

To Text Or Not To Text: Self-perception Of Text Message Dependency Among University Students Of Pakistan And Its Relation To Stress

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Abstract:

Objective: The study aimed to determine whether there was any correlation between self-perception of text message dependency and perceived stress among university students in Pakistan.

Methods: A multicenter cross sectional study was conducted in the form of online survey through Google forms and analysed using IBM-SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 28

Results: The regression analysis of data yielded that only 2 parameters of STDS were significant in correspondence with PSS. The p- values for all other parameters were insignificant and implied no correlation.

Conclusions: Students who send text messages while engaging in a conversation with another person and students who often check the mailbox to see if they have a new text message are more likely to suffer from stress.

Introduction:

With the onset of the age of digitalization, the mode of communication has shifted to text messaging (TM) rather than in-person communication. Problematic Text Messaging (PTM) can be defined as the development of TM into a behavioral addiction which can have profound physical and mental problems. Self-perception of Text message Dependence Scale (STDS) judges the issue of PTM from a three directional approach: i) Emotional Reaction (ER); ii) Excessive Use (EU); iii) Relationship Maintenance (RM). This research paper sought to test its validity among the undergraduate university students of Pakistan especially with its correlation to the 10-item based Perceived Stress Scale (PSS).

Objective:

To find if there is any correlation between self-perception of text message dependency and perceived stress among university students in Pakistan.

Methodology:

Study Design: A multi-center Cross-sectional study was carried out in the form of an online survey conducted through Google Forms questionnaires in the Punjab province, Pakistan. **Setting:** Different Universities of Punjab, Pakistan **Duration of study:** The study took place from 1st July, 2022 till 31st October, 2022. **Sampling Technique:** Snow-ball Sampling

Sample size:

$$n = p(1-p) / (Z/E)^2$$

Z= Confidence level is 1.96 for 95%
E= margin of error=0.05 or 5%
P = Population proportion =0.50 (1)

$$n = 384$$

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Data Analysis Procedure:

The data was analyzed using IBM-SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 28. The scales were scored and computed according to their scoring guidelines.

Results:

The analysis of data yielded that only 2 parameters of STDS were significant in correspondence with the PSS i.e., the participants who scored high in these 2 parameters were more likely to display a higher level of perceived stress than other participants. While the rest of the parameters remained insignificant. While holding other response variables constant, In the Excessive Use section, we observed that the odds of students who send text messages while engaging in a conversation with another person to experience high levels of stress were 1.32 (95%CI: 0.04, 0.52, p = .022) as compared to other subscales of STDS. Similarly, in the Emotional Reaction section, the odds of students who often check the mailbox to see if they have a new text message to experience high levels of stress were 1.33(95%-CI, 0.23, 0.54, p=0.033).

Discussion:

In the Emotional Reaction section of our study, we observed that the p value for the component "I often check my mailbox to see if I have a new text message" was significant (p=0.033) while the remaining factors remained insignificant. We found that "I sometimes send text messages while engaging in a conversation with another person" showed a significant link with stress in the Excessive Use section of STDS, with a p-value of 0.022. Heavy message users may feel that they are overly engrossed in texting and lack self-control. Thus, we suggest that stress is not solely caused by the frequency of text messages. Instead, the perception of one's own dependent conduct would worsen psychological and behavioral prob-

lems.vv

Limitations:

- The major factor limiting the study is the perceived view of stress by individuals.
- Another factor limiting the study is the relationship status of individuals.
- The language used in the text messages and the age are also the confronting limitations for the study.

Strengths:

- Development of a psychic view towards use of messaging as a communication tool.
- The nexus of messaging and emotional health, relationship maintenance and stress prevalence are also some of the strengths of our study.

Poster Designed By M. Ali Abid

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