Advanced International Journal for Research (AIJFR)
E-ISSN: 3048-7641 ● Website: www.aijfr.com ● Email: editor@aijfr.com

Connectivism and Behavioural Addiction: Investigating the Relationship between Loneliness and Study Habits among Social Networking Sites (SNSs) addicted Students

Altaf Ahmad Sheikh[1], Dr. Manzoor Ahmad Rather[2]

[1]Research Scholar, Department of Education, University of Kashmir
[2]Associate Professor, Department of Education, University of Kashmir

Abstract

The connectivism, as a new learning approach, emphasizes the role of networks, technology, and online platforms in facilitating learning. This learning theory, which encourages continuous engagement with digital tools, social media, and online resources for both academic and social purposes, can unintentionally contribute to online addiction known as Behavioral addiction among users. As students rely heavily on these platforms for collaboration, information retrieval, and communication, they may feel compelled to remain connected at all times, leading to excessive screen time. The constant flow of instant feedback, social validation, and peer interaction can foster addictive behaviours, particularly when students feel the need to constantly check for updates or stay involved in ongoing discussions. Additionally, the blending of learning with leisure activities, such as using social media platform for both academic and entertainment purposes, can blur boundaries and make it difficult for students to disconnect. Without proper self-regulation and time management, the consistent integration of digital environments especially You-tub, Twitter, Facebook etc,. into everyday life can lead to dependency, contributing to social networking addiction (SNA) known as behavioral addiction. Thus, while connectivism offers a robust framework for modern learning, it requires careful implementation to prevent overuse and ensure a balanced relationship with technology.

Based on the insights cited above, the authors have formulated the following objectives for the present investigation:

1) To examine the prevalence of behavioural addiction among college students, and

2) To investigate the correlation between loneliness and study habits among college students exhibiting behavioural addictive tendencies.

Descriptive research methodology was applied to achieve the above mentioned objectives. The study identified 600 college students exhibiting SNS addiction from a sample of 1,450 subjects. The results of the study reveal that there is a significant negative correlation between study habits and loneliness among college-going SNS behavior addictive students.

Keywords: Connectivism, SNS Addictive behavior, Study Habits, Loneliness.

1. Introduction

Learning theories in education offer frameworks for understanding how students learn, process information, and develop skills. Each theory presents a unique perspective and highlight separate teaching methods. Behaviourism focuses on observable behaviours and environmental stimuli, while cognitivism emphasizes mental processes like memory and problem-solving. Constructivism encourages active learning through experience and interaction, and humanism prioritizes emotional, social, and intellectual growth. Social learning theory highlights the role of observation and modelling, and connectivism views learning as a network of connections facilitated by technology. Other theories, such as multiple intelligences and experiential learning, focus on different ways students process information and engage with learning. Combining elements from these theories can create a more holistic and effective educational experience. Connectivism that emphasizes networks, technology, and the importance of online platforms for knowledge exchange, can unintentionally contribute to online addiction among students if not approached with care. At its core, connectivism promotes the idea that learning occurs through interactions within networks, whether they be with peers, experts, or digital resources. This leads to a heavy reliance on digital tools, platforms, and social media for academic collaboration, information gathering, and communication. However, constant engagement with these online environments can result in students spending excessive time online, often feeling pressured to stay connected for academic purposes such as accessing resources, participating in discussions, or staying updated with new information.

One of the central tenets of Connectivism is learning through social interaction within networks, which often takes place on social media or digital forums. These digital forums are like YouTube, twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc. As students engage more with these platforms for academic collaboration, the boundaries between social and academic activities become blurred, increasing the likelihood of students spending more time online for both educational and recreational purposes. Additionally, the need for constant updates and feedback, fuelled by the instant gratification that digital platforms provide, can make it difficult for students to disconnect, reinforcing addictive behaviours. The constant influx of information, notifications, and social validation from peers and instructors further encourages compulsive online engagement, making it hard for students to manage their screen time effectively.

Moreover, the fear of missing out (FOMO) on academic or social developments can lead students to feel they must remain constantly online, checking updates and engaging with others. This contributes to unhealthy digital habits, including excessive use of learning platforms, social media, and other online environments. Without proper self-regulation and a clear distinction between academic work and personal activities, students can develop a dependency on digital platforms, resulting in online behavioral addiction.

Behavioural addiction among students is a significant issue that profoundly impacts their academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being. Exploring the relationship between loneliness and study habits in addicted students is a crucial area of research. Addictions to activities such as social media, video games, or gambling can disrupt daily life, causing students to spend excessive time on these behaviours, which negatively affects their academic work, social interactions, as a result, it leads poor

study habits. Consequently, loneliness often emerges, with addicted students withdrawing from social connections and missing out on valuable support from peers, family, and teachers. This isolation further contributes to poor study habits, as students may develop addictive behaviours over academic responsibilities, leading to procrastination, lack of focus, and ultimately lower academic achievement. Addiction is also strongly linked to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress, which leads to feelings of loneliness that impairs emotional and cognitive functions. Given this impact, it becomes essential to identify the specific addictive behaviors prevalent among college students and examine how these behaviours contribute to their sense of loneliness. Understanding the relationship between loneliness and study habits in addicted students is crucial, as it can provide valuable insights into how addiction influences academic performance and overall well-being. This knowledge is vital for developing targeted interventions that can help students overcome addiction, improve their social connections, and enhance their academic success. With this background, the researchers have taken the initiative to investigate loneliness in relation to the study habits of students addicted to Social Networking Sites. Hence, the proposed problem for the present investigation reads as:

A Study on Relationship between Loneliness and Study Habits of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) Addicted Students.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of Connectivism as a learning approach, when examined in the context of SNS behavioral addiction, can be understood through several interrelated concepts that describe how technology and digital networks facilitate learning. Connectivism, a theory developed by George Siemens and others, emphasizes the critical role of connections both human and technological in the process of learning. It posits that learning occurs not in isolation, but through dynamic networks of information, resources, and people, with knowledge being distributed across these networks. This allows learners to continuously connect with a wide range of sources, enabling ongoing access to new information and learning opportunities. However, these very features that make connectivism powerful for modern education can also unknowingly contribute to addictive behaviours, particularly when students become overly dependent on digital tools and online environments. Connectivism places strong emphasis on continuous interaction with a variety of networks, and students may feel pressure to remain constantly online in order to access learning resources, peer support, and up-to-date information. This can lead to compulsive engagement with online tools, platforms, and social media, promoting excessive screen time and dependency. In addition to it, many connectivist environments provide instant access to information and real-time feedback, which can create a cycle of compulsive behavior. The need for immediate validation or updates from peers, instructors, or digital platforms can reinforce addictive patterns, as students continuously return for the instant satisfaction they receive. Additionally, peer interactions and social validation play an important role in connectivism, as learning is deeply social and collaborative. Students often engage in online discussions, share resources, and learn from others. The drive for peer determination, as well as the "Fear of Missing Out" (FOMO), can lead to excessive time spent on social media or digital learning platforms, fostering addictive behaviours.

Operation Definitions of the Terms and Variables

1. Social networking Addiction:

Social Networking Addiction is a behavioral addiction marked by an excessive focus on social networking sites (YouTube, Facebook, etc.), devoting so much time and energy to these sites that it impairs other important life areas. In this study, the variable has been measured using scores obtained from Social Networking Addiction Scale developed by Shahnawaz & Rehman (2020). The scale has 21 items dividing it into six dimensions.

2. Loneliness

Loneliness refers to an individual's subjective perception that he/she lacks close interpersonal relationships, imbalance between desired and actual social contacts. In this study, the variable has been measured using scores obtained from perceived Loneliness scale constructed by Perveen Jha (1997). The scale has total 36 items.

3. Study Habits

It is defined as the individual's systematic and efficient activities to improve learning activity. The variable has been measured using scores obtained from Study Habits Scale developed by Mukhopadhyaya and Sanaswal (2011) The scale consists of 70 items divided into nine aspects which are: 1. Comprehension 2. Concentration 3. Task orientation 4. Study Sets 5. Interaction 6. Drilling 7. Supports 8. Recording 9. Language.

Delimitation of the study

The study is delimited to Government degree college SNSs addicted learners of the Kashmir valley. Furthermore, the study is delimited to the 2nd and 4th semester students only.

Objectives of the study:

The following objectives were formulated for the present study.

1) To examine the prevalence of behavioural addiction among college students,

2) To investigate the relationship between loneliness and study habits among college students exhibiting behavioural addictive tendencies. **(Dimension wise and composite score)**

Hypothesis of the Study

Ha1: There is a significant relationship between Loneliness and Study Habits among college students exhibiting behavioral addictive tendencies. **(Dimension wise)**

Ha2: There is a significant relationship between Loneliness and Study Habits among college students exhibiting behavioral addictive tendencies. **(Composite score)**

Methodology

1. Population

The population of the study includes Government degree college students addicted to social networking sites who are studying in various degree colleges across the south, north, and central regions of the Kashmir Valley.

2. Sample

The sample for the present study consists of 600 students identified as being addicted to social networking sites (SNS) from various colleges across the Kashmir Valley.

3. Sampling process

In the sample process, the investigator used a multistage sampling technique to identify college-going students addicted to social networking sites (SNS) in the Kashmir Valley. There are ten districts in Kashmir divided into three regions i.e three to North, three to Central and four to South Kashmir.The entire sampling process included the following stages:

1st Stage: The investigator has selected six districts, two from each region i.e. north, south and central Kashmir by applying random sampling technique for the present study.

2nd Stage: The investigator used simple random (lottery method) sampling technique to identify 2 colleges from each mentioned districts, resulting in a total of 12 colleges. The total population of these 12 colleges is 23,400 students belonging to 2nd and 4th semesters.

3rd stage: The investigator administered the Social Networking Addiction Scale developed by Shahnawaz and Rehaman (2020) on a sample of 1,440 students randomly selected from two out of six semesters across 12 colleges. The investigator has identified 600 (male= 270, female= 330) social networking addicted students among these 12 colleges.

Statistical Techniques

Following techniques has been applied on data in order to achieve the above mentioned objectives:

1) Mean 2) SD and 3) Person's coefficient of Correlation

Analysis and Discussion of the study:

Table 01, Showing the Significant relationship between Loneliness and the Study Habits among College-going behavior addictive students.

Factor wise

Areas of Study Habits	***Loneliness (Composite score)***
(A1) Comprehension	**r = -.173****
(A2) Concentration	**r =- .099***
(A3)Task orientation	**r = -.183**
(A4) Study Sets	**r = -.086***
(A5) Interaction	**r = -.112****
(A6) Drilling	**r = -.077**
(A7) Supports	**r = -.197****
(A8) Recording	**r = -.109***
(A9) Language	**r = -.130****
Composite Score	**r = -.284****

Acronyms: SNS=Social Networking Sites

The information presented in the above table **(1)** shows that the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 01**(Comprehension)** is found to be***-.173,*** which is significant at 0.01 level of significance **(p< 0.01)** for total sample. It shows a significant negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 01 i.e.(Comprehension). It infers that if the level of loneliness among college-going SNS addicted respondents increases, their study habits Area 01 **(Comprehension)** decreases and vice versa. The Table no. **01 also** shows the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 02 **(Concentration)** is found to be**-.099,** which is significant at 0.05 level of significance **(p< 0.01)** for total sample. It shows a significant negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 02 (Comprehension). It infers that if the level of loneliness among college-going SNS addicted respondents increases, their study habits Area 02 **(Concentration)** decreases and vice versa is also possible.

The table **(1)** shows that the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 03 **(Task-orientation)** is found to be ***-.183,*** which is significant at 0.05 level of significance **(p>0.05)** for total sample. It shows a negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 03 (Task-orientation). It indicates that if the level of loneliness **among** college-going SNS addicted sample subjects increases, their study habits Area 03 **(Task-orientation)** decreases and vice

versa.

The table No.1, shows that the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 04 **(Study Sets)** is found to be**-.086,** which is significant at 0.05 level of significance **(p< 0.01)** for total sample. It shows a significant negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 04 (Study Sets). It infers that if the level of loneliness**)** among college-going SNS addicted respondents increases, their study habits Area 04 **(Study Sets** decreases and vice versa.

The information presented in the above table **(9)** shows that the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 05 **(Interaction)** is found to be**-*.112,*** which is significant at 0.01 level of significance **(p< 0.01)** for total sample. It shows a significant negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 05 (Interaction). It indicates that if the level of loneliness among college-going SNS addicted respondents increases, their study habits Area 05 **(Interaction)** decreases and vice versa.

The information presented in the table N0.01, indicates the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 06 **(Drilling)** is found to be**-*.077,*** which could not arrive at any level of significance for total sample. It shows that there is not any significant correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 05 **(Drilling).**

The above table **(N0.1)** shows that the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 07 **(supports)** is found to be**-*.197,*** which is significant at 0.01 level of significance **(p< 0.01)** for total sample. It shows a significant negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 07 (Supports). It infers that if the level of loneliness among college-going SNS addicted respondents increases, their study habits Area 7 **(Supports)** decreases.

The information presented in the above table **(01)** indicates the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 08 **(Recording)** is found to be ***-.109,*** which is significant at 0.05 level of significance **(p< 0.05)** for total sample. It shows a significant negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 08 (Recording). It infers that if the level of loneliness among college-going SNS addicted respondents increases, their study habits Area 08 **(Recording)** decreases.

Table No.0.01shows the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits area 09 **(Language)** is found to be-**.130,** which is significant at 0.01 level of significance **(p< 0.01)** for total sample. It shows a significant negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits Area 09 (Language). It indicates that if the level of loneliness increases, study habits Area 09 **(Language)** among college-going SNS addicted respondents decreases and vice versa.

The information presented in the above table **(1)** shows that the coefficient of correlation between loneliness **(Composite score)** and study habits **(Composite score)** is found to be ***-.284,*** which is significant at 0.01 level of significance **(p< 0.01)** for total sample. It shows a significant negative correlation between loneliness (Composite score) and study habits (Composite score). It infers that if the level of loneliness among college-going SNS addicted respondents increases, study habits decrease and vice versa.

The above results of the study reveal that, the Hypothesis No 01 which reads as, **"**There is a significant relationship between Loneliness and Study Habits among college students exhibiting behavioral addictive tendencies **(Dimension wise), stands partially accepted.**

The hypothesis no. 2, which reads as **"**There is a significant relationship between Loneliness and Study Habits among college students exhibiting behavioral addictive tendencies **(Composite Score), stands accepted.**

The findings of the study suggest that as loneliness increases among college students addicted to social networking, it leads to the poor study habits. This relationship highlights a significant issue, as loneliness can have a direct impact on students' academic behaviours and outcomes. So, it means that there is a close link between loneliness and study habits among the behavioral addictive students. There are several reasons why loneliness contributes to poor study habits among these students. Firstly, loneliness can lead to a lack of motivation. When students feel isolated, they may lose interest in academic tasks and have a reduced desire to engage in studying. This emotional disengagement from academics can result in procrastination and a lack of focus, which are key indicators of poor study habits. Additionally, loneliness may cause mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression, which further impair a student's ability to concentrate, manage time effectively, and stay organized in their academic work. Secondly, loneliness can diminish students' ability to collaborate with peers, which is an important aspect of developing effective study habits. Social networking addiction often replaces face-to-face interactions, and students who feel lonely may not seek or participate in study groups or academic discussions. The absence of peer support and academic collaboration can significantly hinder a student's ability to learn and perform well in their studies. The demerits and impact of these poor study habits are far-reaching. Students who are both socially isolated and addicted to social media are likely to experience a decline in academic achievement. As their study habits decline, they may struggle with completing assignments on time, understanding course material, and performing well on exams, leading to lower grades and academic dissatisfaction. Over time, this can create a cycle where poor academic performance contributes to further feelings of loneliness and isolation. Several studies have identified a strong link between loneliness and decreased academic motivation. According to the study by ***Cacioppo et al. (2014)***, loneliness has a harmful impact on cognitive function and emotional well-being, which can result in decreased motivation to engage in academic tasks. ***McIntyre & O'Neill (2016)*** found that students who experience higher levels of loneliness, are less likely to engage in regular study routines, seek academic help from peers or instructors, or participate in study groups. ***Russell et al. (2013)*** found that loneliness is strongly associated with anxiety, depression, and stress, which can further impair cognitive function and concentration.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of the study clearly indicate that loneliness has a detrimental effect on the study habits of college students. As loneliness increases, students often experience a decline in their academic motivation, focus, and overall study behaviours. Feelings of isolation can lead to procrastination, a lack of engagement in academic tasks, and diminished concentration, all of which negatively impact academic performance. This negative relationship highlights the critical need to address loneliness as a significant factor influencing students' academic success.

To mitigate the effects of loneliness and improve study habits, colleges and universities should implement targeted strategies. First, **promoting social connections** through peer mentoring programs, study groups, and extracurricular activities can help students build strong social networks, which are essential for emotional support and academic collaboration. Second, **mental health support** is vital in addressing the emotional challenges associated with loneliness. Colleges should offer accessible counseling services and workshops focused on coping with stress, anxiety, and loneliness. Additionally, **time management and study skills** training can be valuable. Students struggling with loneliness may find it difficult to stay organized or prioritize their studies. Providing workshops on effective study techniques, time management, and goal-setting can help students develop more effective study routines, countering the procrastination often associated with loneliness. Finally, institutions should **create supportive and inclusive environments** where all students feel welcome and valued. Strong faculty-student relationships, mentorship opportunities, and a campus culture that promotes diversity and inclusion can foster a sense of community and reduce feelings of isolation. By addressing loneliness through these strategies, colleges can help students overcome its detrimental effects on study habits. This holistic approach not only enhances academic performance but also supports students' emotional well-being, ultimately contributing to their overall success and personal growth.

References:

1. Hassan, D., & Rao, A.V.A. (2012). Relationship between study habits, socioeconomic status and academic achievement of class X students. *Edutracks: A Monthly Scanner of Trends in Education,11*(12), 43-48.
2. Nelda, K. & Annan, A. (2000): Internet addiction in students: A cause of concern. *Cyber Psychology & Behavior, 6(6), 653-656. On, S. S.,*
3. Chang, S. & Wang, C. C. (2011): Comparative loneliness of users versus nonusers of online chatting. *Cyber Psychology, Behavior and Social Networking, 14(1-2), 35-40.*
4. Preplan, L. A. & Perlman, D. (1982): Perspective on loneliness. In L. A. Preplan & D. Perlman (Eds.) *Loneliness: A sourcebook of current theory, research and therapy*. New York: Wiley and Sons.
5. Promila (2014). Study habits of senior secondary school students in relation to gender andacademic stream. *Global International Research Thoughts*, *1*, 1-6.
6. Rajakumar, M., & Soundararajan, M. (2012). A Study on Higher Secondary Students' Study Habits in Tirunelveli District. *Indian Journal Innovations Development, 1 (4), 203-207.*
7. Premalakshmi, K. (2012). Study habits and academic achievement of higher secondarystudents. *Scholarly Journal for Interdisciplinary Studies, 1*(3), 551-565.
8. Rana, N., & Kapoor, S. (2017). Academic achievement of female students at college level in relation to their family environment and locale. *MIER Journal of Educational Studies, Trends and Practices, 7*(1), 51-65.
9. Singh, Y. G. (2011). Academic achievement and study habits of higher secondary students. *International Referred Research Journal*, *3*(27), 19-20.
10. Chand, S. (2013). Study habits of secondary school students in relation to typeof school and type of family. *International Journal of Social Science &Interdisciplinary Research*, *2*(7), 90-96.
11. Gakhar, S. C., & Bains, G. (2011). A study of self-concept and study habits of students ofarts and science streams. *MIER Journal of Educational Studies, Trends and Practices.*