

Influence of Internet Addiction on Mental Health and Adjustment of College Students

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Abstract: *Internet is a network of millions of computers across the world and thereby it is the vast collection of resources people, it enables efficient and effective communication. The use of the internet among college students has increased considerably over the last few years. Internet has become an indispensable tool in business and academia and personal use is increasing every day. For better or worse, internet has infiltrated every aspect of our lives. Society has reached such a level that it is difficult rather impossible to live without the Internet. Moreover college students are the greater users of the Internet. Excessive use of the Internet leads the students to become addicts and affect the psychology of the students. In fact the present study concluded that greater use of Internet leads to decrease the mental health and Adjustment level among college students. Hence Internet addiction and mental health and Adjustment are closely related. It can also be stated Internet plays a major role in the psychology of the students.*

Keywords: Internet, Internet addiction, Mental Health and Adjustment

1. Introduction

Internet is a 'network of networks' that links computers around the world. It is a network of millions of computers across the world and thereby it is the vast collection of resources people, information and multimedia. It enables efficient and effective communication. It is easy to communicate with people in the next building. After the invention of computer the world has become a global village. The Internet provides significant benefits for students, such as research access, Socialization, entertainment and a communication tool with families and friends.

Recent developments in technology have significantly changed human lifestyles. It is a sort of revolution in true sense. The explosion of knowledge and abilities, jobs and skills have further mobilized the pragmatic thinking of human beings across different nations and cultures. Emergence of Internet thus helps in promoting values such as interpersonal relations, uniformity, universalization and secularism, emotional integration communicative mobility further enables' the world to grow and develops one big family of humanity. The WWW reaches every one and everywhere.

On one hand information revolution in cyber age has so many positive characteristics that make human life so comfortable but on the other hand the adverse effect of Internet has also been identified which may be known as compulsive Internet usage or Internet Addiction Disorder(IAD) or cyber space addiction or pathological computer use. Internet is extremely attractive and has positive impact on the user initially, as it is a kind of fun and help giving facility, gives a sense of controllability and allows on inhibited person to venture in a free space {cyber space}. These initial positive impacts have varied influence on different people with respect to their self-concept, body image, mental health, adjustment and so on, through cognition. Internet use may be self-enriching, enhancing for some, depending upon the individual's

personality as to what is his/her self-concept, body image, mental health and adjustment. Slowly the user may enter into a specific response, then into a habitual response, and finally into a sort of compulsive response in this non use becomes painful thus resulting adversely by creating anxiety, stress, depression, and other pathological disorder.

"Addiction" and Internet Addiction Disorder

The consumption of any psychoactive drug legal or illegal can be thought of as comprising three stages: Use, Abuse and Addiction. Initially the user may consume the drug simply to strain the resulting pleasurable or other beneficial effects. If use of the drug then escalates to the point where it is interfering with the ability of the user to function normally, use may turn into abuse, and if drug consumption increases further the user may become addicted. Kimberly S. Young conducted a study involving nearly 500 heavy internet users.

Mcmuran (1994) pointed out that addictive behavior fluctuates and moves in and out routinely and not necessarily progressive in nature, because the level of involvement depends upon the current situation and the addict's skill for coping with that situation. Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kielser, Muknopadhy and Seherlis (1998) revealed that Internet is negatively influencing our real life strong ties and is displacing our social activity.

Signs and symptoms of Internet addiction

- 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.

Physical symptoms of Internet addiction

Internet or computer addiction can also cause physical discomfort such as:

- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (pain and numbness hands and wrist)
- Dry eyes or strained vision.
- Backaches and neck aches, severe headaches.
- Sleep disturbances.
- Pronounced weight gain or weight loss.

Operational definitions of the term used:

• Definition of Internet

“An international network of well over ten thousand networks linked using the TCP/IP protocols also used more loosely to mean either the worldwide information net or the conglomeration of all computers and networks that can be reached via Internet E-mail address.”

• Definition of Addiction

“The fact or process of being addicted”

• Definition of Mental Health

According to Ladell- “Mental health means the ability to make adequate adjustment to the environment on the plane of reality.”

• Definition of Adjustment

According to Coleman, James C- “Adjustment is the outcome of the individual’s attempts to deal with the stress and meet his need, also his efforts to maintain harmonious relationships with the environment.”

2. Objective of the Study

1. To find out significant difference in Mental health of mildly Internet addicted and severely Internet addicted college students.
2. To find out significant difference in Adjustment of mildly Internet addicted and severely Internet addicted college students.

Hypothesis of the Study

1. There is no significant difference in mental health of mildly Internet addicted and severely Internet addicted college students.
2. There is no significant difference in Adjustment of mildly Internet addicted and severely Internet addicted college students.

Methodology of the Study

Keeping in view the Research Evidence, Objects and Hypothesis, the Research Scholar found it suitable to go through Descriptive Survey Method.

Population

The population has been selected from College students in Ghaziabad District.

Sampling

The Research Scholar collected the 100 sample for the study and during the collection of Data; Research Scholar will satisfy technique for listing at population.

Tool

To measure the different variable i.e. Internet addiction, mental health and adjustment the following tools have been used in the present study:

1. “Mental Health Battery (MHB)” constructed by Arun kumar Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta.
2. “Adjustment Inventory” by V.K. Mittal.
3. “Internet Addiction Questionnaire” constructed by Dr. Kimbrey Young.

Statistical Technique

The Research Scholar has been used Mean, Median, Standard Deviation, and t-test as statistical technique in the Study.

3. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Ho1 There is no significant difference in mental health of mildly Internet addicted and severely Internet addicted college students.

Table 1

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	Degree of freedom	t-test
Mildly Internet Addicted	36	57.8	8.9	78	1.69*
Severely Internet Addicted	44	53.5	9.7		

*Not significant difference at 0.05 level

Interpretation:

The data given in the table 1 clearly indicate the Mental Health of Internet addicted Students between two contrast groups the Mildly Internet Addicted students (N=36) score (M=57.8) Mean score point with (8.9) standard deviation, and the Severely Internet Addicted students (N=44) score (M=53.5) Mean score with (9.7) standard deviation. The ‘t’-value (t=1.69) clearly indicates that both the groups have not significant difference in their Mental Health.

Ho2 There is no significant difference in Adjustment of mildly Internet addicted and severely Internet addicted college students.

Table 2

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	Degree of freedom	t-test
Mildly Internet Addicted	36	11.2	3.6	78	5.4**
Severely Internet Addicted	44	7.4	3.0		

** Significant difference at 0.05 level

Interpretation:

The data given in the table clearly indicate the Adjustment of Internet addicted Students between two contrast groups the Mildly Internet Addicted students (N=36) score

(M=11.2) Mean score point with (3.6) standard deviation, and the Severely Internet Addicted students (N=44) score (M=7.4) Mean score with (3.0) standard deviation. The 't'-value (t=5.4) clearly indicates that both the groups have significant difference in their Adjustment.

Findings

On the basis of the analysis of data presented in the foregoing pages the findings are systematically arranged here in accordance with the hypotheses as mentioned below:

Ho1 "There is no significant difference in mental health of mildly Internet addicted and severely Internet addicted college students".

Obtainer's value is less than the table 't' value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis has been accepted. It means that Mildly Internet Addicted and Severely Internet Addicted Students not differ significantly in relation to their Mental Health.

Ho2 "There is no significant difference in Adjustment of mildly Internet addicted and severely Internet addicted college students".

Obtainer's value is more than the table 't' value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis has been rejected. It means that Mildly Internet Addicted and Severely Internet Addicted Students differ significantly in relation to their Adjustment.

4. Conclusion

This study confined to study of Influence of Internet Addiction on Mental Health and Adjustment at college level students. It was found that there was no significant difference in Mental Health of Mildly Internet addicted students and severely Internet addicted students but there was significant difference in Adjustment of Mildly Internet addicted students and severely Internet addicted students.

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