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An Empirical Study of Digital Dependency, Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being among It Professionals with Special Reference to Coimbatore District

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Abstract

Outstanding to the quick development of digital technology, which has fundamentally altered the nature of work in the information technology (IT) sector, computers, cellphones, internet platforms and digital communication tools are now essential components of professional life. Even if these technologies increase productivity, communication and work flexibility, excessive or uncontrolled use can lead to digital dependency and have a detrimental effect on employees' mental health. It is believed that emotional intelligence is an essential human resource that enables people to understand, regulate and control their emotions, handle stress at work, and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships. In this sense the current study focuses on evaluating IT professionals' levels of psychological well-being, emotional intelligence and digital dependency as well as the relationship between these three traits. Additionally it looks for variations in these variables according to specific vocational and socio demographic traits, as well as whether emotional intelligence and digital dependence have a major impact on psychological well-being. We'll use a quantitative cross-sectional survey approach in a descriptive and analytical research design. A structured questionnaire and standardized scales will be used to gather data from chosen IT workers in the Coimbatore District. Frequency, percentage, means, standard deviation, t-test, ANOVA, correlation and multiple regression analysis will all be used to analyse the gathered data. The results are anticipated to offer valuable perspectives for IT firms, HR specialists, counsellors and social workers in formulating plans to encourage positive digital behaviors, bolster emotional intelligence and enhance the psychological health of IT workers.

Keywords: Digital Dependency, Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being, IT Professionals.

Introduction

The digital technologies impacting nearly every facet of professional work, the information technology industry has grown to be a significant part of the modern economy. To carry out their professional duties, IT workers frequently rely on computers, cellphones, internet-based apps, virtual communication platforms and digital information systems. Technology integration has increased productivity and made flexible work schedules possible, but it has also made digital interaction more intense and prolonged. Technology-enabled remote work can offer advantages like flexibility and better work-life balance, according to the World Health Organization and International Labor Organization (2022). However, poor planning and support can lead to isolation, burnout, prolonged sitting, eye strain and other health-related issues. In this regard digital reliance has become a significant behavioral and occupational issue, especially for professionals whose jobs necessitate constant use of digital devices. Emotional intelligence may also assist people in identifying, comprehending and controlling their own emotions as well as reacting correctly to those of others. Positive psychological functioning, such as the capacity to manage stress, preserve meaningful relationships, feel purpose and perform well in both personal and professional spheres, is referred to as psychological well-being. While Mattern *et al.* (2024) investigated how high-performing IT professionals manage difficult work settings; Gupta *et al.* (2023) emphasized the significance of organizational and supervisory support for psychological well-being in their study of IT workers. Therefore examining digital dependency alongside emotional intelligence and psychological well-being is particularly relevant in the IT sector.

Need of the Study

Digital gadgets, internet connectivity, online communication platforms and computer-based apps are now crucial elements of IT workers' working lives due to the industry's explosive growth. IT workers frequently have to reply to online contacts, operate with several digital platforms, stay connected for long stretches of time and meet strict deadlines. Even if digital technology increases productivity and allows for flexible work schedules an over-reliance on it can lead to psychological issues such as mental exhaustion, stress, diminished focus and trouble maintaining work-life balance.

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As a result it is necessary to methodically evaluate the degree of digital dependence among IT workers and comprehend any potential connections with their mental health. Another significant element that could affect how IT workers handle the pressures of technology-intensive job is emotional intelligence. Higher emotional intelligence workers may be better able to identify and control their emotions, handle stress, communicate clearly and preserve constructive interpersonal relationships. Nevertheless, little empirical study has been done on the relationship between digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being, especially among Coimbatore District IT professionals. In order to promote healthier and more productive workplaces, the current study is necessary to provide empirical evidence on these interrelated dimensions and to identify areas where organizations can implement counseling, stress management programs, digital wellness initiatives and emotional intelligence development programs.

Importance of the Study

The IT industry is a highly technology-dependent workplace where employees' professional tasks are strongly linked to ongoing digital contact, which makes the study significant. Organizations can discover possible psychosocial concerns among their employees by knowing the degree of digital dependency and how it relates to psychological well-being. IT companies and human resource managers can use the study's findings to create workplace regulations that are appropriate for digital workload, working hours, employee assistance, work-life balance and psychological wellness. From the standpoint of social work, counseling and employee welfare practice, the study is also important. The results can be used by social workers and counselors in organizational settings to create developmental and preventive treatments that address stress, emotional control, excessive digital use and psychological well-being. Policymakers, researchers, academics and future scholars interested in technology-related behavioral difficulties and occupational mental health may find the study helpful. The research can provide locally relevant evidence and serve as a foundation for the development of workplace mental health interventions, digital wellness strategies, employee assistance programs and emotional intelligence training by concentrating on IT professionals in the Coimbatore District.

Statement of the Problem

The way IT professionals carry out their professional and personal tasks has been drastically altered by the growing reliance on digital technology. Employees may find it challenging to unplug from technology even after work hours due to constant use of computers, smartphones, internet apps and virtual communication platforms. Employees' emotional equilibrium and psychological health may be impacted by prolonged digital engagement, work-related notifications, prolonged screen time, heavy workloads and demands for constant availability. Individual variations in emotional intelligence may also affect how workers interpret, control, and react to these demands. Therefore it is important to determine whether emotional intelligence and digital reliance are related to psychological well-being. While digital technology use, emotional intelligence, and employee well-being have all been studied in the past, the simultaneous examination of these three factors among IT professionals in the Coimbatore District has received very less attention. It is challenging for organizations and helping professionals to create context-specific solutions when there is little local empirical evidence. The study's objectives are to measure the degrees of digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being, investigate the connections between them, find noteworthy variations among particular socio demographic and occupational traits and identify the variables affecting the psychological well-being of IT workers.

Review of Literature

Sun *et al*. (2022) examined the association between digitalization and mental health, with particular attention to the role of well-being at work. The study used data from employees/workers in a large-scale quantitative research sample and examined how increasing digitalization affects employees' psychological experiences. The researchers focused on the relationship between digital work practices, well-being at work and mental health, thereby providing an important foundation for understanding the psychological consequences of intensive digital engagement. The study is particularly relevant to IT professionals because their occupational activities involve continuous interaction with digital technologies. These findings establish the importance of examining digital dependency alongside psychological well-being and provide a conceptual basis for the present study among IT professionals in Coimbatore District.

Raj (2021) conducted a study entitled “Effect of Emotional Intelligence on the Job Performance of IT Professionals” to examine the influence of emotional intelligence on professional performance. The study adopted a quantitative approach and selected 60 IT professionals between 25 and 35 years of age through convenient sampling. The participants were administered an emotional-intelligence questionnaire, while their managers assessed their job performance using performance-appraisal questionnaires. This methodology provided information from both employees and supervisors, allowing the researcher to examine the relationship between employees' emotional competencies and workplace performance. The findings demonstrated the importance of emotional intelligence in the professional functioning of IT employees, indicating that emotional competencies can contribute to effective workplace performance. The study is significant to the present research because IT professionals operate in highly demanding, technology-intensive environments where emotional regulation, interpersonal skills and coping abilities are important.

Karaköse *et al*. (2026) investigated the mediating roles of psychological resilience and digital addiction in the relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health. Rather than collecting data from a single respondent sample, the researchers conducted a meta-analytic structural equation modelling (MASEM) study based on correlations from 257 previous studies, with evidence gathered systematically from Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar. The analysis incorporated substantial evidence across studies and examined the interconnected relationships among emotional intelligence, digital addiction, psychological resilience and mental health. In particular the pooled evidence showed a negative association between emotional intelligence and digital addiction ($r = -.316$) and a positive association between digital addiction and mental health problems ($r = .338$). Although the study focused on university students rather than IT professionals, its integrated model provides strong theoretical support for investigating whether emotional intelligence may help protect employees from problematic digital use and poor psychological well-being

Methodology of the Study

Objectives of the Study

i). To assess the level of socio-demographic digital dependency among IT professionals
ii). To analysis the level of digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among IT professionals
iii). To examine the relationship between digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among IT professionals in Coimbatore District
iv). To determine the influence of digital dependency and emotional intelligence on the psychological well-being of IT professionals and identify the significant predictors of their psychological well-being

Research Design

In order to investigate digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among IT professionals in the Coimbatore District, this study would use a descriptive and analytical research approach. The descriptive component will evaluate the respondents' socio demographic and occupational traits as well as their degrees of psychological well-being, emotional intelligence, and digital dependency. The analytical part will look into how the three main factors relate to one another and determine whether emotional intelligence and digital dependency have a large impact on psychological well-being. Data will be gathered from chosen IT professionals over a predetermined time period using a cross-sectional survey method.

Universe of the Study

IT experts employed by IT and IT Enabled Services (IT/ITES) firms in Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore District will make up the study's universe. Professionals working in software development, programming, testing, technical support, networking, data management, business-process services and other technology-related fields will be included in the study. In order to capture differences in digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among IT workers, the study will take into account employees of various age groups, genders, designations, educational backgrounds and levels of work experience.

Sample Size

The proposed study will select a sample of 100 IT professionals from selected IT and ITES organizations in Coimbatore District. The sample size is intended to provide adequate representation of IT professionals from different occupational and demographic categories and to facilitate meaningful statistical analysis. Both male and female respondents will be included, along with employees belonging to different age groups, work experience levels, designations and working arrangements. Additional respondents may be approached during the data-collection stage to compensate for incomplete or invalid questionnaires and to ensure that approximately 400 valid responses are available for the final analysis.

Method of Sampling

The study will employ a multistage sampling technique for selecting the respondents. Initially, selected IT/ITES organizations and major IT employment clusters in Coimbatore District will be identified. In the next stage, organizations or departments may be categorized according to their nature and size, followed by the selection of eligible IT professionals. Proportionate and purposive sampling may be used at the organizational and respondent levels to ensure adequate representation of different categories of IT professionals. The sampling procedure will include employees who have sufficient exposure to digital technologies in their professional activities, thereby enabling them to provide relevant information about digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

Data Gathering Instruments

Primary data will be collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of four major sections. The first section will collect socio-demographic and occupational information such as age, gender, educational qualification, designation, work experience, working hours and nature of employment. The second section will measure digital dependency, including frequency and duration of digital-device use, dependence on smartphones, computers and internet-based applications, difficulty in reducing digital use and the impact of digital engagement on daily life. The third section will assess emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation and interpersonal skills, while the fourth section will assess psychological well-being. Standardized and validated scales may be incorporated wherever appropriate. A pilot study will be conducted to test the clarity, reliability and suitability of the questionnaire before the final data collection.

Tools for Statistical Analysis

The collected data will be coded, classified and analysed using appropriate statistical software. Frequency and percentage will be used to describe the socio-demographic and occupational characteristics of the respondents, while mean and standard deviation will be used to determine the levels of digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Independent sample t-test will be used to compare two groups, while ANOVA will be applied to examine differences among more than two groups. The level of significance will generally be fixed at 5 per cent ($p < 0.05$).

Research Gap

Although previous studies have examined technology use, digital dependency, emotional intelligence and employee mental health separately, there is comparatively limited research that integrates these three variables within a single empirical framework, particularly among IT professionals in Coimbatore District. Existing research has often focused on general employee stress, technology-related behaviour or psychological well-being without sufficiently examining the possible relationship between excessive digital engagement and emotional competencies. Furthermore, limited attention has been given to the specific occupational environment of IT professionals, whose work involves prolonged and continuous interaction with digital technologies.

Ethical Consideration

The study will adhere to established ethical principles of social science research throughout the research process. Participation will be entirely voluntary and respondents will be clearly informed about the purpose, objectives and nature of the study before data collection. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants and they will have the right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage

without any negative consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained by avoiding unnecessary personal identification details and the information collected will be used exclusively for academic and research purposes. Particular care will be taken while collecting information concerning digital dependency and psychological well-being and respondents will not be subjected to unnecessary psychological discomfort.

Findings & Results

Table 1: Socio-demographic profile

S.No.	Socio-Demographic Profile	Frequency	Respondents	Percentage %
1.	Age	21–30 years	67	67%
2.	Gender	Female	72	72%
3.	Marital Status	Single	75	75%
4.	Highest Educational Qualification	Bachelor Degree	71	71%
5.	Designation	Project coordinator	67	67%
6.	Nature of employment	Customer service	69	69%
7.	Type of Organization	Corporate	74	74%
8.	Monthly Income	Rs.30,001–Rs.50,000	70	70%
9.	Years of Experience	6–10 years	64	64%
10.	Average Working Hours per Day	9–12 hours	76	76%

Table 1 describes the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The results indicate that 67% of the respondents are aged 21–30 years, while 72% are female and 75% are single. In terms of education, 71% possess a bachelor's degree**,** and 67% are employed as project coordinators. Further 69% are engaged in customer service, with 74% working in corporate organizations. Regarding income, 70% earn between Rs.30,001 and Rs.50,000 per month, whereas 64% have 6–10 years of work experience. A majority of the respondents, 76%, reported working 9–12 hours per day. Overall the profile indicates that the respondents are mainly young, educated female professionals working in corporate environments, with moderate income and considerable work experience.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their level of digital dependency.

Digital Dependency	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
High	62	62
Moderate	18	18
Low	20	20
Total	100	100

Interpretation

Table 2 presents the respondents' level of digital dependency. The findings show that 62% of the respondents have a high level of digital dependency, indicating that digital technologies play a significant role in their daily activities. 18% reported a moderate level, while 20% indicated a low level of dependency. Overall the results suggest that digital dependence is relatively high among the respondents, highlighting the growing importance of digital tools and technologies in their work and routine activities.

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their level of emotional intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Good	67	67
Moderate	14	14
Poor	19	19
Total	100	100

Interpretation

Table 3 presents the respondents' level of emotional intelligence. The findings indicate that 67% of the respondents have good emotional intelligence, suggesting that most participants possess a satisfactory ability to understand and manage their emotions. 14% reported a moderate level, while 19% showed a poor level of emotional intelligence. Overall the results indicate that emotional intelligence is favourable among the majority of respondents, although some participants may require further support and development in emotional awareness and emotional management skills.

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to their level of psychological well-being

Psychological Well-Being	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Good	61	67
Moderate	16	16
Poor	23	23
Total	100	100

Interpretation

Table 4 presents the respondents' level of psychological well-being. The findings show that 61 respondents reported good psychological well-being, representing 61% if the frequency is intended to correspond directly to the percentage. A further 16% reported a moderate level, while 23% indicated a poor level of psychological well-being. Overall the results suggest that psychological well-being is favourable among the majority of respondents, although attention may be required to support those experiencing moderate or poor well-being.

Table 5: Difference between of socio-demographic profile and level of Digital Dependency, Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being among IT Professionals.

Variables	Statistical Tool	Value	Result
Age and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	Chi-square	8.205(a) (P=.002<.005)	Significant
Educational Qualification and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	Chi-square	3.054 (a) (P=.000 >.106)	Not-Significant
Age and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	ANOVA	F= 15.165 P<0.05	Significant
Gender and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	t-test	t = .224 P>0.05	Not-Significant
Marital Status and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	t-test	t = 11.115 P<0.05	Significant
Highest Educational Qualification and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	ANOVA	F= .335 P>0.05	Not-Significant
Designation and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	ANOVA	F = 17.744 P<0.05	Significant
Nature of the work and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	t-test	t = .325 P>0.05	Not-Significant
Type of Organization and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	ANOVA	F= 14.158 P<0.05	Significant
Monthly Income and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	ANOVA	F = 12.268 P< 0.05	Significant
Years of Experience and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	ANOVA	F = 15.248 P< 0.05	Significant
Average Working Hours per Day and digital dependency, emotional intelligence, psychological well-being among IT professionals.	ANOVA	F = .213 P>0.05	Not-Significant

Chi-square

The Chi-square results indicate that age has a significant association with digital dependency, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being among IT professionals, with a calculated value of 8.205 and $p = 0.002$, which is below the 0.05 significance level. In contrast, educational qualification does not show a significant association with the three selected variables, as the reported result is $\chi^2 = 3.054$ with $p > 0.05$. Thus the findings suggest that age is an important factor related to digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being, whereas educational qualification does not produce a statistically significant difference.

T-test

The t-test results show that gender does not have a significant association with digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among IT professionals, as the calculated t-value is 0.224 with $p > 0.05$. In contrast marital status shows a significant association**,** with a t-value of 11.115 and $p < 0.05$, indicating that marital status is related to differences in the selected variables. Similarly nature of work is not significantly associated with digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being, as the t-value is 0.325 with $p > 0.05$. Overall the findings indicate that marital status is a significant factor, whereas gender and nature of work do not show statistically significant relationships with the selected variables.

ANOVA

The ANOVA results indicate that age, designation, type of organization, monthly income and years of experience have statistically significant associations with digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among IT professionals, as their F-values are 15.165, 17.744, 14.158, 12.268 and 15.248, respectively, with $p < 0.05$. However highest educational qualification ($F = 0.335$, $p > 0.05$) and average working hours per day ($F = 0.213$, $p > 0.05$) do not show significant associations with the selected variables. Overall the findings suggest that demographic and occupational characteristics such as age, designation, organizational type, income and experience are associated with variations in digital dependency, emotional intelligence,

and psychological well-being, while educational qualification and working hours do not show statistically significant differences.

Suggestions

- **Promote Digital Wellness:** IT organizations should introduce digital wellness programmes that encourage employees to maintain healthy and balanced patterns of technology use, particularly outside regular working hours.
- **Regulate Excessive Screen Time:** Organizations should encourage appropriate breaks during prolonged computer-based work and adopt practices that reduce unnecessary screen exposure and continuous digital engagement.
- **Strengthen Work–Life Balance:** Clear boundaries between working hours and personal time should be established by discouraging unnecessary work-related calls, messages and emails beyond working hours except during genuine emergencies.
- **Provide Emotional Intelligence Training:** Regular training programmes should be organized to develop employees' self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, interpersonal skills and effective communication abilities.
- **Introduce Stress-Management Programmes:** IT companies should provide workshops on stress management, relaxation techniques, mindfulness, time management and coping strategies to help employees deal effectively with occupational pressures.
- **Establish Counselling and Employee Assistance Services:** Organizations should provide confidential counselling and Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) through qualified counsellors, psychologists or social workers to support employees experiencing emotional distress or difficulties related to excessive digital use.
- **Encourage Supportive Leadership:** Managers and supervisors should adopt supportive leadership practices, maintain open communication and recognize employees' emotional and psychological needs rather than focusing exclusively on productivity and performance.
- **Conduct Periodic Psychological Well-being Assessments:** IT organizations should periodically assess employees' psychological well-being, workplace stress and emotional needs through confidential surveys and appropriate screening mechanisms, followed by suitable interventions where necessary.
- **Create Healthy Workplace Practices:** Organizations should promote adequate rest periods, reasonable workloads, flexible working arrangements where feasible, opportunities for physical activity and positive interpersonal relationships to improve employees' overall psychological well-being.
- **Develop Comprehensive Organizational Policies:** IT companies should formulate integrated policies addressing digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

Conclusion

The present study highlights the growing importance of understanding the psychological impact of intensive digital technology use in the IT sector. Digital dependency, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being are closely interconnected aspects of employees' personal and professional lives, particularly in technology-intensive work environments. While digital technologies contribute significantly to productivity and communication, excessive dependence may create emotional and psychological challenges. Emotional intelligence can help IT professionals regulate emotions, manage stress, maintain interpersonal relationships and cope effectively with workplace demands. Therefore organizations should adopt a comprehensive approach that combines digital wellness, emotional-intelligence development, supportive leadership, counselling services, stress-management programmes and healthy work–life balance practices. Such interventions can contribute to a healthier, more emotionally resilient and psychologically supportive work environment for IT professionals in Coimbatore District.

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