

Internet Addiction: A threat to Adolescents

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Abstract

Internet has been an extraordinary innovation in the field of technology. Internet access among adolescents has grown exponentially over the past decade. This growth can be attributed to the launch of affordable mobile phones and lower prices of internet data plans. As an emerging field of information and communication system, the internet poses a practical problem that requires reflective and critical thinking on the part of the individuals especially adolescents. They are so much obsessed with internet that they remain busy either on the laptop or phone neglecting their study, family and health. Blue whale game is one example which has taken so many innocent lives. Internet has facilitated countless games. These are ruining their invaluable time and lives. The beginning of low price internet packages increased access fast to avail internet services, but teenagers are taking its undue advantage. Thus it is imperative to see the impact of internet addiction on their psychophysical health. The present paper will focus on the concept, signs, consequences, causes and treatment of internet addiction.

Keywords: Internet Addiction, Adolescents, Psychophysical Health

Introduction

Technological addictions may promote addictive tendencies (Griffiths, 1995). Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD) destroys lives by triggering neurological complications, psychological disturbances, and social problems (Cash, Rae, Steel, & Winkler, 2012). The internet-addicts group had the highest levels of depression and suicide ideation (Kim et al., 2006). Internet addiction was associated with three psychological health pointers comprising poor self-rated health, subjective unhappiness, and depressive symptoms (Ha & Hwang, 2014). There was a significant connection between internet addiction and depressive symptoms and obsessive-compulsive symptoms (Ha et al., 2007).

Sleep and commission errors may be affected negatively at night with the use of blue light LED smartphones (Heo et al., 2017). Internet addiction is a general idea which evokes an image of an individual who uses internet over to such extent as affects daily routine life. Later, it mars the personal and social relationships gradually. It causes disturbances in human life. It affects physical as well as the psychological health of adolescents in various ways. Many researchers linked internet addiction with multiple disorders, but internet was primarily intended for constructive deeds.

Females with a family account of breast cancer should shun the excessive use of their smartphones, tablets and laptops at night (Mortazavi & Mortazavi, 2018). Internet addicts passed threefold time on internet in comparison to non-addicts. Internet impacted negatively on the studies and daily life routines of the addicts (Chou & Hsiao, 2000). The internet addicts group exhibited the highest degree of loneliness, depressed mood, and compulsivity than other groups (Whang, Lee, & Chang, 2003). There was a connection between pathological internet use and depression (Young & Rogers, 1998).

Internet Addiction

Ivan Goldberg proposed the concept of 'Internet Addiction' in 1996 for pathological compulsive internet use. Internet addiction has been a severe threat to people and their health (Goswami & Singh, 2016). "Behavioral problems related to Internet use have been described in various ways, including 'Internet addiction disorder' (Bai et al., 2001), 'pathological Internet use' (Young, 1998), and 'problematic Internet use' (Shapira et al., 2000, as cited in Ko, Yen, Chen, Chen, & Yen, 2005)". Internet addiction is as "a psychological dependence on the Internet, regardless of the type of activity once logged on (Kandell, 1998)". Internet addiction can be demarcated as an impulse-control disorder that does not encompass an intoxicant (Young, 1998). According to Young, Pistner, O'mara, & Buchanan (1999), Internet addiction is a broad term covering a wide variety of behaviours and impulse control problems. The five subtypes of internet addiction are as follows:

- 1- **Cybersex Addiction:** Those who use or even get attached to adult websites for cyberporn.
- 2- **Cyber-relationship Addiction:** Excessive involvement in online relationships with virtual friends.

- 3- **Net Compulsions:** It comprises an extensive division of online gambling, compulsive shopping or stock trading.
- 4- **Information Overload:** Unwarranted web surfing and database searches. The massive amount of time in searching for, collecting and organising information.
- 5- **Computer Addiction:** Addiction to playing games at the cost of work performance or family duties.

Signs and Consequences of Internet Addiction

Look at through rose-coloured glasses at internet, where the addicted individual, is thinking about computer or web as the most imperative "thing" in his everyday life. States of mind change, addicted people are showing an expanded creation of dopamine, a synapse of the cerebrum, or, in other words, joy. Resistance, where the individual bit by bit looks for an ever increasing number of long periods of computer to feel joy (Fradelos, Kourakos, Velentza, Polykandriotis, & Papatthanasiou, 2016). There are several signs of internet addiction. The first and foremost sign is excessive use and passing a long time on laptops, computers and smartphones. Significant symptoms are fatigue, sleeplessness, headache, loneliness, isolation, less social disclosure and exhaustion.

Internet addicts showed more mental health problems than non-internet addicts (Kuhu, Awasthi, & Verma, 2017). Internet addiction had a positive link with students' emotional instability, and it also had a negative association with the students' academic performance (Ambad, Kalimin, & Ku-Yosof, 2017). Internet addiction variables had a significant positive relationship with symptoms of mental disorders (Mohammadkhani, Alkasir, Pourshahbaz, Dehkordi, & Sefat, 2017). There was a substantial and reverse connection between Internet addiction and students' mental health (Jahanian & Seifury, 2013). Results of unnecessary internet use fall under the primary classifications of social, physical, psychological and mental issues (Akar, 2015). Internet addicts had many problems such as interpersonal problem, behavioural problem, physical problem, psychological problem, and work problem in their daily life (Alam et al., 2014).

Causes of Internet Addiction

Social desirability had a robust affirmative association with adolescent internet addiction (Waldo, 2014). Adolescents with internet addiction have different psychological structures than those who use the internet less regularly (Cao & Su, 2007). There are various aspects which predict the problematic internet use as personality traits, parenting, familial factors, alcohol use and social anxiety (Weinstein & Lejoyeux, 2010). Reasons for unreasonable internet use are gathered under the primary classifications of learning and advancement needs, socialisation requirement, mental reasons and looking for entertainment (Akar, 2015).

Treatment for Internet Addicts

Since internet addiction was first introduced in the media and research composing, numerous studies have been grasped endeavouring to portray, explore, analyse and anticipate unreasonable use and perceive possible intercession or solutions for internet obsession. Young (1999) introduced these possible treatment techniques to address internet addiction:

1. **Practice the Opposite:** Build another lessened timetable or time design for the use of internet.
2. **External Stoppers:** Use stable things (e.g., time to work, to meet supervisor, and so on.)
3. **Setting Goals:** Set clear and achievable objectives to help grow new substantial internet-use plans.
4. **Abstinence:** Avoid specific addictive website or application.
5. **Reminder Cards:** Use visible, convenient indications of what addicts need to do at a particular time.
6. **Personal Inventory:** Generate a rundown of each action or practice that has been dismissed or reduced since the online propensity developed.
7. **Support Groups:** Organise social support groups to reduce their dependence on internet chat rooms.
8. **Family Therapy:** Improve open communication and ensure family assistance.

Other than psychological approaches, pharmacological treatment may also be used sometimes. Camardese, Leone, Walstra, Janiri & Guglielmo (2015) reviewed the existing literature and found specific pharmacological interventions (e.g., using antidepressants, mood stabilisers, opioid receptor antagonists, or antipsychotics) which can lessen the symptomatic problem in patients suffered from internet addiction.

Conclusion

Internet has been an incredible shelter for humankind. It has made everything simple for all. Everything is only a couple of clicks away at this point. Individuals have some way or another end up subject to internet even for everyday work.

Indeed, youths are excessively using internet without reasons. It offers so much that it opposes to hold up. Consequently, they are getting dependent on it. Therefore, in this condition, it has never again remained a boon for humankind. It is pulverising time and also the well-being of young people. The issues which were prior related with age (e.g., Spondylitis) have now turned out to be common among young people on account of excessive sitting on laptop or computer. Subsequently, it is elementary to treat internet fixation either through mental strategies or by pharmacological methodology relying on the seriousness of the issue. Guardians' job is of crucial significance in this treatment. So parents ought to be advised. Individual counselling and self-improvement approach is instrumental in treating internet enslavement. It is furthermore critical to see the internet usage structure among youngsters. It will assist to comprehend what, why and when they are surfing on internet.

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