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MEASURING TECHNOLOGY ADDICTION AMONG PART-TIME STUDENTS IN UiTM KOTA BHARU

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Abstract: *The digital revolution has fundamentally altered the global educational landscape, with technology now permeating every facet of student life. While essential for modern business literacy, this "always-on" culture fosters a precarious dual nature, particularly among part-time students at the Faculty of Business and Management (FBM) in UiTM Kota Bharu. This study investigates the factors influencing technology addiction, examining the roles of emotional intelligence, psychological well-being, and technology usage. A quantitative, non-experimental correlational research design was adopted, utilizing a structured questionnaire distributed to 124 respondents selected via simple random sampling. Results indicate moderate levels for all variables: Emotional Intelligence (M = 3.58), Psychological Well-Being (M = 3.53), Technology Usage (M = 2.96), and Technology Addiction (M = 3.01). Pearson Correlation analysis revealed significant and positive relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Notably, Emotional Intelligence demonstrated a very strong correlation with technology addiction (r = .974), while Psychological Well-Being (r = .672) and Technology Usage (r = .759) showed strong positive correlations. This research highlights the critical need for academic interventions to bolster internal resilience and emotional regulation among future business leaders to mitigate digital dependency.*

Keywords: *Technology Addiction, Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being, Technology Usage*

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Introduction

The digital revolution has fundamentally altered the global educational landscape, with technology now permeating every facet of the contemporary student experience. At the Faculty of Business and Management (FBM) in UiTM Kota Bharu, this integration is particularly pronounced as students increasingly rely on sophisticated digital platforms for collaborative learning, real-time market data analysis, and professional networking. This always-on culture, while essential for modern business literacy, possesses a precarious dual nature. While digital tools satisfy primal human needs for social contact and rapid information, they simultaneously foster an unhealthy desire for instant gratification (Hazelden Betty Ford, 2017). For business students, who are specifically groomed to navigate high-pressure corporate environments and complex human relations, the inability to "unplug" can lead to a dangerous "new normal." In this environment, digital parallel universes may begin to replace the vital development of essential soft skills and professional socialization routines necessary for career success.

Beyond the academic utility of these tools, the escalating prevalence of Technology Addiction among undergraduates suggests a deeper crisis involving personal and psychological variables. The tendency for students to prioritize virtual interactions over physical ones is often driven by a combination of high Technology Usage patterns and fluctuations in Psychological Well-being. When students face the stressors of rigorous business curricula, such as competitive grading or the looming pressure of career placements, technology offers a rapid, albeit maladaptive, escape from feelings of loneliness or anxiety (Dolan, 2018). This dependency is further moderated by the student's level of Emotional Intelligence (EI); those with lower EI may struggle to regulate the "mental vortex" of digital overstimulation, failing to distinguish between fleeting digital rewards and meaningful reality. Consequently, the intersection of these factors creates a significant behavioral risk, where the very technology designed to empower future business leaders may instead undermine their mental health and interpersonal efficacy.

Despite the undeniable professional advantages of digital literacy in the modern corporate landscape, a growing concern at UiTM's Faculty of Business and Management (FBM) is the escalating prevalence of Technology Addiction among its undergraduates. As these students navigate the rigorous demands of business curricula characterized by heavy academic workloads, the pressure of maintaining social standing, and the high-stakes anxiety of future career placements, many have begun to utilize technology as a maladaptive coping mechanism to escape systemic stress. This reliance creates a paradox where the tools intended to facilitate professional growth instead foster a compulsive dependency, leading to a new normal that disrupts both regular mood and essential socializing routines.

The core of this problem is three-fold, beginning with the critical role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Psychological Well-being. Students exhibiting deficits in EI often find it increasingly difficult to distinguish between their experienced reality and the parallel universes of social media or gaming, which offer instantaneous stimulation and reward. This lack of emotional regulation is frequently coupled with an erosion of psychological well-being, where the constant reliance on digital devices for primary stimulation is linked to heightened feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and melancholy (Dolan, 2018). When faced with academic setbacks, such as a poor score on a management exam or a personal breakup, these students lack the internal resilience to self-motivate; instead retreating further into digital platforms to satisfy their need for social contact.

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Furthermore, the transition into adult responsibilities for FBM students is complicated by Compulsive Technology Usage, which offers an erroneous sense of relationship security and environmental change. While healthy professional development requires the mastery of nuanced, face-to-face interpersonal skills, excessive technology use promotes "invisible" interactions that hinder the growth of genuine social competence. Without a targeted academic intervention to address these independent variables, which are emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-being, and Technology Usage patterns, the risk of technology addiction will continue to escalate. Failure to mitigate this dependent variable poses a direct threat to the holistic development, academic performance, and future employability of UiTM business students in an increasingly competitive global market.

Literature Review

Technology Addiction

In the contemporary digital landscape, Technology Addiction has surfaced as a pivotal behavioral outcome, defined less by total screen time and more by a pathological dependence on digital platforms as a maladaptive coping strategy (Hazelden Betty Ford, 2017). This research framework posits that technology addiction is the byproduct of a complex interplay between an individual's internal psychological assets and their external behavioral patterns. Such dependency is closely linked to the deterioration of psychological well-being, often manifesting as acute anxiety, loneliness, and melancholy during periods of disconnection (Dolan, 2018). Moreover, the accelerated pace of technological innovation cultivates a drive for instant gratification, which complicates the critical social and intellectual milestones essential for the transition into early adulthood. Ultimately, total immersion in these digital parallel universes threatens to destabilize daily mood and social structures, normalizing a state where the distinction between physical reality and virtual reward systems becomes increasingly blurred.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is an independent predictor that governs an individual's internal regulatory capacity and is conceptualized through various theoretical lenses. These range from an ability-based cognitive skill set involving the monitoring and regulation of emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) to mixed models of competencies such as impulse control and self-motivation (Goleman, 1996). Additionally, the trait-based perspective frames EI as a constellation of personality dispositions, including sociability and self-control (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Regardless of the specific framework, the analytical significance of EI in this study lies in its role as a protective buffer. High levels of emotional competence serve as a critical determinant of positive behavioral outcomes, acting as a safeguard against maladaptive coping mechanisms and addictive behaviors (Parker et al., 2008; Brackett & Mayer, 2003).

By employing healthy coping strategies, individuals with high EI can effectively navigate the complex social and intellectual pressures of early adulthood. Conversely, a deficit in EI which specifically regarding impulse control and self-motivation that creates a regulatory void often linked to psychological distress (Whang et al., 2003; Reay et al., 2006). Individuals with lower emotional intelligence are significantly more susceptible to Internet and Technology Addiction (IA) as they struggle to navigate environmental pressures. In this context, they utilize digital platforms as maladaptive tools to regulate their moods and manage their internal emotional landscapes (Whang et al., 2003; Engelberg & Sjöberg, 2004). Ultimately, technology addiction

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is viewed not as a primary issue but as a secondary symptom of an underlying inability to effectively manage one's emotional state.

Psychological Well-Being

Psychological Well-Being (PWB) serves as a critical independent variable and a multidimensional mental state encompassing happiness, self-acceptance, and the cultivation of positive social relationships (Cardak, 2013). It reflects an active interplay between an individual's perceived meaning of life and their pursuit of self-realization (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Analytically, PWB determines the primary motivation for digital engagement; according to the Digital Escape or Compensatory hypothesis, individuals experiencing low PWB are often characterized by loneliness or a perceived lack of meaning view the internet as a practical, anonymous substitute for face-to-face social contact, which they may find inherently stressful (Caplan, 2002).

While some research suggests that non-communicative internet use may offer temporary relief from emotional distress (Jackson et al., 2008; Caplan & Turner, 2007), the long-term immersion in digital environments carries significant risks. While these platforms provide a temporary virtual reward, excessive reliance on them as a primary source of self-realization ultimately erodes real-world social routines (Dolan, 2018). Consequently, an individual's level of psychological well-being is a significant predictor of the dependent variable; as well-being decreases, the reliance on virtual environments increases, leading to the development of compulsive behaviors and a heightened susceptibility to technology addiction (Nalwa & Anand, 2003; Baggio et al., 2018).

Technology Usage

While EI and PWB represent internal psychological states, Technology Usage serves as the critical behavioral independent variable that facilitates the transition from functional digital engagement to clinical addiction. The rapid evolution of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has fundamentally restructured modern education, rendering digital engagement an unavoidable facet of the student experience (Idrus & Salleh, 2017). Within Malaysian public universities, students spend significant time online, utilizing digital portals as essential tools for both academic research and social interaction (Haghighi et al., 2011; Anuar et al., 2013). However, this research posits that usage is not a monolithic construct; the specific nature of digital engagement is more predictive of addiction than simple connectivity.

The analytical focus, therefore, rests on the interactivity of the platforms utilized. Applications characterized by high levels of social interaction and instant gratification, such as social media, gaming, and real-time chat rooms, exhibit a significantly more potent addictive quality compared to traditional, passive information-gathering tools (Chou et al., 2005; Afzal & Fardous, 2016). As constant connectivity becomes the new normal for university students, the intensity and frequency of technology usage act as the primary behavioral catalyst. Ultimately, this intensity transforms internal psychological vulnerabilities into a clinical state of technology addiction, bridging the gap between unavoidable academic connectivity and pathological dependency (Apuke, 2018).

In summary, this study proposes a multi-dimensional model where Technology Addiction (DV) is the final manifestation of internal psychological deficits interacting with external behavioral patterns. The theoretical path begins with Emotional Intelligence (IV), which serves as the primary internal regulator; a deficiency in this area creates a regulatory void that undermines

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an individual's Psychological Well-Being (IV). As well-being diminishes, the individual experiences a heightened drive for digital escape to compensate for real-world loneliness or stress.

However, these internal vulnerabilities only translate into a clinical dependency when activated by Technology Usage (IV). By engaging in high-interactivity platforms like social media and gaming, the individual finds the instant gratification and virtual rewards necessary to temporarily bypass their emotional distress. Therefore, this research model suggests that Technology Addiction is not merely a byproduct of screen time, but an integrated process where low internal resilience (EI and PWB) meets a high-interactivity behavioral catalyst (Usage), ultimately resulting in a pathological and detrimental reliance on digital environments.

As presented in Figure 1 below, the conceptual framework for this study comprises independent variables, namely Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being, and Technology Usage; Technology Addiction is the dependent variable.

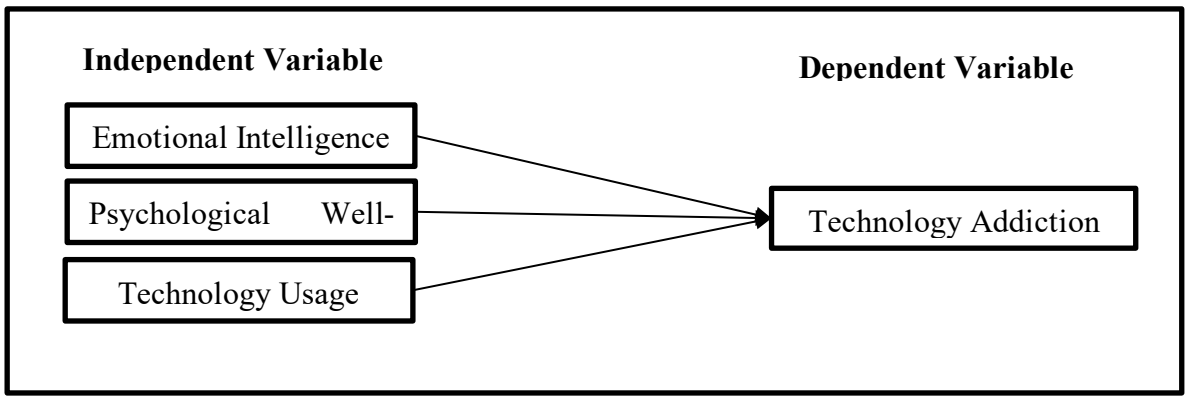

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental correlational research design to examine the determinants of technology addiction among students at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Kelantan, Kampus Kota Bharu. The research framework positioned emotional intelligence, psychological well-being, and technology usage as independent variables, while technology addiction served as the dependent variable.

The target population comprised 180 part-time students from the Faculty of Business and Management. To maintain the rigor of a probability sampling approach, a formal sampling frame was established using an official registry from the Faculty's Academic Affairs Department. Each student was assigned a unique numerical identifier (1–180). Based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, a minimum sample of 123 was required; ultimately, 124 respondents were selected via a computer-generated random number table, ensuring each individual possessed an equal and independent probability of selection. Data were elicited through a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms. To preserve the integrity of the simple random sampling design, the survey link was distributed exclusively to the identified respondents. The instrument consisted of five sections: (i) demographic profile, (ii) emotional intelligence, (iii) psychological well-being, (iv) technology usage, and (v) technology addiction. All latent constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree. The instrument's internal

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consistency was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (β). The results demonstrated acceptable to high reliability across all constructs, with all values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.60. Specifically, Emotional Intelligence (β = *.848*; 13 items) and Psychological Well-Being (β = .844; 12 items) exhibited high consistency, followed by Technology Usage *(*β*= .818*; 12 items) and Technology Addiction (β = *.649*; 6 items). Furthermore, data distribution was assessed via skewness and kurtosis tests. The values fell within the acceptable ranges for social science research, indicating that the data approximated a normal distribution.

The demographic analysis revealed that a plurality of the respondents was aged between 22 and 30 years (41.9%), followed by the 31 to 40 years cohort (28.2%). Gender distribution was skewed toward females, who represented 65.3% of the total sample. Regarding educational attainment, the majority held either a Diploma (37.9%) or a Bachelor's Degree (31.5%). In terms of occupational status, the sample reflected a high proportion of working students, with 36.3% employed in the private sector and 23.4% in the government sector. Only 19.4% identified exclusively as full-time students. This diverse profile ensures that the findings reflect a broad spectrum of both working and non-working academic perspectives within the faculty.

Result

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics can be used to summarise data samples to characterise the properties of the dataset. Descriptive statistics are typically given as a data summary that describes the information included in the data (Hayes, 2022). According to Salkind (2006), data should be computed as a collection of descriptive statistics to outline the fundamental features of a set of distribution scores. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, namely the mean and standard deviation, computed from the interval scale of independent and dependent variables in this study.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Scale	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emotional Intelligence	3.58	.690
Psychological Well-Being	3.53	.705
Technology Usage	2.96	.714
Technology Addiction	3.01	.741

Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation for each variable in this study, particularly the independent variables: Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being, and Technology Usage, and the dependent variable, which is Technology Addiction. The mean scores and standard deviation for all variables are as follows: Emotional Intelligence (M = 3.58, SD = .690), Psychological Well-Being (M = 3.53, SD = .705), Technology Usage (M = 2.96, SD = .714), and Technology Addiction (M = 3.01, SD = .741). According to Field (2013), data points with low standard deviation (compared to the mean) are close to the mean, and data points are far from the mean if the standard deviation is high (compared to the mean). From Table 1, it can be concluded that the standard deviation values for all variables are relatively far from the mean.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

A simple bivariate correlation can be defined as a zero-order correlation that refers to the relationship between two continuous variables (Aminuddin, 2025). A correlation is best defined as the purpose of looking at the relationship between two variables in a linear fashion

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(Coakes et al., 2010). The correlation interpretation used in this study is based on Mukaka (2012), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Interpretation by Mukaka (2012)

Size of the correlation	Coefficient General Interpretation
±.8 to ±1.0	Very strong relationship
±.6 to ±.8	Strong relationship
±.4 to ±.6	Moderate relationship
±.2 to ±.4	Weak relationship
±.0 to ±.2	Weak or no relationship

Table 3: Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being, Technology Usage, and Technology Addiction

No.	Variable	1	2	3
1.	Emotional Intelligence			
2.	Psychological Well-Being	.844**		
3.	Technology Usage	.181	.199	
4.	Technology Addiction	**.974**	**.672**	**.759****

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 presents the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being, Technology Usage, and Technology Addiction. Based on the results, there were significant and positive correlations between Psychological Well-Being and Technology Usage with Technology Addiction; the correlations are strong according to Mukaka (2012), *r=.672 and .759,* respectively. Meanwhile, Emotional Intelligence and Technology Addiction scores were r = .974 indicated very strong relationship.

Discussion and Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the factors influencing technology addiction among students at the Faculty of Business and Management, UiTM Kota Bharu. The findings indicate that the sample, predominantly comprising female students aged 22–30, exhibits moderate levels across all investigated variables. Specifically, participants reported moderate levels of Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being *(M = 3.53),* while Technology Usage *(M = 2.96)* and Technology Addiction *(M = 3.01)* also remained in the moderate range.

The correlation analysis reveals critical insights into the drivers of digital dependency. Consistent with the initial hypothesis, Emotional Intelligence (EI) demonstrated a very strong positive relationship with technology addiction *(r = .974).* This suggests that for these business students, higher scores in emotional self-awareness and regulation are deeply intertwined with their digital engagement, perhaps reflecting the "always-on" professional culture required for modern business literacy. Furthermore, Psychological Well-Being *(r = .672)* and Technology Usage *(r = .759)* showed significant and strong positive correlations with technology addiction.

These results align with previous literature suggesting that technology often serves as a substitute for social engagement, particularly for individuals seeking anonymity or relief from emotional distress. The high correlation between usage and addiction reinforces the notion that interactive features such as social media and gaming possess a more potent addictive quality than simple information-gathering tools. For FBM students, the pressure of rigorous curricula

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and career placements may drive them toward these digital "parallel universes" as a maladaptive coping mechanism.

This study confirms that Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being, and Technology Usage are significant predictors of technology addiction among business students at UiTM Kota Bharu. While technology is an essential tool for academic and professional success in the contemporary digital revolution, its compulsive use poses a direct threat to the holistic development and future employability of undergraduates.

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations and implications are proposed to mitigate technology addiction within the academic environment of UiTM Kota Bharu. First, the Faculty of Business and Management (FBM) should integrate specialized modules focused on Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Psychological Well-Being into the core business curricula. This integration is vital to help students develop the internal resilience needed to manage the "mental vortex" of digital overstimulation and distinguish between fleeting virtual rewards and meaningful reality.

Furthermore, university counseling services should implement targeted interventions to identify students utilizing technology as a maladaptive coping mechanism for academic stressors, such as heavy workloads or competitive grading. Awareness campaigns are also essential to educate students on the highly addictive nature of interactive features—specifically social media, gaming, and real-time chat rooms—which serve as primary "communication portals" but often hinder the development of face-to-face interpersonal skills. Ultimately, addressing these independent variables is critical to safeguarding the holistic development and future employability of future business leaders in an increasingly competitive global market.

The findings suggest that simply providing digital literacy is insufficient; there is a pressing need for academic interventions that bolster internal resilience and emotional regulation skills. By addressing these psychological variables, the faculty can help students navigate high-pressure environments without retreating into detrimental digital dependencies. Future research should consider a larger longitudinal design to further explore how these variables evolve as students transition from the academic environment into the professional corporate landscape.

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