

**PREVALENCE OF INTERNET USAGE AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS AT TAIBAH UNIVERSITY AND ITS IMPACT ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, MADINAH, KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA, 2015.****Nisreen Albouq*, Bushra Hafiz, Ahmed Qasem and Yousef Ekhmimi**

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ABSTRACT

Background: Internet is one of the strong revolutions we are facing, it gives us really fascinating benefits and advantages as easy information gathering and good communication abilities. Although there are many benefits associated with the use of Internet, there has been a deep concern regarding the risk associated with using it. **Aim:** To determine the relationship between internet usage and academic performance (GPA) among medical students at Taibah University. **Methodology:** This cross sectional study was carried out at Taibah University, Madinah, KSA, among the students of the College of Medicine who included male and female students from 2th, 3th, 4th and 5th year, during May 2015 to November 2015. A total of 240 study participants were selected by using simple random sampling. Of those selected, 193 participated and completed the questionnaire. The data was collected by using a pre-tested, electronic, semi-structured questionnaire and the data analysis was done by using SPSS, version 20. **Results:** Out 193 medical students, 107 (55.4%) were female and 86 (44.6%) were male. The mean age of the students was 22.58 years. 100% (193) study subjects were using internet. Out of 193 respondents we found that (67.4%) male students are using the internet to keep in touch while (65.4%) female students are using the internet for studying. **Conclusion:** All medical students are using internet and it was mainly for studying purpose. There is no significant relationship between the GPA and internet usage.

KEYWORDS: Internet, medical students, academic performance.**INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, Internet plays an important aspect in our daily activity and become an essential tool that used for diversity of things. Internet use has increased globally showing a high rate of problems caused by inappropriate use of internet.^[1] Despite the positive effects of internet, there is growing literature on the negative effects of its excessive use^[2]. The use of internet is increasing among medical students and it is affecting almost all aspects of their lives. The excessive use of internet has negative effect on several aspects of the users including the academic performance^[3]. Many researchers have assessed the impact of internet usage on university students' academic performance to know its effect. Tuckman^[4] defined performance as the apparent demonstration of understanding, concepts, skills, ideas and knowledge of a person and proposed that grades clearly depict the performance of a student. Hence, we need to know what can positively or negatively affect the learning process. It is known that the universities start introducing the internet in their campuses because they believe this will help the students in many aspect and facilitate their access to multiple website for academic purpose.

Due to the advanced development of network construction in universities, the number of Internet-using university students is increasing^[5]. A lot of researches reported that, the students are mostly used the internet for academic purposes^[6]. On the other hand, other researches revealed that, the student mainly using it as an entertainment tool.^[8,9] The aim of this study was to explore the Prevalence of Internet usage among medical students at Taibah University and its effect on the Academic Performance.

METHODOLGY

The present cross sectional study was carried out at Taibah University among the students of the College of Medicine, who included male and female students, from 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th year, during May 2015 to November 2015. A total of 240 study participants were selected by using simple random sampling. Of those selected, 190 participated (response rate, (80.417%) and completed the questionnaire, who included 84 males and 106 females. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants, and verbal informed consent was obtained. The data was collected by using a pre-tested, electronic, semi-structured questionnaire. which included questions on personal data (Name, age, gender, marital status, and academic year) and their previous grade point

average (GPA). It took approximately 5-10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Data were tabulated by using Microsoft office — Excel sheet, entered and analyzed by using SPSS, version 20.0. Ethical Committee approval was obtained before starting the study. The Chi-square test and one way ANOVA were used to find out the statistical significance of the differences in the proportions. A p-value of <0.05 was considered to be significant.

RESULTS

Demographic data in terms of gender, age and marital status of the respondents were shown in (Table 1). Out of 240 medical students, 193 completed and returned the questionnaire, giving the response rate of (80.417%). One hundred and seven students (55.4%) were female and eighty six (44.6%) were male. The mean age of the students was 22.58 years. Regarding the marital status, 184 were single (95.3%), 8 were married (4.1%) and 1 was divorced (0.5%). Regarding the GPA, (19.2%) students had a GPA range between (5-4.5), (34.7%) students range between (4.49–4), (28.0%) students range between (3.99–3.5), (14.0%) students range between (3.49–3), (3.6%) students range between (2.99–2.5) and (0.5%) student had a GPA which range between (2.49–2). The subjects belonged to different levels of academic years, there were 33 participants from the 2nd

year medical students (17.1%), 64 participants from the 3rd year (33.2%), 47 participants from the 4th year (24.4%) and 49 participants from the 5th year (25.4%). The results show that all the participants are using the internet (100%). Respondents' time spent for the internet revealed in (Table 2). The majority of male students (66.3%) spent 2-4 hours while female students (44.9%) spent 5-7 hours on internet. Regarding the time spent on internet in relation to students' GPA, We found that the majority of student (103 students) 53.4% use the internet for 2-4 hours and most of them are of 4-4.49 GPA (Table 3). 169 students (87.6%) think that using internet provide them enough opportunities to promote themselves and their activities comparing to 24 students (12.4%) don't think so. The results revealed that 104 students (53.9%) think that their grades and school work suffers because of the time they spend online, while 89 students (46.1%) don't think so. The main purpose of using the internet among female medical students was for studying (65.4%), while the male students mainly used the internet to keep in touch with friends and family (67.4%) the data presented in (Table 4). The academic performance (grade suffer) was measured through the subjects' GPA and the results revealed that student who had lower GPA believed that their grades are affected by spending more time online. In accordance to this, the higher the students' GPA was, the higher their satisfaction with the amount of time they spent online.

Table 1: Demographic data of respondents, (n= 193)

	Variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	male	86	44.6
	Female	107	55.4
Marital status	Single	184	95.3
	Married	8	4.1
	Divorced	1	0.5
Age	20	5	2.6
	21	44	22.8
	22	45	23.3
	23	54	28.0
	24	25	13.0
	25	18	9.3
	26	2	1.0

Table 2: Respondents' time spent for the internet among male and female medical students

Variable	<1 hour	2-4 hs	5-7 hs	8-10 hs	>10 hs	P value
Gender						
Male	2.3%(2)	66.3%(57)	25.6%(22)	4.7%(4)	1.2%(1)	0.016
Female	0.9%(1)	43%(46)	44.9%(48)	7.5%(8)	3.7%(4)	

Table 3: Relation between GPA and time spending on internet

Variable	<1 hour	2-4 hs	5-7hs	8-10 hs	>10 hs	P value
GPA:						
5-4.5	0% (0)	64.9%(24)	29.7%(11)	5.4%(2)	0%(0)	0.257
4.49-4	4.5%(3)	53%(36)	32.8%(22)	4.5%(3)	4.5%(3)	
3.99-3.5	0%(0)	50%(27)	40.7%(22)	5.6%(3)	3.7%(2)	
3.49-3	0%(0)	51.9%(14)	40.7%(11)	7.4%(2)	0%(0)	
2.99-2.5	0%(0)	28.6%(2)	42.9%(3)	28.6%(2)	0%(0)	
2.49-2	0%(0)	0%(0)	100%(1)	0%(0)	0%(0)	

Table 4: purposes of Internet use and their percentage distribution among male and female medical students

	Gender	To keep in touch	To meet new people	To make professional contact	To share photo	To play games	To discover new music, books	To find information and share feedback	For studying
rarely	Male	9.3%	61.6%	52.3%	30.3%	62.8%	10.5%	30.3%	4.7%
	Female	19.6%	81.3%	44%	22.4%	76.6%	19.6%	29%	12.2%
sometimes	Male	23.3%	23.3%	25.6%	20.9%	16.3%	25.6%	23.3%	34.9%
	Female	26.2%	13.1%	29%	30.8%	16.8%	31.8%	36.4%	22.4%
Often	Male	67.4%	15.1%	22.1%	48.8%	21%	64%	46.4%	60.4%
	Female	54.2%	5.6%	27.1%	12.1%	6.5%	48.6%	36.6%	65.4%

DISCUSSION

No doubt that internet brings benefits to the users, however there are negative impacts that are identified by the researchers which include impaired academic performance^[10]. The present study aimed to determine the extent of internet usage among medical students at Taibah University and explored the impact of internet use on the academic performance. In the present study, 100 % of medical students were using internet, In accordance to study conducted at Qassim University in Saudi Arabia in which 100% of the students were using the internet^[11]. Similar study conducted by Aggarwal Sumit, S, et al (2015), they found that the majority of the medical students 98.81% were using internet^[12]. In contrast to study conducted by Bin Ghouth (2008) at medical college of Hadramout University in Yemen, they found 76.20% of the students were using internet^[13]. The results of this study showed that most of the students 53.4% spent 2-4 hours per day, while 36.6% spent 5- 7 hours per day.

These durations were not far from the result of study conducted by Ahmad Ayub, F, et al (2014) in Malaysian university, in which the results of their study showed that students used the Internet for 4.48 hours per day on average^[14]. The result of this study showed that there is no relation between students' GPA and the time spent on internet. In contrast to study conducted in Malaysia, the results revealed Significant relationship between GPA and Internet usage during weekdays ($p = 0.003$). However, there was no significant relationship between Internet use and CGPA during weekends ($p = 0.677$)^[15]. This variation could be due to students independency on internet.

In this study, The main purpose of using the internet among female medical students was for studying (65.4 %), while the male students mainly used the internet to keep in touch (67.4%). Study done by Harlina Siraj, H, et al (2015) in a Malaysian Public University^[15], the results showed that the majority of female students (87.6 %) were using the internet for course related purpose but regarding the male student they were also use the internet for same purpose in contrast to our study.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that all medical students at Taibah University are using the internet and they mainly use it for academic purpose. Chi square test indicated that there is no significant relationship between the students' GPA and internet usage.

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