

## Tendency of internet addiction in college students (Case Study on Public Administration Students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, HKBP Nommensen University)

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Received: March 16, 2023	Revision: April 04, 2024	Accepted: April 05, 2024
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### Abstract

The Internet provides tremendous educational benefits for students. Also, it provides better communication, information, and social interaction opportunities for young people, but excessive internet use can lead to negative psychological addiction. This study aims to quantitatively describe the tendency of internet addiction in the population of students majoring in Public Administration from the class of 2020, 2021, and 2022. The total sample was 142 people, including all students from the three batches. The data analysis method applied in this research is the crosstab or cross-tabulation analysis technique. The data analysis process involved the use of SPSS V.25 statistical software. From the results of the analysis of gender and range of addiction, it can be seen that the majority of respondents, both males (66.7%) and females (69.9%), experience a moderate level of internet addiction, especially social media. The number of respondents who experienced moderate addiction reached 98 out of a total of 142 respondents. In the analysis of respondents' age groups and range of addiction, it can be seen that three age groups dominate, namely 19, 20 and 21 years old. Of the 28 respondents aged 19, 17 of them experienced moderate addiction. In the 20-year-old age group, out of 43 respondents, 33 were classified as moderately addicted. While in the 21-year-old age group, out of 37 respondents, 26 of them also showed a moderate level of addiction. Furthermore, the tendency of internet addiction in college students is dominated by two main aspects: characteristics and excessive use. Students who feel attached to the internet tend to always think about it and find it difficult to control their use.

**Keywords:** Tendency; Addiction; Internet; College Students

### INTRODUCTION

The development of information technology and the internet has brought major changes in how modern society interacts, works, and learns (Zenebe et al., 2021). In the era of information technology, internet use is inevitable for humanity. Internet use shows its negative impact when excessive (Bisen & Deshpande, 2020; Novianti & Matulesy, 2023). In recent decades, we have witnessed tremendous growth in internet usage, with 3,486,642,862 current users worldwide (Kandasamy et al., 2019). The internet can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it provides many benefits and adds convenience. On the other hand, its use can be very enticing, which can result in overconsumption,

manifesting in behavioural addiction-like symptoms (Zhang et al., 2020; Lin et al., 2019).

The Internet provides tremendous educational benefits for college students. Also, it provides better communication, information, and social interaction opportunities for young people, but excessive internet use can lead to negative psychological (Chowdhury & Chakraborty, 2017). According to (Parinduri et al., 2022), internet addiction can also hurt academic performance, family relationships, and the emotional state of young people. Internet use is increasing along with the spread of mobile devices and Internet-based applications (Deonisius et al., 2019). This

phenomenon has significantly transformed how people interact, access information and live their daily lives. While these changes bring tremendous benefits in terms of connectivity and access to information, the benefits of mobile devices and applications can also have adverse effects, such as internet addiction (Hsieh et al., 2018).

In addition, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it also turns out to affect internet addiction for students. Studies show in research conducted by (Hamami et al., 2022) which revealed a substantial positive relationship between stress due to the Covid-19 pandemic and internet addiction in college students. The increasing use of the internet, especially social media platforms, is one of them. Students are a group that is vulnerable to stress originating from academic life. Students usually experience anxiety due to the demands of life and academic responsibilities (Tsai et al., 2020).

Internet addiction is excessive internet use that interferes with daily life (Neverkovich et al., 2018). Due to its negative impact on students' learning and life, it is important to know the tendency of internet addiction in college students and promptly provide appropriate guidance to them (Peng et al., 2019). Internet addiction is a new disorder described in 1996 by psychologist Kimberly Young. College students are considered a high-risk group (Young, 1998; Frangos et al., 2018; Joseph et al., 2021). People with Internet addiction have difficulty controlling Internet use and experience problems in work or academic performance and social relationships, as well as psychological and physical issues (Bulut Emel, 2021).

Internet addiction in college students has become a serious concern, given its impact involving several important aspects of their lives. In the social dimension, students addicted to the Internet may experience isolation because they prefer online interactions over real-world social interactions (Sosiady et al., 2022). On the academic side, this addiction can affect their concentration, productivity and the quality of their learning outcomes (Su et al., 2023).

In terms of mental well-being, excessive and unhealthy use of the internet can lead to stress, fatigue, and even more serious mental health problems (Zulkifli & Mohamed, 2023; Saikia et al., 2019). The widespread dependence on the Internet among university students has the potential to form unhealthy behaviours (Kuang et al., 2020). Intensive engagement in cyberspace can result in a loss of balance between academic and personal life needs, making it difficult for students to focus on educational tasks, manage time effectively, and develop healthy social relationships (Pratama & Widyanti, 2019).

In an academic context, internet addiction can affect student performance, both in terms of educational achievement and psychological well-being. Therefore, it is important to explore the tendency of internet addiction in university students, especially in the Public Administration major at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, HKBP Nommensen University. This research is motivated by concerns about the negative impact of internet addiction on student learning and well-being. Understanding the pattern of internet use and the factors that trigger addiction is expected to make a real contribution to the development of relevant preventive and interventive solutions.

Through a case study approach on Public Administration Students, this research aims to identify how internet addiction tendencies develop among them in more detail. In addition, this research will investigate the factors that contribute to such addiction. With an in-depth understanding of this tendency, the research results are expected to provide valuable insights for educational institutions. This will support the development of more adaptive policies and support programs for students and promote the healthy and effective use of Internet technology in the academic environment. Overall, this research has educational value and provides practical insights that can help improve the well-being and academic achievement of Public Administration

students at HKBP Nommensen University's Faculty of Social and Political Sciences.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study aims to quantitatively describe the tendency of internet addiction in the population of students majoring in Public Administration from the classes of 2020, 2021, and 2022. The total sample was 142 people, including all students from the three batches. The instrument used in this study is an internet addiction test developed by Young in 1996, known as the Internet Addiction Test (IAT). Young is recognised as a pioneer in the study of internet addiction, and the IAT used in this study consists of 20 items. This tool has been shown to have a high level of reliability and validity, making it a very popular screening tool in internet addiction research.

The data analysis method applied in this study is the crosstab or cross-tabulation analysis technique. This technique combines two variables into one matrix, forming a table that makes it easy to see the relationship between them. By using crosstabs, researchers can analyse the relationship between respondent characteristics, such as gender and age, with the final total score and addiction range. The data analysis process involved the use of SPSS V.25 statistical software. The collected data, especially the scores from the IAT test, will be processed through the software for a more in-depth and structured analysis. The results of this analysis will be interpreted and then presented in the form of narratives and tables. Based on the analysis findings, conclusions will be drawn, and suggestions may be given to overcome or reduce internet addiction among Public Administration students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The frequency of respondents in this study was 142 students who were then given 20 questions with 4 answer choices, namely never, sometimes, often and always. Based on gender, research

respondents consisted of 39 men (27.5%) and 103 women (72.5%). Based on age, the age range of respondents ranged from 17 years to 24 years. Respondents were dominated by students aged 19 to 21 years. Specifically, students aged 20 years were the largest group, with the number of respondents reaching 43 people.

Through this diversity of characteristics, this research summarizes a comprehensive picture of student perceptions and responses to a series of questions asked. By paying attention to a number of variables such as gender and age range, this research can provide in-depth insight into the thinking patterns and behavior of students who are the focus of the research.

### Validity Test Results

The validity test is carried out on each research item, the evaluation process refers to the criteria, namely each item considered valid or feasible to use in research. To ensure this feasibility, the researcher compares the calculated *r*-value and *r*-table with a significance level of 0.05. At the evaluation stage, the *r* table generated from a sample of 142 respondents was 0.165. Meanwhile, the *r* count obtained in this study reached 0.307. With this comparison, it is clear that the calculated *r* value is greater than the predetermined *r* table value. Therefore, based on the passing standard used, it can be concluded that each item included in this study consistently meets the required validity criteria. This shows that the research instruments used have proven valid and reliable in measuring the variables under study. Thus, the results of this validity test provide a strong basis to ensure that the data collected through the instrument is reliable and relevant for further analysis in the context of the research conducted.

### Reliability Test Results

This study not only paid attention to the validity of the items but also conducted a reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha formula. The main purpose of this

analysis is to evaluate the extent to which the items used in this study are consistent and reliable in measuring the variables under study. The requirements for passing this reliability test refer to Cronbach's Alpha value, where a value of  $\geq 0.700$  is considered a decent or satisfactory reliability standard. After calculating the Cronbach's Alpha value, it was found that the test results on the items of this study reached 0.704. Referring to the reliability criteria, this value can be interpreted as satisfactory consistency or high reliability. The items used in this study can be relied upon with this figure to provide consistent and reliable results. The importance of this reliability lies in the ability of the research instrument to provide consistent results if repeated on the same sample group. Therefore, with an Alpha Cronbach value of 0.704, this study has a strong basis to ensure that the instruments used are valid and consistent in measuring the variables under study. This gives researchers and readers confidence that the data obtained can be relied upon to support research findings and further analysis.

**Normality Test Results**

This research involves an important test that aims to determine whether the data that has been collected shows a normal distribution or comes from a normally distributed population. In the context of statistical analysis using SPSS software, there are two methods commonly used to measure normality distribution: Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk calculations. The determination of the calculation method is based on the number

of respondents involved. This study involved 142 respondents. Therefore, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov calculation was chosen, which is generally recommended for respondents greater than or equal to 50 people. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results show a Sig value of 0.200, greater than the 0.05 significance level. This means there is insufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis that the data used has a normal distribution. In other words, the results of this test indicate that the data collected in this study is normal or normally distributed.

**Gender and Range of Addiction**

The data shows that the level of addiction to the internet, especially social media, tends to be at a moderate level for both genders. The majority of respondents, both men and women, showed moderate addiction, with a percentage of 66.7% for men and 69.9% for women. The number of male individuals categorised in the moderate level of addiction reached 26, while females reached 72. When the two groups are combined, the total reaches 98 people out of the 142 respondents involved in this study. With an overall percentage of 69%, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents, regardless of gender, experience some level of addiction to the internet, particularly social media. These results highlight the significance of the problem of internet addiction in society, with most individuals feeling it at a level that can be considered moderate. Therefore, there is a need for awareness and concerted efforts to manage internet use so as not negatively impact psychological and social well-being (Table 1).

Table 1. Gender and Range of Addiction

	Gender	Addiction Range			Total
		Low	Medium	High	
Men	Count	5	26	8	39
	Expected Count	6.6	26.9	5.5	39.0
	% Within Gender	12.8%	66.7%	20.5%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	20.8%	26.5%	40.0%	27.5%
	% of Total	3.5%	18.3%	5.6%	27.5%
Women	Count	19	72	12	103
	Expected Count	17.4	71.1	14.5	103.0

	% Within Gender	18.4%	69.9%	11.7%	100.0%
	% Within Addiction Range	79.2%	73.5%	60.0%	72.5%
	% of Total	13.4%	50.7%	8.5%	72.5%
	Count	24	98	20	142
	Expected Count	24.0	98.0	20.0	142.0
Total	% Within Gender	16.9%	69.0%	14.1%	100.0%
	% Within Addiction Range	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	16.9%	69.0%	14.1%	100.0%

(Source: Primary Data, 2023).

### Age of Respondents and Range of Addiction

The data collected illustrates an interesting pattern of internet addiction among respondents, from the youngest to the oldest. Interestingly, this addiction is not limited to a particular age group but is spread evenly among respondents of all age ranges. In contrast, a study conducted by (Menon et al., 2018) showed that there is a high level of correlation between age and internet addiction, with older students being more addicted to the internet than younger students. However, the final results of this study show that all respondents, regardless of age, are at a moderate level of addiction to the Internet. Three age groups dominate the respondents, namely, 19, 20, and 21 years old.

Of the 28 19-year-old respondents, 17 of them were identified as having a moderate level of addiction, likewise with the 20-year-old age group, where out of 43 respondents, 33 of them were classified as moderately addicted. Meanwhile, of the 37 respondents aged 21, 26 of them also showed a moderate level of addiction. This analysis leads us to understand that internet addiction is not only a problem involving a certain age group but is spreading among younger generations. There is a need for further attention to the impact of internet use, especially among adolescents and young adults, and efforts to develop effective prevention and treatment strategies (Table 2).

Table 2. Age Respondents and Range of Addiction

Age		Addiction Range			Total
		Low	Medium	High	
	Count	0	1	0	1
	Expected Count	.2	.7	.1	1.0
17	% Within Respondent Age	0,0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.7%
	% of Total	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
	Count	1	3	1	5
	Expected Count	.8	3.5	.7	5.0
18	% Within Respondent Age	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	4,2%	3,1%	5.0%	3,5%
	% of Total	0.7%	2.1%	0.7%	3.5%
	Count	7	17	4	28
	Expected Count	4.7	19.3	3.9	28.0
19	% Within Respondent Age	25.0%	60.7%	14.3%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	29.2%	17.3%	20.0%	19.7%
	% of Total	4,9%	12.0%	2.8%	19.7%
20	Count	5	33	5	43

	Expected Count	7.3	29.7	6.1	43.0
	% Within Respondent Age	11.6%	76.7%	11.6%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	20.8%	33.7%	25.0%	30.3%
	% of Total	3.5%	23.2%	3.5%	30.3%
	Count	8	26	3	37
	Expected Count	6.3	25.5	5.2	37.0
21	% Within Respondent Age	21.6%	70.3%	8.1%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	33.3%	26.5%	15.0%	26.1%
	% of Total	5.6%	18.3%	2.1%	26.1%
	Count	1	10	4	15
	Expected Count	2.5	10.4	2.1	15.0
22	% Within Respondent Age	6.7%	66.7%	26.7%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	4.2%	10.2%	20.0%	10.6%
	% of Total	0.7%	7.0%	2.8%	10.6%
	Count	2	7	2	11
	Expected Count	1.9	7.6	1.5	11.0
23	% Within Respondent Age	18.2%	63.6%	18.2%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	8.3%	7.1%	10.0%	7.7%
	% of Total	1.4%	4.9%	1.4%	7.7%
	Count	0	1	1	2
	Expected Count	.3	1.4	.3	2.0
24	% Within Respondent Age	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	0.0%	1.0%	5.0%	1.4%
	% of Total	0.0%	0.7%	0,7%	1.4%
	Count	24	98	20	142
	Expected Count	24.0	98.0	20.0	142.0
Total	% Within Respondent Age	16.9%	69.0%	14.1%	100.0%
	%Within Addiction Range	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	16.9%	69.0%	14.1%	100.0%

(Source: Primary Data, 2023).

### Factors Affecting Addiction

Based on the aspects that affect addiction (Young & Rogers, 1998), this addiction tendency is dominated by the aspects of characteristics and excessive use because students who seem to be tied to the internet make them think of the internet all the time. Then, this tendency affects students' self-control, making it difficult for them to control themselves by providing limits when using the internet. Thus, their efforts to limit themselves from using the internet often fail. This certainly impacts students' performance and productivity and raises some quite crucial problems in their lives. This is why students

eventually choose shortcuts by increasing the use of the internet as an escape or an outlet from feeling upset and angry about the problems that come into their lives. Students think they can anticipate such negative feelings and restore their spirit with the internet.

According to (Zanah & Rahardjo, 2020), their research results show that social media addiction among students is influenced by loneliness and fear of missing out. Negative antecedents such as loneliness and fear of missing out can influence individuals to engage in things that are also negative, namely social media addiction. This is also in

line with research conducted by (Harahap & Miftahurrahmah, 2020), which proves a significant relationship between social media addiction and loneliness in Yogyakarta State University students. The two variables' correlation is positive, indicating a unidirectional relationship.

This phenomenon continues to occur in the student life phase, leading to them becoming individualistic or apathetic towards their surroundings and ignoring their social life. Of course, this can get worse if it continues to be left unchecked, which can also impact an indifferent attitude towards the work or tasks they have. Moreover, this will make the problems faced by students more complicated. From these things, a conclusion can be drawn that the tendency starts from the characteristics and excessive use, then causes the inability to control oneself to start looking for ways to anticipate the problems that come, after which it starts to ignore social life and its work.

## CONCLUSION

From the analysis of gender and range of addiction, it can be seen that the majority of respondents, both men (66.7%) and women (69.9%), experience a moderate level of internet addiction, especially social media. The number of respondents who experienced moderate addiction reached 98 out of a total of 142 respondents. This data shows that the problem of internet addiction, especially social media, has a significant impact on society, with most individuals feeling a moderate level of addiction. In the analysis of respondents' age groups and range of addiction, it is seen that three age groups dominate, namely 19, 20, and 21 years old. Of the 28 19-year-old respondents, 17 of them experienced moderate addiction. In the 20-year age group, out of 43 respondents, 33 were classified as moderately addicted. While in the 21-year-old age group, out of 37 respondents, 26 of them also showed a moderate level of addiction. This analysis indicates that internet addiction does not only occur in certain age groups but spreads among younger generations.

Furthermore, the tendency of internet addiction in university students is dominated by two main aspects: distinctive features and excessive use. Students who feel attached to the internet tend to always think about it and find it difficult to control their use. Difficulties in self-control make attempts to limit internet use often fail. As a solution, some students tend to increase their internet use as an escape from feeling upset and angry about the problems they face. They believe the internet can help overcome negative feelings and restore their enthusiasm for life.

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