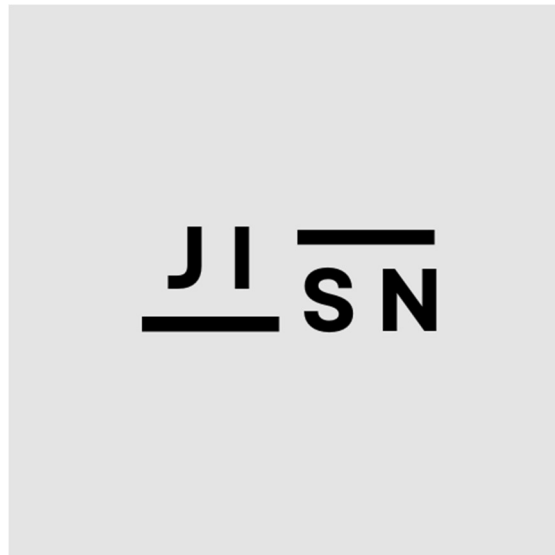


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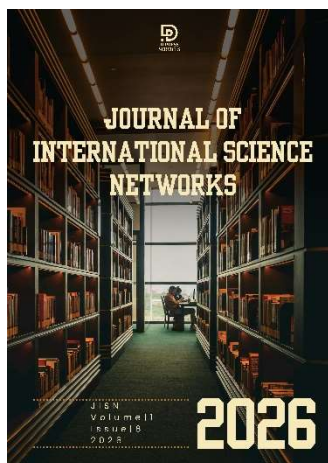
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THE CONCEPT OF DIGITAL STRESS AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS

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ANNOTATION:

This article provides a comprehensive psychological analysis of the concept of digital stress, a phenomenon that has become increasingly prevalent in contemporary society. The excessive flow of information, constant online availability, and intensive use of digital technologies exert significant psychological pressure on individuals, negatively affecting their emotional well-being and cognitive functioning. The study examines the main sources of digital stress, its psychological manifestations, and emotional–cognitive consequences using a systematic analytical approach. Analytical tables are employed to classify digital stressors and illustrate their impact levels. The findings highlight the importance of developing effective psychological prevention strategies and digital well-being practices to reduce digital stress in modern life.

KEYWORDS:

digital stress, technostress, digital environment, psychological strain, information overload, emotional exhaustion.

1. Introduction

Over the past decades, digital technologies have become deeply embedded in nearly all spheres of human life. Smartphones, social media platforms, email communication, instant messaging applications, and remote work systems have transformed how individuals work, study, and interact. While these technologies have enhanced efficiency and accessibility, their excessive and uncontrolled use has generated new psychological challenges. One of the most significant of these challenges is digital stress.

Digital stress refers to a state of psychological strain that arises from continuous interaction with digital technologies. In academic literature, this phenomenon is often described using the term technostress, which encompasses feelings of anxiety, mental fatigue, irritability, and emotional overload associated with technology use. The pressure to remain constantly connected, respond quickly to messages, and process large volumes of information places a substantial burden on individuals' psychological resources.

In contemporary society, individuals are frequently expected to be available online at all times. Work-related notifications, social media updates, and continuous information streams fragment attention and reduce opportunities for psychological recovery. As a result, individuals experience decreased concentration, emotional exhaustion, and reduced life satisfaction.

Digital stress is particularly prevalent among students, office workers, and professionals whose activities rely heavily on digital tools. Despite its growing impact, digital stress often remains underestimated and normalized as an unavoidable aspect of

modern life. Therefore, examining digital stress as a distinct psychological phenomenon and identifying its manifestations is of critical importance.

The aim of this study is to conceptualize digital stress from a psychological perspective, analyze its main sources, and examine its manifestations at emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physiological levels.

2. Methodology

This study adopts a theoretical and analytical research design grounded in stress psychology, cognitive psychology, and occupational psychology. The research is based on a systematic review and analysis of international peer-reviewed literature addressing digital stress and technostress.

The following methodological approaches were employed:

- **Theoretical analysis** to examine existing conceptualizations of digital stress and technostress;
- **Systematic approach** to analyze digital stress as a multidimensional psychological phenomenon;
- **Comparative analysis** to contrast different sources of stress and their psychological effects;
- **Analytical table method** to structure and visualize stressors and manifestations.

This methodological framework enabled a comprehensive understanding of digital stress and its psychological implications.

3. Results

The analysis indicates that digital stress develops under the influence of multiple interrelated factors and manifests across various psychological domains.

Table 1.

Main sources of digital stress

Source of Stress	Description	Impact Level
Information overload	Excessive flow of digital information	High
Constant online availability	Pressure to respond immediately	High
Multitasking	Simultaneous performance of multiple digital tasks	Moderate–High
Technical problems	Software and hardware malfunctions	Moderate
Lack of control	Difficulty managing digital time	High

Information overload and constant online availability emerged as the most significant sources of digital stress, reflecting the increasing demands placed on individuals in digital environments.

Table 2.

Psychological manifestations of digital stress

Domain	Manifestations
Emotional state	Irritability, anxiety, emotional exhaustion
Cognitive processes	Reduced attention, memory impairment
Behavioral patterns	Avoidance of technology or compulsive use
Physical condition	Headaches, sleep disturbances

Digital stress manifests not only at the psychological level but also through psychosomatic symptoms, indicating its broad impact on overall well-being.

4. Discussion

The findings support the view that digital stress represents a distinct form of modern stress associated with continuous exposure to digital environments. The persistent presence of digital stimuli limits individuals' ability to disengage and recover psychologically, thereby intensifying emotional strain.

Previous studies suggest that prolonged digital stress may contribute to burnout, decreased work performance, and psychological instability. A critical characteristic of digital stress is its gradual and often unnoticed development. Individuals may not immediately recognize the harmful effects of excessive digital engagement, allowing stress to accumulate over time.

The normalization of constant connectivity further complicates efforts to identify and address digital stress. Consequently, digital stress should be recognized as a significant psychological risk factor requiring targeted prevention and intervention strategies.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, digital stress is a complex psychological phenomenon inherent to modern information societies. Its development is driven by information overload, constant online availability, multitasking demands, and limited control over digital time use. Digital stress manifests at emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physiological levels, adversely affecting individuals' mental health and quality of life.

The findings emphasize the need to promote **digital well-being**, including digital hygiene practices, effective time management, and psychological resilience. Addressing digital stress is essential not only

for individual mental health but also for sustainable productivity and social well-being in the digital age.

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