



INFLUENCE OF INTERNET ADDICTION ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Internet is becoming a widely accepted channel for information exchange and networking. It is experiencing tremendous growth and development in its size and numbers of users all over the world. The benefits of the internet have been widely researched and include keeping in touch with friends, making vacation plans, managing finances, assisting with educational needs etc. Despite the positive effects of internet, there is growing literature on the negative effects of its excessive use. The goal of this research is to examine the degree to which the students are addicted to Internet usage and the impact of Internet addiction (IA) on their academic success and mental health. While most young people today are consistently exploring all phases of Internet connections, there is a plethora of debate as to what constitutes leisurely use of the Internet and where the border lies between such use and a non-transient addiction. Therefore, our first goal is to determine a concise measurement for IA that will distinguish levels and usage patterns that will stipulate when one should be considered addicted and when not. As a result, we developed a comprehensive set of questions to measure this degree of IA.

Key Words : *Internet Addiction Academic Performance And Mental Health*



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Introduction

The Internet provides a constant, ever-changing source of information and entertainment, and can be accessed from most smart phones as well as tablets, laptops, and desktop computers. Email, blogs, social networks, instant messaging, and message boards allow for both public and

anonymous communication about any topic. The benefits of the internet have been widely researched and include keeping in touch with friends, transferring funds, engaging with entertainment and assisting with educational needs (Akhter, 2013). Each person's Internet use is different. You might need to use the Internet extensively for your work, for example, or you might rely heavily on social networking sites to keep in touch with faraway family and friends. Spending a lot of time online only becomes a problem when it absorbs too much of your time, causing you to neglect your relationships, your work, school, or other important things in your life. If you keep repeating compulsive Internet behavior despite the negative consequences in your offline life, then it's time to strike a new balance. Internet has enlightened the human society by providing information, transforming knowledge and facilitating for communication. However, it created its own problems and internet addiction becomes one of them (Kapahi et al., 2013). An individual's inability to control the usage of internet is defined as internet addiction (Chao and Hsiao, 2000, cited at Akhter, 2013, p. 1794). Internet overuse or excessive use of computer that may lead to interfere or change in one's regular daily life can be described as internet addiction (Kapahi et al., 2013). In the internet addiction, people become addicted not to the substance, but to work with computer or to the feeling achieved during working with the internet (Johanian and Seifury, 2013). Young internet users are more at risk of becoming internet addicts than older users (Thatcher and Gooloman, 2005).

Internet addiction, otherwise known as computer addiction, online addiction, or Internet addiction disorder (IAD), covers a variety of impulse-control problems, including

Cybersex Addiction – compulsive use of Internet pornography, adult chat rooms, or adult fantasy role-play sites impacting negatively on real-life intimate relationships.

Cyber-Relationship Addiction – addiction to social networking, chat rooms, texting, and messaging to the point where virtual, online friends become more important than real-life relationships with family and friends.

Net Compulsions – such as compulsive online gaming, gambling, stock trading, or compulsive use of online auction sites such as eBay, often resulting in financial and job-related problems.

Information Overload – compulsive web surfing or database searching, leading to lower work productivity and less social interaction with family and friends.

Computer Addiction – obsessive playing of off-line computer games, such as Solitaire or Minesweeper, or obsessive computer programming.

The most common of these Internet addictions are cybersex, online gambling, and cyber-relationship addiction.

Signs and symptoms of Internet addiction or computer addiction

Signs and symptoms of Internet addiction vary from person to person. For example, there are no set hours per day or number of messages sent that indicate Internet addiction. But here are some general warning signs that your Internet use may have become a problem-

- Losing track of time online.
- Having trouble completing tasks at work or home. .
- Isolation from family and friends.
- Feeling guilty or defensive about your Internet use.
- Feeling a sense of euphoria while involved in Internet activities.

Self-help tips for breaking your Internet addiction

There are a number of steps you can take to get your Internet use under control.

- Recognize any underlying problems that may support your Internet addiction.
- Build your coping skills.
- Strengthen your support network.
- Modify your Internet use, step-by-step
- Set goals for when you can use the Internet. For example, you might try setting a timer, scheduling use for certain times of day, or making a commitment to turn off the computer, tablet, or smart phone at the same time each night. Or you could reward yourself with a certain amount of online time once you've completed a homework assignment or finished the laundry, for instance.
- Replace your Internet usage with healthy activities. If you are bored and lonely, resisting the urge to get back online can be very difficult. Have a plan for other ways to fill the time, such as going to lunch with a coworker, taking a class, or inviting a friend over.

Therapy and counseling for Internet addiction Therapy can give you a tremendous boost in controlling Internet use.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy: Provides step-by-step ways to stop compulsive Internet behaviors and change your perceptions regarding Internet, Smartphone, and computer use. Therapy can also help you learn healthier ways of coping with uncomfortable emotions, such as stress, anxiety, or depression.

A Glance at Internet Usage

The use of the Internet has become a central part of the developed and developing societies around the world. Approximately 78.1 percent of the United States population use Internet on a regular basis (Internet World Stats, 2012). Close to 245 million people uses Internet in United States, ranking among top ten countries in the world with highest Internet usage.

According to the study of Shana (2012) students' intention of using internet mainly for making friends and chatting, and only a few percentages (26%) of students use internet for academic purposes. Young (2004) investigated the affect of internet use and social capital on the academic performance of the students. The study commented that internet usage has less affect on studies and students are more rely on the internet to access information and entertainment. The study conducted Jeong (2005) demonstrated that internet addiction is significantly and negatively affect to students' academic performance.

Significance of the Study

The aim of this study was to determine the association of psychiatric symptoms with Internet addiction while controlling for the effects of age, gender, marital status, and educational levels. It is hypothesized, that high levels of Internet addiction are associated with psychiatric symptoms and are specially correlated with obsessive-compulsive disorder symptoms.

This study is very important to investigate the seriousness of internet addiction in the society nowadays especially for adolescent in college. Internet is very useful for user to find information for their current work. However presently internet is not only use for seeking information but being use to fills leisure time as well. If this phenomenon continues without any solution then internet addiction will become very serious and serious. So to investigate the seriousness of the internet addiction is the main thing to start so that this problem can be solve. Hence this study seeks to find out how serious internet addiction among college student is.

This study also will explain the negative consequences of internet addiction. Besides that these studies also important to let the people who are involve to take care of it such as parents and teacher. Through this study, they may start too aware of this problem so that can try to control their children or student.

This study can provide much information about internet addiction. This study can provide information on the symptoms of the internet addiction, the impact of internet addiction and also

the effect of internet addiction. The important effect that needs to be investigating in this study is whether the internet addiction will affect the academic performance of student in colleges.

Mental Health

Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. The scope for promoting mental health is identified by analogy with physical health promotion successes. Mental health is a community responsibility, not just an individual concern, just as many countries and communities have realized for heart health, tobacco control and mental health.

Mental Health is not just the absence of mental illness. It is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Objectives

- To study the effect of internet addiction on academic performance of college students/adolescents.
- To study the effect of internet addiction on mental health of college students/ adolescents.

Hypothesis

- There would be significant effect of internet addiction on academic performance of college students/ adolescents.
- There would be significant effect of internet addiction on mental health of college Students/ adolescents.

Method of Research

The descriptive survey method will be used in the present study.

Sample

The sample for the present study will consist of 200 college students. The respondent will be selected from govt. College, bhiwani.

Tools Used

1. Mental health Battery (MHB) by Singh and Gupta (1987).
2. Internet addiction test (IAT) by Kimberly and Young (1998).

Table 1: Frequencies and level of mental health of college students.

Sr.No.	Categories	Obtained score	subjects	%age
1	Excellent Mental Health (EMH)	90 and above	58	58
2	Good Mental Health (GMH)	Between 70 – 90	120	120
3	Average Mental Health (AMH)	Between 50 – 69	20	20
4	Poor Mental Health (PMH)	Between 30 – 49	-	-
5	Very Poor Mental Health (VPMH)	Below 29	2	2
			200	100

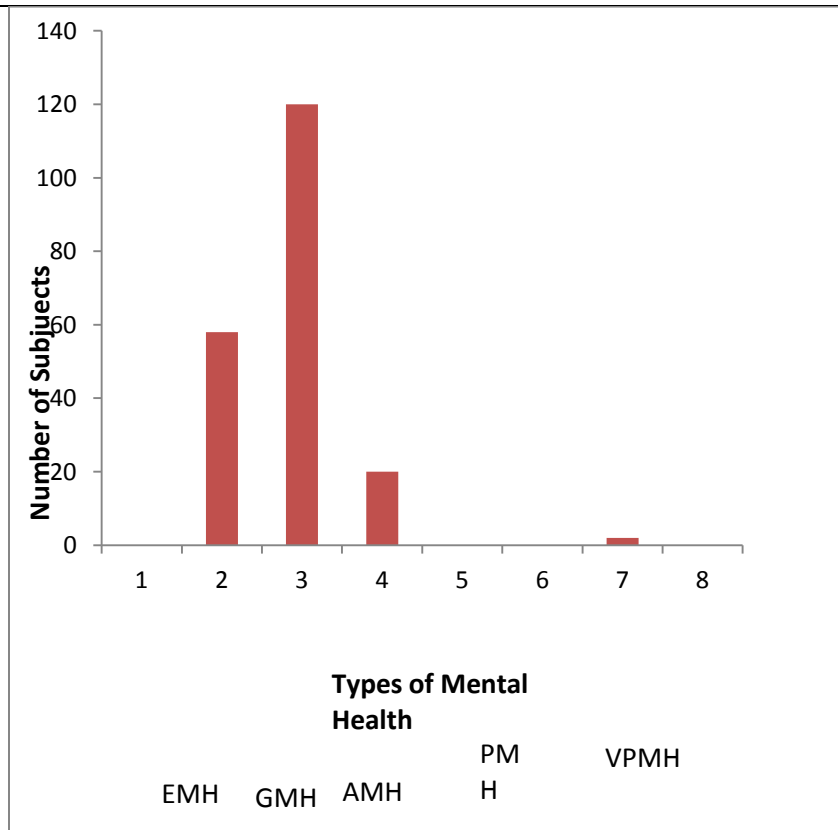


Fig. 1 Number of students and level of their Mental Health

The table 1 shows the mental health of the subjects according to the mental health battery by Singh and Gupta 1987. It shows that out of 200 subjects 58 students scored above 90 and falls in category of excellent mental health, while 120 students scored between 70 to 90 and falls in the

category of good mental health, whereas 20 students scored between 50 to 60 and falls in the category of very poor mental health.

Table 2: Frequencies and usage of internet of college students

Sr.No	categories	Obtained scores	subjects	%age
1	Average user (AU)	Between 20-49	92	92
2	Facing frequents problems because of internet (FFPI)	Between 50-79	98	98
3	Addict and facing significant problems due to excess use of internet (AFSPEI)	Between 80-100	10	10
Total			200	100

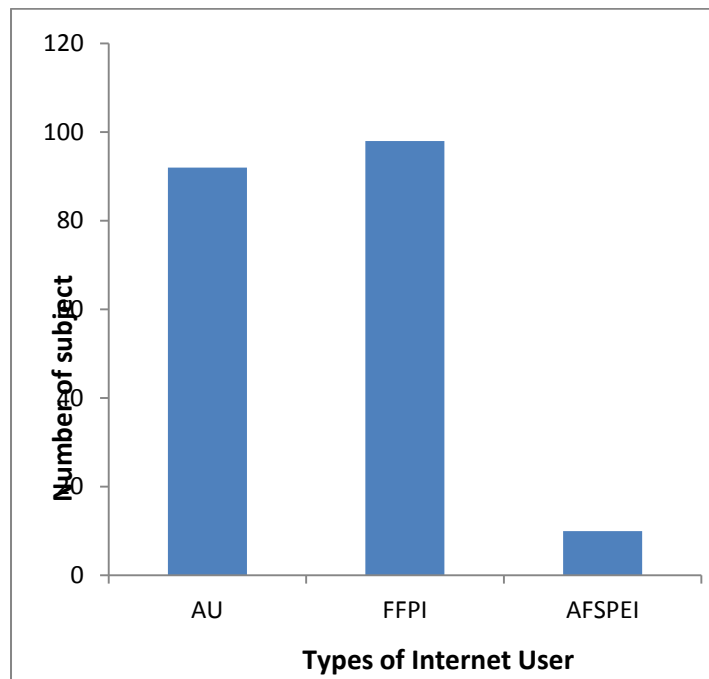


Fig. 2 Number of Students and Usage of Internet

The table 2 shows the usage of the internet of the subjects according to internet addiction test by Kimberly Young (1998). It shows out of 200 subjects 92 students scored between 20-49 and fall in category of average user, while 98 students scored between 50-79 and experiencing

occasional or frequent problems of internet. Lastly, 10 students scored between 80-100 and found that internet usage is causing significant problems in their life.

Table 3: Comparison of Mental health on the basis of Gender and type of College

Sr. no	Gender	Urban	Rural	Total	χ^2 value
1	Male	54	46	100	0.509
2	Female	60	40	100	
Total				200	

Significant at 0.01 level

Significant at 0.05 level

By analyzing Table 3, we can interpret the difference of mental health among college students on the basis of gender; the computed chi square value is 0.509. This value of chi square is greater than table value at .05 levels but smaller than the value at .01 level of significant.

Table 4: Comparison of usage of internet on the basis of gender and college students

Sr.No.	Gender	Urban	Rural	Internet Addiction Group			Total
				Minimal	Moderate	Excessive	
1	Male	54	46	24	48	28	100
2	Female	60	40	30	52	18	100

Internet Addiction Test is independent to chi square test.

By analyzing the table 4, we can interpret the usage of internet among the college students on the basis of their gender. The usage of internet among 54 male from urban and 46 male from rural 24 are minimal affected, 48 are moderate and 28 are excessive affected and from 60 female urban and 40 female rural, 30 are minimal, 52 are moderate and 18 are excessive affected.

Findings of the Study

- It was found that out of 200 subjects, 58 students scored above 90 and falls in the category of excellent mental health, while 120 students scored between 70 to 90 and falls in the category of good mental health, whereas 20 students scored between 50 to 60 and falls in the category of average mental health and 2 students scored below 29 and belonged to the category of very poor mental health.

- It was found that out of 200 subjects, 92 students scored between 20-49 and fall in the category of average user, while 98 students scored between 50 to 79 and experiencing occasional or frequent problems because of internet lastly 10 students scored between 80 to 100 and internet usage is causing significant problems in their life.
- It was found that there is no significant difference in mental health of male and female college students.
- A significant difference was found in the usage of internet on the basis of gender. Male are spend more time on internet as compare to female.
- A significant difference was found on the basis of urban area college students spends more time on internet as compare to rural area college students. More usage of internet has adverse affects on mental health and academic performance of college students.

Suggestions For Further Study

Some suggestions are presented here

- The study can be conducted to other districts of Haryana.
- The study can be conducted on a large sample than selected for the present study which can make the result more reliable.
- The study can be conducted on senior secondary school students other than college students.
- Similar study can be analyzed by different statistical techniques for varying the result.
- Similar study may be extended to social sites like facebook, twitter, whatsapp , orkut etc.

Conclusion

Findings of the present study revealed that there was a significant effect of internet addiction on academic performance and mental health of students/adolescents. Results further indicated that the students who were in the severe and profound groups of internet addiction were found to have detrimental effects both in their academic performance and mental health rather than the students who were addicted to the internet usage moderately. Therefore, one can conclude from the present investigation that internet usage can be beneficial to students in their academic set-up and may not cause potential harm to their mental health if used in moderation. However, more comprehensive research is needed on diverse sample to substantiate the same.

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