

## **Digital Stress: How to cope with it?**

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**Abstract:** Now days, Digital Stress is relevant topic for discussion and there is a need to find the solution to cope with it. Digital stress is stress caused by negative interactions in emails, texts, social media, chat rooms and forums. It makes sense to wonder if the use of digital technology creates stress. There is more information flowing into people's lives now than ever — much of it distressing and challenging. There are more possibilities for interruptions and distractions. Stress might come from maintaining a large network of Facebook friends, feeling jealous of their well-documented and well-appointed lives, the demands of replying to text messages, the addictive allure of photos of fantastic crafts on Pinterest, having to keep up with status updates on Twitter, and the “fear of missing out” on activities in the lives of friends and family. The major digital stressors are: public sharing and humiliation, Impersonation, Mean and harassing personal attacks, Breaking and entering, Pressure to comply and Smothering. The paper described the factors that causes digital stress and suggested strategies to cope with it. Through our study we want to recommend the users of digital technology to make the use of it but try not to be affected by its ill-effects.

**Keywords:** Digital Stress, Technology, Stressors, Strategies

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## **Introduction**

It makes sense to wonder if the use of digital technology creates stress. There is more information flowing into people's lives now than ever — much of it distressing and challenging. There are more possibilities for interruptions and distractions. It is easier now to track what friends, frenemies, and foes are doing and to monitor raises and falls in status on a near-constant basis. Stress is the changes which our bodies experience as we adjust to our continually changing environment. It has been an integral part of our daily life. Stress is the way human beings react both physically and mentally to changes, events, and in their lives. People experience stress in different ways and for different reasons.

## **Literature Review**

A 2010 Pew study found that roughly 32 percent of teens have experienced some form of online harassment. And, according to FBI research, that proportion can range from 5 percent to 72 percent, depending on factors such as age and one's definition of cyber bullying. Sometimes, online bullying has tragic offline consequences. Stories about teen suicides connected to cyber bullying have made headlines in recent years.

A 2015 study, "How to Cope with Digital Stress: The Recommendations Adolescents Offer Their Peers Online," examines comment threads shared among adolescent peers to better understand how young people advise each other when it comes to online bullying.

## **Objectives of the Study**

To understand the concept of digital stress. To identify the causes and finding out the strategies to overcome the digital stress.

## **Research Methodology**

The secondary data has been drawn from various publications and from personal discussions. Research studies conducted in this and related areas in different universities, books and journals dealing with the subject were the other sources of secondary data.

## **What is Digital Stress?**

Digital stress is stress caused by negative interactions in emails, texts, social media, chat rooms and forums. Weinstein and Selman based on their research identified two types of digital stress and six stressors.

Type 1 is seen as an expression of hostility, meanness and cruelty. It includes the following stressor types:

- Mean and harassing personal attacks – Usually anonymous, hateful messages directed at an individual. Example: “You’re ugly” or “I hope you die”
- Public shaming and humiliation – Humiliating messages about an individual that are posted in a public way. Example: Posting someone else’s private information on Facebook or sharing a nude photo intended for one person
- Impersonation – Pretending to be someone else either by hacking someone’s account or by creating a fake account

Type 2 encompasses stresses related to navigating closeness in relationships. This includes:

- Feeling smothered – occurs when one person feels overwhelmed by someone sending excessive messages
- Pressure to comply with requests for access – feeling pressure from a friend or significant other to give them access to online accounts or to send sexual messages or nude pictures as a symbol of trust
- Breaking and entering into digital accounts and devices – going through someone’s texts, pictures, emails, or online accounts on their phone or computer without their permission

### **What are the signs and symptoms of digital stress?**

Common signs maybe experienced with respect to digital stress include the following:

- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Isolation or withdrawal from social activities
- Increased secrecy
- Anger
- Depression
- Failing grades
- Rebellion
- Stomach-aches, headaches or other general body aches not explained by a medical condition

## **Strategies to overcome digital stress**

### **Switch off from work**

According to a survey conducted by VTech and Toluna, being constantly accessible for work was the number one source of technology-related stress for participants, and nearly a quarter spent more time working because of it. Although it can be tempting to carry on checking emails and answering work calls long after you leave the office, it is important to allocate some time for yourself and switch off from work stress.

### **Have important conversations face-to-face**

One of the major problems with communicating primarily by email, social media sites or text messaging is that it can be difficult to detect tone or meaning in the same way as in a face-to-face conversation. Therefore, misunderstandings can easily arise. It is also more common to have to wait for a reply, which can cause prolonged stress and anxiety.

### **Be selective with your contacts**

Being inundated with messages or reading constant social media updates from people who cause you stress in any way can easily ruin your mood. Therefore, it can be helpful to be selective about who you are available to and when. Many of us feel obliged to accept all social media friend requests and hand over our personal contact details when asked, but only do this if you want to.

### **Don't feel pressured to have it all**

According to VTech and Toluna's survey, the second leading cause of technological stress is having to keep up with technology changes. However, it is important to realise that it is not essential to have and know it all. Although it may be tempting to purchase

the latest mobile phone or iPod, or to set up an account for every social media site going, remember that technology is meant to be there to enhance your life not detract from it, and if it is causing you stress then it is not doing its job.

### **Have a digital detox**

Many of us spend a vast percentage of our day connected to the internet or texting on our mobile phones; however this can cause us to miss out on many everyday sources of pleasure, such as conversations with the people around us. To help cut stress and make time for more worthwhile activities, try to have a digital detox.

### **Limitations of the study**

The current study is based on secondary data which are collected from the different articles, journals and studies. All the researchers, articles and studies conducted on the different countries. Therefore, this is the applicable limitation of current study.

### **Future Research**

Further studies can be conducted on the basis of primary data.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations**

- Manage cell phone and internet use.
- Model appropriate cell phone and social media use. Example: Every time a parent takes a “selfie” with their infant, they are demonstrating that this is the venue in which to take and send pictures to others.
- Discuss the risks of posting pictures and comments online.
- Privacy concerns, confidential information and protecting methods should be considered.

- There should be proper open discussion about the stressors that can occur from the use of cell phones, social media and other online interactions.

### **Conclusions:**

The study presents that the concept of digital stress is still young and is just making inroads into some of the leading academic journals. There is need of total dearth of empirical research based on this concept so that the society can get benefit as a whole.

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