

## ABSTRACT

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Title: Examining Problematic Internet Use, Student Burnout, and Wellbeing  
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Problematic internet use (PIU), also referred to as internet addiction (IA) significantly correlates with burnout and lower wellbeing in high school students and adults. No known studies have explored this relationship in an undergraduate population. However, college students display the highest amount of internet use out of any age group, potentially increasing the likelihood of PIU. Relatedness, autonomy, and competence need satisfaction decreases burnout and increases wellbeing, and although general fear of missing out (FoMO) has not been researched, workplace FoMO was found to predict burnout. Therefore, we believe psychological need satisfaction and FoMO moderates the PIU/burnout/wellbeing relationship. Participants ( $n = 205$ ) were recruited via our university subject pool, Reddit, Facebook, and snowball sampling. They were randomly assigned to either a high or low FoMO vignette condition. Participants completed pre- (I.e., trait FoMO, Problematic Internet Use Questionnaire, Need Satisfaction and Frustration Scale), and post-measures (I.e., state FoMO, work and school burnout, wellbeing). Independent samples  $t$ -tests examined baseline differences between condition, and the experimental manipulation's effectiveness regarding shifts in FoMO. Pearson's correlations assessed the strength of the relationship between PIU and burnout/wellbeing (Hypothesis 1). For Hypothesis 2 and 3, hierarchical linear regressions were conducted with PIU and the moderators (need satisfaction or FoMO) entered at Step 1 and their interaction term entered at Step 2. Results were considered significant if model  $p < .05$  and the change in  $R^2$  is significant when the interaction term enters the model. For significant interactions, I conducted simple slopes analysis to examine the interaction at low (+ 1 SD), average, and high (- 1 SD) levels of the moderator. Overall, I found that PIU predicted higher burnout and lower wellbeing. Moreover, PIU decreased wellbeing for individuals high in competence satisfaction and for people low in FoMO. Future research should explore the mechanism behind these relationships.