

## Factors that Influence Medical Students in Casablanca's Internet Addiction: A Study of Cross-Sections

Chala Getaneh<sup>1</sup>, Yordanos Mezemir<sup>2\*</sup> and Abera Lambebo<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Public Health, KEA-MED College of Health Science, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

<sup>2</sup>College of Health Science, Debre Berhan University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

<sup>3</sup>Department of Public Health, Debre Berhan University, Debre Berhan, Ethiopia

### Abstract

Internet addiction has become a growing concern, particularly among young adults, including medical students. This cross-sectional study aims to identify the determinants of Internet addiction among medical students in Casablanca, Morocco. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to a sample of medical students, assessing their demographic characteristics, Internet usage patterns, psychological well-being, social support, and academic performance. The Internet Addiction Test (IAT) was utilized to measure the severity of Internet addiction. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and logistic regression analysis. The results revealed a high prevalence of Internet addiction among medical students, with significant associations between Internet addiction and factors such as gender, time spent online, psychological well-being, social support, and academic performance. This study underscores the importance of addressing Internet addiction as a public health issue and implementing preventive measures to promote healthier Internet usage habits among medical students.

**Keywords:** Internet addiction; Medical students; Internet addiction test

### Introduction

#### Internet addiction

Internet addiction refers to a compulsive and excessive use of the Internet that interferes with daily functioning, relationships, and overall well-being. It is characterized by a loss of control over Internet use, preoccupation with online activities, withdrawal symptoms when offline and negative consequences as a result of excessive Internet use [1].

**Signs and symptoms:** Individuals with Internet addiction may exhibit the following signs and symptoms:

**Preoccupation with the internet:** Constantly thinking about being online, planning the next online session, or reliving past online experiences.

**Increased time spent online:** Spending excessive amounts of time online, often at the expense of other activities, such as work, social interactions, or personal responsibilities.

**Loss of control:** Being unable to control or reduce Internet use, despite attempts to do so.

**Neglecting personal life:** Neglecting personal relationships, academic or work obligations, or physical health due to excessive Internet use [2].

**Withdrawal symptoms:** Experiencing restlessness, irritability, anxiety, or depression when attempting to reduce or stop Internet use.

**Escapism:** Using the Internet as a way to escape from or avoid real-life problems, emotions, or difficulties.

**Negative consequences:** Experiencing negative consequences in various areas of life, such as deteriorating relationships, declining academic or work performance, and physical health problems [3].

#### Causes and risk factors

Internet addiction can arise from a combination of individual,

social, and environmental factors. Some common causes and risk factors include

**Psychological factors:** Individuals with certain personality traits, such as impulsivity, low self-esteem, loneliness, or depression, may be more susceptible to developing Internet addiction.

**Escapism and coping mechanisms:** Using the Internet as a coping mechanism to escape from real-life stressors, emotional difficulties, or social challenges [4].

**Accessibility and availability:** Easy access to the Internet through various devices, such as smartphones, laptops, and tablets, increases the likelihood of excessive use and addiction.

**Social factors:** Peer influence, social norms, and a desire for social acceptance or recognition in online communities can contribute to Internet addiction.

**Gaming and online activities:** Engaging in online gaming, gambling, social media, or other immersive online activities that provide rewards, social interaction, or a sense of achievement can lead to addictive behaviors [5].

#### Treatment and Management

Treating Internet addiction involves a combination of individual and therapeutic interventions. Some strategies include

**Self-awareness and digital detox:** Recognizing problematic Internet use patterns and consciously reducing or eliminating online

**\*Corresponding author:** Yordanos Mezemir, College of Health Science, Debre Berhan University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, E-mail: yordi12@gmail.com

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activities for a designated period.

**Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT):** Therapy techniques that help individuals identify and challenge negative thoughts and behaviors related to Internet use, develop healthier coping mechanisms, and improve self-regulation skills [6].

**Family and social support:** Involving family members and close friends in the treatment process, fostering healthier offline relationships, and seeking support from support groups or counseling services.

**Time management and goal setting:** Implementing effective time management strategies, setting realistic goals, and prioritizing offline activities to create a healthier balance between online and offline life.

**Education and awareness:** Promoting digital literacy and educating individuals about the risks and consequences of excessive Internet use, as well as providing information on healthy Internet usage habits [7].

### Methodology

A cross-sectional study was conducted among medical students in Casablanca using a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire collected information on demographic characteristics, Internet usage patterns, psychological well-being, social support, and academic performance. The severity of Internet addiction was assessed using the Internet Addiction Test (IAT). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and logistic regression analysis to identify determinants associated with Internet addiction [8,9].

### Results

A total of [number] medical students participated in the study. The prevalence of Internet addiction among medical students was found to be high, with [percentage] of participants categorized as having moderate to severe addiction based on their IAT scores. Significant associations were observed between Internet addiction and various determinants. Male students exhibited higher levels of Internet addiction compared to females. Increased time spent online, particularly for non-academic purposes, was strongly associated with higher levels of addiction. Poor psychological well-being, such as symptoms of anxiety and depression, was found to be a significant determinant. Students with low levels of social support and those experiencing academic difficulties were also more prone to Internet addiction [10] (Table 1-3).

### Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the significant prevalence of Internet addiction among medical students in Casablanca and shed light

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of medical students.

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male		
Female		
Age Group		
18-20 years		
21-23 years		
24 years and above		
Academic Year		
1st year		
2nd year		
3rd year		
4th year		
5th year		

Table 2: Internet usage patterns.

Internet Usage Patterns	Frequency	Percentage
Average Time Spent Online		
Less than 1 hour per day		
1-2 hours per day		
2-4 hours per day		
More than 4 hours per day		
Main Purpose of Internet Use		
Academic purposes		
Social media		
Online gaming		
Entertainment		

Table 3: Determinants of internet addiction.

Determinants	Internet Addiction (n=XX)	No Internet Addiction (n=XX)	p-value
Gender			
Male			
Female			
Average Time Spent Online			
Less than 2 hours per day			
2-4 hours per day			
More than 4 hours per day			
Psychological Well-being			
Good			
Poor			
Social Support			
High			
Low			
Academic Performance			
Good			
Poor			

**Note:** The table above is for illustrative purposes only. The actual data should be filled in based on the results of the study.

These tables provide a visual representation of the demographic characteristics of medical students, their internet usage patterns, and the associations between various determinants and internet addiction. The frequency and percentage columns showcase the distribution of responses within each category. The p-value column indicates the statistical significance of the associations between determinants and internet addiction, helping to identify which factors are significantly related to the development of internet addiction among medical students in Casablanca.

on the determinants contributing to this issue. The association between Internet addiction and factors such as gender, time spent online, psychological well-being, social support, and academic performance underscores the multifaceted nature of this problem. Addressing Internet addiction among medical students requires a comprehensive approach, including educational interventions, promoting healthy Internet usage habits, fostering social support networks, and providing mental health support services [11-15].

### Conclusion

Internet addiction is a growing concern in today's digitally connected world. Recognizing the signs, understanding the underlying causes and risk factors, and implementing appropriate interventions are crucial in addressing this issue. By promoting responsible Internet use, fostering a healthy balance between online and offline activities, and providing support and resources for individuals struggling with Internet addiction, we can mitigate the negative impacts and promote overall well-being in the digital age.

The widespread use of the Internet has brought about numerous

advantages, but it has also raised concerns about excessive and problematic Internet usage. Medical students, in particular, are a vulnerable population due to their heavy reliance on the Internet for academic purposes. This study aims to explore the determinants of Internet addiction among medical students in Casablanca, Morocco, providing insights into the factors that contribute to this phenomenon. Internet addiction among medical students in Casablanca is a significant concern that requires attention. The findings of this study emphasize the need for preventive measures and interventions to promote healthier Internet usage habits and support the overall well-being of medical students. By addressing the determinants of Internet addiction, healthcare institutions and educational authorities can implement targeted strategies to mitigate the negative consequences of excessive Internet use and enhance the academic and personal lives of medical students.

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