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PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF ATTITUDES & USE OF INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG AIRCREW

ENQUÊTE PRÉLIMINAIRE SUR LES ATTITUDES ET L'UTILISATION D'INTERNET ET LES MÉDIAS SOCIAUX PARMIS LES AÉRONEFS

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Introduction: The advent of internet initially, and then other social media applications, has brought with it various socio-psychological issues ranging from inadequate sleep to daytime sleepiness. There has been concern regarding aircrew engagement in social media use in the night affecting performance in the air the next day. Towards developing an understanding of social media use among aircrew and its effects, this questionnaire study was carried out.

Material & Methods: Aircrew reporting to IAM IAF for training participated in this questionnaire study. A questionnaire was developed for the purpose. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. A total of 93 aircrew completed the questionnaire form.

Results: On a typical working day, more than half of the aircrew spend 30 minutes or less watching TV, whereas almost one fourth did not watch TV. This proportion increased to 62% watching TV for one or more hours over the weekend. Approx 66% spent 30 minutes or less during the week day on social media. The majority of the aircrew began sleep between 10-11 pm, fell asleep within 30 minutes, and graded their sleep quality as sound. A large majority use the internet every day. Approx one third of the respondents got the urge to check their social networking updates during social gatherings. A small percentage of the aircrew felt that spending between 1-3 hrs per day in front of a screen is acceptable. Aircrew feel that internet usage in the night affects performance on ground work at the squadron more than flying.

Discussion: This is the first ever study, to our knowledge, to understand the attitudes of aircrew towards internet & social media use. This use and inadequate sleep quantity is leading to daytime sleepiness. It may be affecting performance of both ground crew as well as aircrew. It has provided interesting insights for interventions. Future studies will explore and focus on specific segments of this questionnaire to develop relations between specific media use and performance.