

# Investigating Psychological Well-Being Index in Users of Virtual Networks, a Communication Design

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** *psychological well-being index is important in psychological and personality structure. Social networks affect various aspects of psychological well-being that deserves attention. This study was conducted aimed to assessing wellbeing of social network users and its comparison with non-users. Method: This study was a descriptive comparative study. In this regard, 220 high school girl students studying in the academic year of 2015-2016 were selected using multi-stage cluster sampling based on criteria for the use of social networking of telegram. Demographic information of research participants was assessed by a questionnaire made by the researcher and psychological well-being index was assessed by Ryff questionnaire. Data was analyzed by chi-square test, analysis of variance and Bonferroni software in SPSS 19. Results: The results showed that there is a significant difference between two groups of users and non-users in terms of all six components of psychological well-being ( $p < 0.01$ ). Conclusion: The findings of this study show the effectiveness of the Phenomenon of Internet use on the psychological well-being index and reflect the importance of the above mentioned index in planning a comprehensive program of prevention and treatment.*

**Keywords:** *use of the Internet, cyberspace, psychological well-being, Telegram*

## Introduction

Technological developments have always its own consequences, the emergence of new communication technologies, has espoused new and exciting ways of communication for the present man. Social networks also assist with the completion of previous communications and communications in a virtual context has created a situation where we can use it to communicate with many people familiar and unfamiliar, talk and exchange thoughts. On the other hand, and in

parallel with this development, the presence in these spaces of communication has different nature. This difference is led to the consequences of social networks and the presence and use of them attract some attentions.

The term social networks were first introduced in 1954 by J.E Barnes and then quickly became a key element of research and studies. In general, the social networks are a set of social institutions including people and organizations that make form to a set of social significant relations that interact together to share values (Memar, Adlipoor khaksar, 2012).

Of course, the arrival of students to cyberspace affects different aspects of communication needs and psychological issues. In particular, the age of puberty has its own considerations. The cyber threats among young people are rapidly becoming a global phenomenon. Educators, parents and policymakers are working to limit these negative and sometimes destructive behaviors. Solving this problem needs cooperation of pupils, their parents and teachers (Cassidy et al., 2012). According to what mentioned above, the aim of this study was comparing the components of psychological well-being index in two groups of users and non-users.

## Method

The present study was a causal-comparative design in the collection of descriptive plans. The population of this study included all male students in high schools of Region 9 of Tehran in the academic year of 2015-2016. According to the members of the population, the number of samples was calculated using Cochran formula equal to 220 people. In order to achieve the desired sample, multistage cluster sampling method was used. The aim of the study was explained to the students, the students were asked to answer questions and patient confidentiality was emphasized. It was also noted that there is no need to mention the name. Then the questionnaires were collected on the same

day. Inclusion criteria were as follows: 1) having normal IQ, education in high school of Region 9 of Tehran as non-guests, 2) lack of vision and hearing disorders in Internet users and 3) the absence of severe psychiatric syndrome symptoms. The exclusion criteria were as follows: 1) incomplete questionnaires completed according to the given cut-off point and 2) not to sign informed consent to participate in the research. In this study due to the psychological well-being scale, parametric multivariate analysis of variance test was used and software SPSS version 19 was used for data analysis.

### Instruments

In this study, research made demographic questionnaire and welfare Ryff questionnaire were used.

**Demographic questionnaire:** this questionnaire was made by the researcher to collect demographic information such as age, education, marital status, occupation and duration of drug use.

**Psychological Well-Being Questionnaire:** This tool is designed by Ryff and has 84 items and covers 6 factors. The six dimensions include environmental mastery, personal growth, Purpose in life, autonomy, self-acceptance and positive relationships with others. The participants in the 6-degree scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) respond to the questions.

### Results

Demographic status of the participants showed that the highest frequency of the participants belongs to high school and its lowest belongs to Kardansh. Also, about 25% of the participants did not mention their field of study. In addition, about 60 percent of the participants belonged to the second grade of high school and 21.5% belonged to pre-university. In terms of usage of the Internet, 50 percent of participants use time less than 3.5 hours a day, 40 percent between 3.5 to 5 hours and 10 percent more than 5 hours. Demographic characteristics analysis using Chi-square test showed that there is no significant difference between the distribution of the characteristics ( $p > 0.05$ ). Before statistical tests, the assumption of normal distribution was verified by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ( $p > 0.05$ ). Also, the equality of variances was verified by Levene's test ( $p > 0.05$ ). In order to compare psychological well-being index in the form of six components, analysis of variance was used. The results showed that there is not a significant differences between the components of psychological well-being (new alpha by Bonferroni method was equal to 0.008) in

all six aspects among the two groups of user and non-user ( $p < 0.01$ ).

### Discussion and Conclusion

This study was conducted aimed to compare psychological well-being index in the two groups of users and non-users. Results showed that the two groups had no significant difference in terms of six components. In this context, and in line with our findings, Nastizadeh (2010) in a study entitled "the relation of Public health with Internet addiction of the students of University of Sistan and Baluchestan" concluded that public health of users addicted to Internet in the indices of anxiety, depression than normal users are at greater risk. In a study, Ranjbar (2011) showed that there is a significant inverse correlation between the amount and type of use of Internet with mental health and by increasing the use of internet mental health of the students decrease. Mirzaeian et al (2011) in a study compared the rate of Internet addiction among college students and its impact on mental health. The results showed that mental health and its components, including physical symptoms, symptoms of anxiety, social dysfunction and depression symptoms among the three groups of students was different. Shadur (2014) in another study compared the mental health of female high school students addicted and non-addicted to the Internet in the city of Dezful. The results showed that there is a relationship between internet addiction and somatization and anxiety of mental health in students. Pantic et al (2012) examined the relationship between online social networks and depression in High School Students. Results showed that high school students spend an average of two hours for social networks and three hours for watching television. Results showed that there is a relationship between addiction to the online social-networking and depression. Espinoza and Jares (2012) in a study suggested that Internet addiction is becoming a serious mental health problem in some countries. Rajeev and Jobilal (2015) conducted a study titled "the effect of social networks on social relationships". Results showed that the role of social media on public relations students is very high and must control programs be done on this factor to reduce harms of social effects. Strickland (2014) in his study examines the relationship between social media use and mental health in the adult population. He states that most of social media users are at risk of developing mental health problems. This study was conducted to compare psychological well-being index in two

groups of users and non-users. The results showed that both groups showed a significant difference in terms of six factors. These findings could be useful in the prevention and treatment of Internet addiction.

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