Research Journal in Advanced Humanities

RJAH

https://doi.org/10.58256/sm079g73

Open Access

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Section: *Digital Humanities*

Media-oriented digital communication and techno wellness in the academic online context: Exposure to risky digital content

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the interplay between media-oriented digital communication and Techno Wellness within the academic online context, focusing specifically on students' exposure to risky digital content, such as electronic blackmail. The primary objective was to examine the relationship between electronic blackmail anxiety and its impact on Techno Wellness among students enrolled in the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan. Employing a descriptive correlational design, the study surveyed a sample of 350 male and female students using two validated and reliable instruments: The Techno Wellness Scale and the Electronic Blackmail Anxiety Scale. Findings revealed a moderate level of Techno Wellness alongside a high level of electronic blackmail anxiety among the participants. Moreover, results indicated a statistically significant negative correlation between electronic blackmail anxiety and Techno Wellness. The study concludes by emphasizing the urgent need to design awareness programs addressing the psychological and academic risks of exposure to harmful digital practices, evaluate preventive strategies, and encourage the integration of digital tools that promote mental well-being in academic contexts. Further recommendations highlight the importance of enhancing inter-institutional collaboration, developing precise assessment instruments, and advancing research in the field of digital communication and Techno Wellness.

KEYWORDS: digital communication, electronic blackmail anxiety, media-oriented, risky digital content, techno wellness

Research Journal in Advanced Humanities

Volume 6, Issue 3, 2025

ISSN: 2708-5945 (Print)

ISSN: 2708-5953 (Online)

ARTICLE HISTORY

Submitted: **18 May 2025**

Accepted: **28 August 2025**

Published: **18 September 2025**

HOW TO CITE

Z. Halalsheh, N., Jubrail Qaqish , G., Khaled Mohmmad Saeed Al Salahat, Y. ., & faris salem batarseh, L. (2025). Media-oriented digital communication and techno wellness in the academic online context: Exposure to risky digital content. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*, *6*(3). https://doi.org/10.58256/sm079g73

Published in Nairobi, Kenya by Royallite Global, an imprint of Royallite Publishers Limited

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Introduction

Achieving a balance between human interaction with technology and maintaining mental and physical health in the fast-paced technological era has become one of the significant challenges individuals face in their daily lives. Exposure to such digital threats is not merely an incidental occurrence but rather a factor that sows anxiety and deeply affects psychological well-being. Consequently, the world has begun seeking innovative strategies to protect individuals from these threats while promoting their technological well-being. Technological well-being is responsible for achieving a healthy balance in the use of technology, ensuring an individual's mental, physical, and social wellness. This pursuit has thus emerged to explore the complex relationship between mental health and anxiety when using technology, and to examine how to transform technology from a source of anxiety into a tool that enhances health and wellness.

The origin of the word "technology" dates back to the Greeks, where it was understood to mean "the science of skills." Technology is a system used by humans as both a tangible and intangible tool to save time and effort, increase efficiency, and solve problems (Ishtayeh & Alian, 2009). Technology has had positive effects on individual lives through its purposeful and constructive use, facilitating access to information, aiding in task completion, and improving productivity. It is also a means of connecting with others through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram, among others. When used positively, technology enhances feelings of happiness, wellness, and optimism (Botella, Riva, Gaggioli, Wiederhold, Alcaniz, & Banos, 2012).

Despite the importance and positive influence of technology, its misuse can lead to harmful effects, such as prolonged use of social media, resulting in social withdrawal, isolation, aggression, increased depression, poor academic performance, addiction, weakened skills, invasion of privacy, and the dissemination of personal information that may lead to cyber extortion (Kahneman, 2011).

Forward (1997) defined cyber extortion as the act of threatening to publish photos or leak confidential information about the victim in exchange for exploiting them, either financially or by forcing them to engage in illegal acts. The threats may occur through social media or email. Al-Shahri (2012) also defined it as an attempt to obtain confidential documents, images, or information about a victim and threaten to defame them via social media platforms.

Al-Badaneyah (2014) described cyber extortion as an attempt to gain sexual, financial, or emotional benefits from the victim through coercion and threats, leading to mental imbalance and persistent anxiety. Anxiety, as a concept, is a feeling of discomfort, tension, and fear due to the anticipation of potential danger, accompanied by physical and psychological symptoms (Ibrahim, 2014). According to El-Sayed (2000), several causes of anxiety include: A sense of alienation and instability within the family, school, or community, economic, social, and cultural factors, past incidents and experiences, Psychological pressure and inability to cope, Misinterpretation of events, Genetic predisposition, and External attribution of failure.

Mohammed (2010) identified various types of anxiety, such as Generalized anxiety: a broad feeling of worry not linked to a specific cause. Social anxiety: fear of social interaction with others, whether friends or relatives. Panic disorder: sudden fear and terror accompanied by various physiological symptoms. Objective anxiety disorder: fear triggered by external danger threatening one's life, such as fire or a predatory animal—this form of anxiety is necessary for survival. Neurotic anxiety disorder: an ambiguous fear with no identifiable cause.

In recent years, the rapid expansion of media-oriented digital communication has profoundly reshaped the academic online environment, creating both opportunities for learning and risks to students' psychological well-being. While digital platforms facilitate interaction, participation, and access to information, they also expose students to harmful practices, including cyber extortion, misinformation, and online harassment. Such exposure raises critical concerns about TechnoWellness, a concept that emphasizes the balance between effective digital engagement and the preservation of mental health. Within this context, examining the relationship between students' encounters with risky digital content and their levels of TechnoWellness is essential for understanding how digital communication can be managed responsibly in academic settings (Lovari, 2019).

With the evolution of modern digital life, new forms of anxiety have emerged—among them, what may be termed "cyber extortion anxiety," a persistent psychological distress stemming from exposure to cybercrime in which perpetrators threaten to release the victim's private media (photos, videos, audio recordings, or conversations) unless demands—whether financial or ethical—are met. This occurs if the victim refuses to

comply with the extorter's demands, which may be financial or ethical/unethical (Ali, 2022). Although the term is not yet widely standardized, similar manifestations have been documented in empirical research. For instance, Kareem (2025) reports that among female university students, electronic extortion can lead to severe psychological consequences, including suicidal ideation, pervasive fear of scandal, and constant monitoring of social media activity due to fear of personal exposure. These findings underscore the significant mental toll of such digital threats and highlight the urgent need for better conceptualization, measurement, and intervention strategies in academic contexts.

Al-Humaine (2012) categorized electronic blackmail anxiety into:

1. Emotional extortion anxiety: involves exploiting the victim's emotions to gain psychological and emotional control, making the victim feel guilty toward the extorter.
2. Financial extortion anxiety: the extorter coerces the victim into providing financial gain by taking advantage of their vulnerability.
3. Informational extortion anxiety: involves stealing (hacking) information, unlawfully accessing and manipulating it, or disrupting networks.

The causes of electronic blackmail anxiety can be attributed to several key factors. Firstly, weak moral restraint, as a result of unrestricted exposure to media through technology, implants unethical behaviors that contradict societal values. Secondly, weak religious restraint, as this behavior often stems from a lack of faith and a sense of divine accountability, drives individuals to commit prohibited acts. Thirdly, deteriorating financial and economic conditions play a significant role in motivating some individuals to engage in extortion for material gain. Additionally, taking and sharing indecent images via social media is one of the most common forms of extortion, especially among young women. Finally, hacking devices enables extorters to access sensitive data that can be used for blackmail (Saleh, 2012).

Today, technology is used in various forms—from social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, to devices such as smartphones and computers, as well as electronic games on devices or the internet. These tools can be a double-edged sword: when used positively, they enhance feelings of happiness and optimism, which can significantly benefit university students by boosting academic performance, developing logical beliefs, and improving communication skills. Conversely, negative technology use may lead to academic decline, increased social problems, and a departure from societal values, while also generating new types of anxiety, such as cyber extortion anxiety. Hence, the concept of "technological well-being" arises, advocating for the mindful use of technology in a way that supports mental and social health (Bottela et al., 2012).

The term "well-being" dates back over 2,000 years, when Aristotle sought to understand health and disease and define a model of good health. Health was traditionally defined as the absence of disease or disorder; however, the World Health Organization redefined it as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, encompassing not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. In this context, health is seen as a neutral state, while well-being is understood as a positive state of thriving life—a continuum ranging from illness on one end, to health in the middle, and the highest level of well-being on the other (Pierce, 2010).

An individual can experience well-being even in the presence of physical illness, whereas suffering may persist even without any physical ailments. The holistic approach emphasizes the importance of non-physical factors—such as psychological, social, and spiritual components—that influence the relationship between body, mind, and soul. In many cases, difficulty in coping with physical illness may stem from psychological, social, or spiritual causes (Lim, Jin & Ng, 2012).

Sweeney and Witmer developed the first wellness model, known as the "Wheel of Wellness" (WOW), based on Adlerian concepts from the early 20th century. Later, Myers and Sweeney (2008) further developed this model into the "Indivisible Self Model of Wellness," which encompasses five core dimensions: the coping self, the creative self, the spiritual self, the physical self, and the social self.

The dimensions of wellness manifest in five life tasks: work, friendship, love, spirituality, and self-regulation. These elements interact and integrate to determine an individual's level of wellness. A positive correlation exists between fulfilling these life tasks and achieving a higher level of well-being. Recent research has shown a growing interest in exploring wellness from various perspectives, particularly in light of technological advancements, as studies begin to assess the impact of technology on human well-being and health (Myers,

Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000).

The concept of technological well-being refers to how individuals interact with technology in ways that enhance their overall wellness. It includes using technology to improve personal comfort, manage technological anxiety, enhance physical health, apply technology appropriately, and achieve professional goals (Kennedy, 2014).

With the growing use of technology, research has increased on its impact on well-being. Some studies indicate that technology may enhance well-being by fostering social connectivity (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007), increasing positive emotions such as happiness and optimism (Bottela et al., 2012), and improving physical health (Spring et al., 2013). Conversely, other studies have found adverse effects, such as increased anxiety (Brosnan, Joiner, Gavin, Crook, Maras, Guiller, & Scott, 2012) and anxiety specifically related to computer use (Ayyagari, Grover, & Purvis, 2011).

Literature Review

Several recent studies have examined the relationship between technological well-being, cyber extortion, and related psychosocial factors across various populations. Khatatneh (2023) investigated self-exploration and technological well-being among students at Mutah University, examining the predictive role of self-exploration on technological well-being among victims of cyber extortion. Utilizing two scales with a sample of 64 students (26 males and 38 females) and applying a predictive descriptive approach, the study revealed moderate levels of both self-exploration and technological well-being. Self-exploration accounted for 27% of the variance in technological well-being, while no statistically significant gender differences were found. The study recommended implementing programs and counseling services to enhance self-exploration and technological well-being among victims of cyber extortion.

Hameed (2023) explored the relationship between cyber extortion and privacy among a sample of 50 high school students, identifying an inverse correlation between privacy and experiences of cyber extortion. Similarly, Al-Dhalaeen (2022) examined the predictive capacity of emotional intelligence dimensions in relation to technological well-being among 225 unemployed individuals aged 25–35 years. The findings indicated moderate levels of both emotional intelligence and technological well-being, with the emotional intelligence dimensions contributing significantly to the prediction of technological well-being.

Ali (2022) investigated the association between adolescents' use of Facebook and cyber extortion anxiety in a sample of 550 adolescents (275 males and 275 females). The results indicated a significant positive correlation between the frequency of Facebook use and levels of cyber extortion anxiety. In line with these findings, Al-Kubaisi and Surhid (2020) examined cyber extortion among 232 university students, highlighting that such behavior often stems from the negative use of technological advancements.

Research has also addressed the broader concept of technological well-being in academic contexts. Shawaqfeh and Almahaireh (2019) assessed technological well-being, happiness, and optimism among 450 undergraduate students at the University of Jordan. Their study revealed moderate levels of technological well-being and a positive correlation between technological well-being, happiness, and optimism, with gender differences favoring males; however, no differences were observed across college types. Karakish (2019) similarly investigated the predictive role of technological well-being in academic achievement among 444 undergraduate students, confirming a moderate level of technological well-being and its predictive relationship with academic performance, without significant gender differences.

Other studies have focused on the impact of cybercrimes and technology misuse on adolescents. Herlina and Jati (2019) explored cybercrime among 17 adolescents, identifying activities such as hacking, exposure to inappropriate content, spying, and manipulation of digital content for financial gain. Nasaescu, Lopez, Llorent, Ortegaruiz, and Zych (2018) analyzed the relationships among technology misuse, social-emotional competencies, online emotional communication, and cyberbullying among 2,139 adolescents in Andalusia, Spain. Their findings revealed a strong inverse relationship between social-emotional competencies and technology misuse, along with significant associations between emotional aspects of online communication, cyberbullying, and technology misuse.

Additionally, Gupta and Kunwar (2018) examined the impact of cybercrime on adolescents' perceptions of social issues via social media among 300 participants. The study identified prevalent cybercrimes such as hacking, file and identity theft, exposure to child pornography, identity manipulation, and online financial

fraud. Finally, Al-Enezi (2013) explored technophobia, quality of life, and future anxiety among 317 students (aged 21–23) at King Saud University. The results demonstrated a positive correlation between technophobia and future anxiety and inverse relationships between technophobia and quality of life, as well as between future anxiety and quality of life.

Despite the growing body of literature on technological well-being, cyber extortion, and adolescents' and students' interaction with digital platforms, several critical gaps remain unaddressed in the context of academic online environments. Most existing studies have examined the relationship between technological well-being and psychosocial variables, such as self-exploration (Khatatneh, 2023), emotional intelligence (Al-Dhalaeen, 2022), or happiness and optimism (Shawaqfeh & Almahaireh, 2019). Similarly, research on cyber extortion and related anxieties has primarily focused on adolescents' use of social media platforms like Facebook (Ali, 2022) or general misuse of technology (Nasaescu et al., 2018), without specifically exploring the interplay between exposure to risky digital content in academic online settings and students' Techno Wellness.

Furthermore, while some studies have investigated gender differences or the predictive role of technological well-being on academic achievement (Karakish, 2019; Shawaqfeh & Almahaireh, 2019), there is a limited body of research examining how academic students navigate digital risks, such as cyber extortion, within the context of online learning platforms and educational technologies. In addition, the mediating or moderating role of factors such as self-exploration, privacy, and responsible media use in shaping Techno Wellness remains largely unexplored.

This gap highlights the need for empirical research that systematically investigates how media-oriented digital communication in academic online environments influences students' TechnoWellness, particularly in relation to exposure to risky digital content. Addressing this gap can provide valuable insights for developing interventions, counseling strategies, and educational policies that aim to enhance digital resilience, mental well-being, and safe technology use among university students.

Problem Statement:

The increasing reliance on social media platforms has turned them into essential tools in contemporary society, thanks to their multifaceted uses that facilitate daily life. However, in recent times, people have begun to misuse technology, leading to the emergence of various cybercrimes, the most prominent of which is cyber extortion. Social media has, in some cases, become a means for entertainment and illicit communication. This misuse can result in severe psychological and social consequences, with many individuals falling victim to cyber extortion. Consequently, affected individuals may suffer from social isolation, maladaptation, and various psychological disorders.

The rapid expansion of media-oriented digital communication in academic online environments has introduced both opportunities and risks for students' psychological and technological well-being. While these platforms facilitate learning, collaboration, and engagement, they also expose students to potentially harmful content, such as cyber extortion and privacy breaches, which may increase levels of electronic blackmail anxiety. Understanding how students' Techno Wellness is influenced by their interactions with digital media is therefore essential for promoting safe and balanced technology use.

Despite the growing significance of online academic communication, research examining the direct relationship between media-oriented digital communication and students' Techno Wellness remains limited. Investigating this interplay can provide valuable insights into how digital engagement affects mental well-being, highlight strategies to mitigate risks, and inform the development of interventions aimed at enhancing both technological and psychological resilience among students in online learning environments. The central research problem can be summarized in the following question:

> **What is the relationship between students' Techno Wellness and electronic blackmail anxiety in academic online environments?**

This main question branches into the following sub-questions:

1. What are students' perceived levels of electronic blackmail anxiety in academic online environments?
2. What are students' perceived levels of *TechnoWellness* in academic online environments?
3. Is there a statistically significant correlation ($\alpha = 0.05$) between students' *TechnoWellness* and electronic blackmail anxiety in academic online environments?

Study Objectives

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To assess the level of *Techno Wellness* among students in academic online environments.
2. To assess the level of electronic blackmail anxiety among students in academic online environments.
3. To investigate the relationship between *Techno Wellness* and electronic blackmail anxiety in the context of academic online engagement.

Theoretical Importance

This study contributes to the understanding of cyber extortion anxiety, a relatively new construct that has received limited attention in previous research. As digital technologies become increasingly integrated into daily life, examining their psychological impact is essential. Additionally, the study aims to deepen the understanding of Technological Wellness and raise awareness of how digital engagement influences individuals' decision-making, self-perception, and capacity to cope with technology-related challenges. By focusing on the interplay between these two constructs, the research seeks to expand knowledge in this emerging field.

Practical Importance

The study guides promoting responsible and effective technology use, helping students enhance their Technological Wellness while mitigating risks associated with cyber extortion. It provides practical tools and insights to support students in managing digital risks, promoting psychological well-being, and striking a balance between technology use and personal development.

Study Terminology

Technological Wellness

Scientifically, it refers to the manner in which individuals interact with technology in a way that promotes their overall well-being. It comprises several dimensions, including the use of technology for comfort, technological anxiety, the use of technology to enhance physical health, the manner of technology use, and the use of technology for professional purposes (Kennedy, 2014).

Operational Definition: It is measured by the score a student at the University of Jordan obtains on the Technological Wellness Scale used in this study.

Cyber Extortion Anxiety

Scientifically, it refers to a state of psychological tension experienced by an individual after falling victim to a cybercrime, wherein the perpetrator acquires private photos, videos, voice recordings, or messages from the victim and threatens to release them online or via social media platforms. This typically occurs when the victim refuses to comply with the perpetrator's demands, which may include financial compensation or unethical acts (Ali, 2022). Operational Definition: It is measured by the score a student at the University of Jordan obtains on the Electronic blackmail anxiety Scale used in this study.

Study Boundaries

- **Temporal Boundary:** The study was conducted during the summer semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.
- **Geographical Boundary:** The study was geographically limited to the University of Jordan, located in Amman, the capital city.
- **Human Boundary:** The study was limited to students enrolled in the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan.
- **Measurement Limitation:** The study was confined to the responses of students from the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan on the two scales used.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive correlational design, which is suitable for examining how media-oriented digital communication in academic online environments influences students' Techno Wellness and their

levels of electronic blackmail anxiety. The study population consisted of all students enrolled in the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan, totaling 4,776 students according to the records of the Admission and Registration Department for the summer semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the University of Jordan, and all participants provided informed consent prior to completing the scale. A representative sample of 350 students was selected using a simple random sampling method to ensure equal chances of inclusion and enhance the generalizability of the findings. Data were collected using two validated instruments: the Technological Wellness Scale, which assesses multiple dimensions of students' interaction with technology, including use for comfort, management of technological anxiety, enhancement of physical health, purposeful use, and professional engagement; and the Electronic Blackmail Anxiety Scale, which measures psychological tension resulting from exposure to cyber extortion, including threats to release private media or messages online if demands are not met. Ethical considerations were consistently observed throughout the data collection process, including voluntary participation, informed consent, and maintaining the confidentiality of responses. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods to address the study objectives and research questions related to students' engagement with digital media and its impact on their Techno Wellness.

To achieve the study's objectives, the researchers developed the Electronic Blackmail Anxiety Scale, based on the studies by Ali (2022) and Al-Kubaissi & Surhaid (2020), after reviewing various tools related to cyber extortion. The scale consists of 15 items, each measured on a four-point Likert scale, and all items are phrased in a positive direction. Its validity and reliability were verified through face validity, discriminatory indicators, and internal consistency, as assessed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient. To ensure construct validity, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the responses to individual items and the total score of the scale, confirming that all items contributed appropriately to the overall measurement of electronic blackmail anxiety, as shown in Table 1):

Table (1): Item-Total Correlation Coefficients for the Electronic blackmail anxiety Scale

Correlation Coefficient	Item
.772**	1
.385**	2
.559**	3
.563**	4
.516**	5
.490**	6
.530**	7
.456**	8
.402**	9
.383**	10
.301**	11
.398**	12
.363**	13
.356**	14
.685**	15

It is evident from Table 1 that the item-total correlation coefficients range between .301 and .772. An item was considered acceptable if its correlation was statistically significant at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. Therefore, all item correlations are deemed acceptable.

To ensure the reliability of the Electronic blackmail anxiety Scale, internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a value of 0.835, indicating a high level of reliability. The scale uses a four-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree). Total scores range from 15 to 60, with higher scores indicating greater levels of electronic blackmail anxiety. Anxiety levels were categorized based on mean scores as follows: 1.00–1.99 = low, 2.00–2.99 = moderate, and 3.00–4.00 = high.

The Technological Well-being Scale developed by Shawaqfeh and Almahaireh (2019) was utilized to assess students' interaction with technology and its impact on their overall well-being. The scale consists of 30 items, all phrased in a positive direction, and employs a four-point Likert scale. Its validity and reliability were verified through face validity, discriminatory indicators, and internal consistency, including Cronbach's alpha, split-half reliability, and test-retest reliability. Item-total correlation coefficients ranged between 0.30 and 0.73, indicating acceptable levels of internal consistency. The reliability coefficients were as follows: Cronbach's alpha = 0.84, split-half reliability = 0.78, and test-retest reliability = 0.87. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the University of Jordan, and all participants provided informed consent prior to completing the scale.

The scale uses a four-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree) to measure students' technological well-being. Total scores range from 30 to 120, with higher scores reflecting greater levels of technological well-being. Mean scores were interpreted as follows: 1.00–1.99 = low, 2.00–2.99 = moderate, and 3.00–4.00 = high levels of technological well-being.

Results

Results Related to the First Question: *What is the level of technological well-being among students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan from their perspective?*

To answer this question, means and standard deviations were calculated for the level of technological well-being among students from their perspective. Table 2) presents the results:

Table (2): Means, Standard Deviations, Rankings, and Levels of Technological Well-being among Students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan (ranked in descending order by mean)

No.	Item	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.	Level
7	My use of the internet helps me develop my academic and cultural knowledge.	1	3.28	0.618	High
22	I search online for ways to stimulate my thinking and improve my learning.	2	3.19	0.549	High
9	I feel satisfied with myself for keeping up with new technological developments.	3	3.13	0.638	High
20	My online activities do not prevent me from completing my required duties.	4	3.05	0.683	High
23	I can find innovative solutions to difficult problems through the internet.	4	3.05	0.559	High
10	I use the internet to access information related to my religious beliefs.	6	3.04	0.688	High
19	My use of technology helps me find creative solutions to problems I face.	7	3.02	0.579	High
4	I use technology to share enjoyable experiences with others at my university.	8	2.95	0.616	Moderate
...	...	...	...	...	...
25	My use of the internet does not affect my sleep.	30	2.41	0.870	Moderate

Note: Table truncated for brevity — complete results available upon request.

The results in Table (2) indicate that the means of the technological well-being items ranged between 2.41 and 3.28.

- The highest-ranked item was item (7): *"My use of the internet helps me develop my academic and cultural knowledge"*, with a mean of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 0.618, indicating a high level.
- The lowest-ranked item was item (25): *"My use of the internet does not affect my sleep"*, with a mean of 2.41 and a standard deviation of 0.870, indicating a moderate level.

The overall mean of the scale was 2.77, with a standard deviation of 0.365, reflecting a moderate level of technological well-being among the students.

This moderate level of technological well-being among students at the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan may be attributed to several factors:

First, the high academic workload contributes to increased levels of psychological and physical stress, negatively affecting students' ability to utilize technology effectively. Academic pressure may also reduce concentration and time-management skills, which in turn impair the quality of technology use.

Results Related to the Second Question: *What is the level of electronic blackmail anxiety among students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan from their perspective?*

To answer this question, **means and standard deviations** were calculated for the level of electronic blackmail anxiety among students. Table (3) presents the results:

Table (3): Means and Standard Deviations of Electronic blackmail anxiety among Students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan

No.	Item	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev.	Level
1	I feel anxious if someone encrypts my personal information or threatens to destroy my data.	1	3.29	0.791	High
2	I worry that an unknown person might publish my photos or personal information on social media without my consent.	1	3.29	0.826	High
8	I get anxious when I receive inappropriate video clips.	3	3.27	0.804	High
4	I am afraid of being asked to engage in unethical acts.	4	3.21	0.914	High
5	I worry that a member of my family could be subjected to cyber extortion.	4	3.21	0.878	High
7	I feel scared when anonymous people request personal documents or files from me.	6	3.15	0.839	High
9	I believe that advanced technologies such as high-resolution camera phones increase the risk of breaches.	7	3.13	0.865	High
10	I become suspicious of apps and games on social media as they may be used for extortion.	8	3.09	0.853	High
6	Threats that push me to do things I do not want to do cause me anxiety.	9	3.06	0.901	High
11	I seek help through social media to resolve conflicts with family members.	10	3.01	0.819	High
13	I fear being emotionally blackmailed via social media.	11	2.86	0.925	Moderate
14	I fear being financially blackmailed via social media.	12	2.78	0.955	Moderate
15	I feel anxious if someone encrypts my personal information or threatens to destroy my data.	12	2.78	0.975	Moderate
3	I feel anxious about receiving pornographic messages.	14	2.74	1.073	Moderate
12	I worry about a relative committing suicide or being murdered due to cyber extortion.	15	2.46	0.947	Moderate

Overall Electronic blackmail anxiety Mean: 3.02 | Standard Deviation: 0.617 | Level: High

As shown in Table 3, the means of the electronic blackmail anxiety items ranged from 2.46 to 3.29.

- The highest-ranked items were item (1): "I feel anxious if someone encrypts my personal information or threatens to destroy my data" and item (2): "I worry that an unknown person might publish my photos or personal information on social media", both with a mean of 3.29, indicating a high level of anxiety.
- The lowest-ranked item was item (12): *"I worry about a relative committing suicide or being murdered*

due to cyber extortion", with a mean of 2.46, indicating a moderate level of anxiety.
The overall mean score of 3.02 (SD = 0.617) reflects a high level of electronic blackmail anxiety among the students.

Results Related to the Third Question: *Is there a statistically significant correlation at the significance level (α = 0.05) between technological well-being and electronic blackmail anxiety among students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan?*

To answer this question, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between technological well-being and electronic blackmail anxiety among students. Table 4) presents the results:
Table (4)

Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Technological Well-Being and Electronic blackmail anxiety among Students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the University of Jordan

Variables Compared	Cyber Extortion Anxiety	
Technological Well-Being	Correlation Coefficient	-0.567**
	Significance Level	0.000

***Statistically significant at α = 0.05*

The results in Table 4 indicate a significant negative correlation between technological well-being and cyber extortion anxiety, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.567, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Discussion

Technological Well-Being Among Students

The study revealed a moderate level of technological well-being among students at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Jordan, with an overall mean of 2.77 (SD = 0.365). The highest-rated item was "My use of the internet helps me develop my academic and cultural knowledge" (M = 3.28, SD = 0.618), while the lowest was "My use of the internet does not affect my sleep" (M = 2.41, SD = 0.870) (Table 2). These findings suggest that while students perceive the internet as a valuable tool for academic and cultural development, concerns about its impact on personal well-being, such as sleep, remain prevalent.

Several factors may contribute to this moderate level of technological well-being. High academic workloads can lead to psychological and physical stress, which may hinder students' ability to utilize technology effectively. Academic pressure can reduce concentration and time-management skills, impairing the quality of technology use (Shawaqfeh & Almahaireh, 2019). Additionally, variability in access to technology and educational resources among students can lead to disparities in the effective use of technological tools. Inequitable access limits the potential benefits that can be derived from such tools (Gupta & Kunwar, 2018). Moreover, the lack of adequate training in effective technology use may hinder students from maximizing the benefits of available resources, which can adversely affect their academic performance and overall well-being (Al-Dhalaeen, 2022).

Electronic Blackmail Anxiety

The study also found a high level of electronic blackmail anxiety among students, with an overall mean of 3.02 (SD = 0.617) (Table 3). The highest-ranked items were related to concerns about personal data encryption and unauthorized publication of personal information (M = 3.29 for items 1 and 2), while the lowest-ranked item concerned fears about a relative committing suicide or being murdered due to cyber extortion (M = 2.46 for item 12).

Several factors may contribute to this elevated anxiety. Increased digital exposure and intensive social media use make students more vulnerable to potential cyber extortion, as scammers can easily access their personal information. This exposure intensifies feelings of digital insecurity and increases anxiety levels (Ali, 2022). Many students lack the technical skills and knowledge necessary to confront electronic threats. Limited awareness of digital safety hinders their ability to recognize and respond effectively to online scams, leaving them

more susceptible to extortion and, consequently, increasing their anxiety (Al-Kubaisi & Surhaid, 2020). Social pressure is another contributing factor. Students often feel compelled to maintain a positive digital reputation among peers. In cases of extortion, fear of scandal and social rejection significantly amplifies their anxiety. The psychological impact of cyber extortion can be profound, leading to anxiety, depression, and social isolation. Victims often experience deteriorating mental health, increasing their vulnerability to stress and fear (Nasaescu et al., 2018). Finally, the lack of awareness and formal training in digital safety within educational institutions is a core reason for this elevated anxiety. Without proper preventive education, students remain ill-equipped to handle cyber threats, making them more anxious and at risk (Herlina & Jati, 2019).

Correlation Between Technological Well-Being and Electronic Blackmail Anxiety

The study found a significant negative correlation between technological well-being and electronic blackmail anxiety ($r = -0.567$, $p < 0.05$) (Table 4). This inverse relationship indicates that students with higher technological well-being experience lower levels of anxiety related to cyber extortion. This finding aligns with existing literature, which suggests that technological well-being—characterized by awareness of digital safety, cybersecurity education, and effective use of technology—enhances resilience against cyber threats. Students who practice safe digital behaviors, such as using secure passwords, updating software, and employing privacy-protecting tools, are less likely to fall victim to cyber extortion, thereby reducing associated anxiety (Shawaqfeh & Almahaireh, 2019; Ali, 2022). Conversely, students who engage heavily with technology without adequate safeguards are more susceptible to anxiety from potential cyber risks.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed.

1. Develop Awareness and Educational Programs: Launch targeted awareness campaigns and training workshops to educate individuals about the psychological impacts of cyber extortion and how to protect themselves effectively.
2. Evaluate the Effectiveness of Response Strategies: Conduct studies to assess the effectiveness of various interventions—such as psychological counseling and stress management techniques—in reducing cyber extortion anxiety.
3. Enhance Technological Well-Being Tools: Promote the use of technology that positively supports mental health, including apps that monitor psychological well-being and mitigate the adverse effects of digital exposure.
4. Support Future Research: Encourage further research to explore the relationship between technological well-being and electronic blackmail anxiety in depth, and to develop new models to understand this dynamic better.
5. Develop New Assessment Tools: Create specialized assessment instruments to help counselors more accurately measure levels of electronic blackmail anxiety and technological well-being.
6. Promote Institutional Collaboration: Foster partnerships between educational institutions, mental health centers, and tech organizations to develop comprehensive strategies for addressing cyber extortion anxiety.
7. Provide Psychological Support to Victims: Establish specialized psychological support programs, including individual and group counseling, for those affected by cyber extortion.

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