

Original article

Final title: **Internet addiction and its association with life satisfaction among university students in Bangladesh**

Title at submission: Prevalence of internet addiction and its association with life satisfaction and socio-demographic variables

Round 1



Reviewer: Sifat E Syed, ORCID: [0000-0003-3075-0294](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3075-0294)

Overview

Thanks to the authors for addressing an important concern like Internet addiction among youth. This is a well articulated manuscript in simple English. I have few comments on methodology and discussion mostly, listed with line numbers below.

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Responsible editor

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Keywords

internet addiction, life satisfaction,
prevalence, university students,
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None

Ethical approval

Approved by the IRB of the Institute
of Biological Sciences, the
University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh,
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Trail registration number

Not applicable

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|---|----------|--|
| 1 | Comment | Please provide an Overview of the manuscripts within 100 words. |
| | Response | Thank you so much for your valuable suggestion. We have gladly accepted it and incorporated as 'Key messages' into the manuscript (please see lines 48-53). |
| 2 | Comment | Title is too long. It can be shorter. |
| | Response | We appreciate your suggestion to make it shorter. In response, we have revised the title to make it more concise while maintaining its core focus. The updated title is: Internet addiction and its association with life satisfaction: a cross-sectional study (please see lines 2-3). |
| 3 | Comment | "We collected 60 participants from each Hall" (line 98),
How were they selected, not mentioned. |
| | Response | Thank you for your insightful comment. In response to your query, we would like to clarify the participant selection process. To select 60 participants from each hall, we used simple random sampling technique within each hall to ensure that every student had an equal chance of being selected. This method helped to maintain the representativeness of the sample while avoiding bias. We have now added this detail to the manuscript for clarity (please see lines 104-110). |
| 4 | Comment | Line 104: Exclusion criteria: a) irregular students,
Comment: How it was determined whether a student was regular/irregular? |
| | Response | Thank you for your question regarding the classification of regular and irregular students. In this study, the university administration's official registration status was used to determine this. Regular students are enrolled in full-time degree programs, while irregular students are those who have deviated from the standard academic progression, such as taking breaks or enrolling in non-standard terms (please see lines 115-119). |
| 5 | Comment | Line 107: Researchers recruited data from different universities in different areas by appointing trained 107 graduate students.
Comment: Did the researchers give training to the data collectors for using the research instruments? or they were already trained? Was there any piloting done? |
| | Response | Yes, the researchers provided training to the data collectors before data collection began. The graduate students who were appointed as data collectors received comprehensive training on how to use the research instruments effectively. The training included an overview of the study's objectives, instructions on administering the questionnaires, and guidance on ensuring consistency and accuracy in data collection. Additionally, a pilot study was conducted prior to the main data collection to test the instruments and refine the procedures. This allowed us to address any issues or ambiguities in the instruments and ensure the reliability and validity of the data collection process (please see lines 124-130). |
| 6 | Comment | Line 112: Socioeconomic status (lower class, middle class, higher class),
Comment: How was the socio-economic status determined. |
| | Response | In this study, socio-economic status (SES) was determined using a combination of key indicators, including household income, educational level of the head of the household, and occupation. These indicators were used to categorize participants into lower, middle, or higher socio-economic classes. The classification was based on commonly used SES scales and was adapted to reflect the local context and available data. Due to space constraints, it has been explained very briefly in the text (please see lines 134-138). |

- 7 **Comment** Line 117: Instrument: Internet Addiction Test.
Was this tool validated in Bangla by the researchers or the validated version is used?
A validated Bangla version of this scale is available, but the reference is not cited in the manuscript (Karim et al 2014).
- Response** We appreciate you pointing out the availability of a validated Bangla version of the scale. In our study, we used the validated Bangla version of the Internet Addiction Test (IAT). However, we realize that we inadvertently omitted the reference to the original validation study by Karim et al. (2014) in the manuscript. Necessary revisions were made, and the relevant reference was included to appropriately acknowledge the tool's validation in the Bangla language (please see lines 143-150).
- 8 **Comment** Statistical software name and version not mentioned.
- Response** We apologize for the oversight regarding the statistical software used in our analysis. In the revised manuscript, we will include the name and version of the statistical software employed. For this study, we used SPSS version 26.0 (please see lines 170-171).
- 9 **Comment** Line 201: Possible explanation of higher rate of internet addiction than previous reports can be discussed. Current study population lived in University hostels, not with family, this factor can be discussed comparing with sample characteristics of similar studies.
Internet addiction between male and female students can be discussed comparing with findings of similar studies.
- Response** Thank you for your thoughtful suggestions. In response, we have included a discussion on the higher rate of IA in our study compared to previous reports, focusing on factors like the study population and the influence of living in university hostels. We have also compared our hostel-living participants with those from similar studies who lived with their families, to highlight how the hostel environment may contribute to higher addiction rates. Additionally, we have addressed the gender differences in internet addiction, drawing comparisons with similar studies to better contextualize our findings (please see lines 230-241).
- 10 **Comment** Line 220: The explanation of higher internet addiction among students who were not satisfied with life can be given.
- Response** In response to your comment, we have explained the higher rates of IA among students with low life satisfaction, discussing how life dissatisfaction may drive individuals to use the internet as a coping mechanism for negative emotions and loneliness. This will be supported by relevant literature on the link between mental well-being, life satisfaction, and addictive behavior (please see lines 256-264).
- 11 **Comment** No reference of young internet addiction validation article is missing.
- Response** We apologize for the oversight. It has been included the appropriate citation for the validation study of the test in our revised manuscript. The correct reference is:
Young, K. S. (1998). Internet Addiction: The Emergence of a New Clinical Disorder. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 1 (3), 237-244.

Responsible editor: M Mostafa Zaman, ORCID: [0000-0002-1736-1342](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1736-1342)

- 12 **Comment** The manuscripts should be aligned to health (and disease) issues to meet the Journal's scope. The Introduction and Discussion sections could refer to health and disease related to internet addiction.
- Response** We understand the need to align the manuscript with the journal's focus on health and disease. We have tried to revise the Introduction and Discussion sections to better highlight the health impacts of IA, including its effects on mental and physical health. We have also discussed its links to mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and social isolation.
- 13 **Comment** The manuscript's length should be shortened, focusing on the main message of the study. Unnecessary texts, such as the logistic regression equation (lines 137-140), could easily be removed without changing the meaning and message. Therefore, I suggest the authors revise it within 1500 words, three tables and 20 references.
- Response** We have shortened the manuscript by removing unnecessary details, such as the logistic regression equation, and have tried to limit it to the required number of tables and references.

Round 2

Reviewer: Md. Faisal Ahmed , ORCID: [0000-0001-7190-8591](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7190-8591)

Overview

Thank you for the opportunity to review the revised version of this manuscript. The authors have addressed many of the previous concerns, and the revised manuscript presents an interesting and relevant contribution to the literature. The structure is clearer, and the research objectives are more aligned with the methods and results. However, a few points still need to be addressed before the manuscript can be con-

- 1 **Comment** The explanation of the SES assertion has not been provided in the footnote of the table.

Response We chose to exclude this variable from the analysis due to its ambiguity.

- 2 **Comment** Decimal points are not consistently provided, such as in the 95% confidence intervals; this was also suggested by the editor.

Response Thank you for your helpful comment. We have carefully revised the manuscript and ensured that the 95% confidence intervals are now consistently presented with one decimal point, as suggested by both the reviewer and the editor (Please see line 310).

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- 3 **Comment** The manuscript's length has not decreased; it currently stands at 2944, down from the previous 2988.

Response Thank you for your comment. We have now made further revisions and successfully reduced the manuscript length significantly, as per the editor's suggestions (please see lines 69, 74-75, 120-130, 132-139, 204-205, 259-265).

- 4 **Comment** Students stay in the hall for various durations depending on their years/semesters. Their permanent address may not align with their current internet use. The editor suggested omitting it.

Response Thank you for your suggestion. As advised by the editor, we have omitted this part from the revised manuscript (please see lines 132, 187, 305, 307).

- 5 **Comment** All data are categorised. Why is a normality check necessary? Line 172 still contains it. This is unacceptable.

Response Thank you for your comment. As advised, we have removed the statement (please see lines 173-174).

- 6 **Comment** The editor requested a sex-stratified analysis, which has not been done. Internet addiction and other factors may differ between sexes. Tables 1 and 2 should be presented for males, females, and sexes combined in three columns. Table 2 should contain data for addictions only; the non-addiction percentages will be implied, e.g., life satisfaction in the addiction group is 70% (the remaining 30% do not have life satisfaction).

Response Thank you for your valuable suggestion. We carefully considered performing a sex-stratified analysis as recommended. However, conducting this analysis would require major modifications to the results and discussion sections, as well as minor changes to the introduction and methodology. Given the extent of the revisions needed and to maintain the consistency and focus of the current manuscript, we respectfully decided not to perform this additional analysis.