic elements. Individual factors may include mental health problems, poor coping skills, low self-esteem, and a lack of social support. Environmental factors may involve a lack of parental supervision, peer pressure, and cultural norms encouraging excessive internet and smartphone use. Technological aspects may encompass app and website designs that promote addictive behaviours. Socio-demographic factors, such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status, can also influence smartphone use patterns and contribute to PSUD. The effects of PSUD are both psychological and behavioural. Excessive use can lead to decreased self-esteem, increased anxiety, and depression. It can also result in the development of unhealthy coping mechanisms such as social media addiction, procrastination, problematic smartphone use and dependence, and impulsive behaviours. Behaviorally, PSUD can lead to compulsive checking of notifications, reduced productivity, social isolation, and physical problems such as digital eye strain, neck pain, and posture issues. Specific online activities, such as social media, gaming, and streaming services, have also been linked to addictive behaviours.

Identifying and diagnosing PSUD can be challenging, and more research is needed in this area to reach a consensus. Instruments such as the Problematic Use of Mobile Phones (PUMP), the Smartphone Addiction Scale (SAS), and the Problematic Internet Use Questionnaire (PIUQ) have been developed to measure PSUD. However, synthesising existing literature on PSUD is essential to inform future research and management strategies. This includes identifying gaps in current knowledge, evaluating the quality of existing research, and highlighting potential areas for further investigation and prevention. Through my investigation, I aim to contribute valuable insights into identifying and managing PSUD, addressing the growing concern of PSUD in modern society. By understanding the complexities of PSUD's impact on mental wellbeing, I seek to develop effective strategies that promote a healthier and balanced relationship with digital technology. The implications of managing PSUD, including FOMO and other anxieties related to digital disconnection, are vital for individuals' mental health and wellbeing in the digital era.