

LEVEL OF INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG ADOLESCENTS – A REVIEW

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Abstract

Internet is an integral part of adolescents in this digital era. Utilization of social networks through internet has captured the attention of adolescents entirely. The level of dependency of adolescents on the social network has reached the level that without internet, every adolescent cannot think about the direction of their growth. Excessive usage of adolescents on internet is leading to addiction. Through the several studies, though using of internet provides wider knowledge to the adolescents, it is widely accepted that internet usage has profound negative influence on adolescents. The present paper reviews major studies related to internet addiction among adolescents, and its impacts such as academic performance, gender differences in internet addiction, depression, anxiety and stress among adolescents.

Key works: Internet addiction, social networks, adolescents, depression, anxiety etc.

1. Introduction

The internet is a medium to obtain faster information, research and communication, but for some users, it may become a companion for survival. Adolescents usually have poor self-control, worse self-regulation, and poor cognition as compared to adults and are considered the most vulnerable group to the temptations of the internet. The term 'internet addiction' was first proposed by Ivan Goldberg for pathological internet use in 1993. Beard recommends that the following five diagnostic criteria are required for a diagnosis of internet addiction viz. feeling preoccupied with the internet, need to use the internet with increased amounts of time in order to achieve satisfaction, unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back or stop internet use, restless, moody, depressed, or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop internet use, and staying online longer than originally intended. Additionally, at least one of the following must be present, jeopardized or risked the loss of a significant relationship, job, educational or career opportunity because of the internet, lying to family members, therapist, or others to conceal the extent of involvement with the internet and using the internet as a way of escaping from problems or of relieving a dysphonic mood e.g. feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety and depression.

2. Internet addiction

According to American Psychiatric Association, the term “addiction” does not emerge in the most modern description of the DSM – IV. In added, an additional study has mentioned that internet addiction is not a DSM-IV diagnosis so far. Kimberley Young was the first person who published a case study with a 43 year old woman addicted to e-mail. This was followed by the first influential internet addiction study collected about 600 cases of people who have problems in their daily life due to controlled internet use. In 1998, Young have anticipated a set of criterion for diagnose internet addiction based on the DSM-IV criterion for pathological gambling. Young have certain eight out of ten criteria that they felt that they can apply most readily to internet use: preoccupation of the internet; a desire for increase time spent on-line to attain a similar quantity of satisfaction; repeated efforts to curtail internet use; feel irritability, depression, or mood liability when internet use is limited; staying online longer than anticipated; putt job or relationship in risk to use internet; lying to others regarding what quantity time is spent on-line; and mistreatment the internet as a way of regulation mood. Individuals fulfil 5 of the 8 criteria would be considered as internet addicted. Educational activities like home works, searching information needed and searching for medical information are not related to internet addiction. Internet addiction is a predictor of stress, depression, anxiety, and loneliness. People who are using the internet excessively are mostly playing online games and browsing social media. The side effects of the excessiveness led to anxiety, depression, health problems, school absenteeism, lying, fatigue, unemployment, decreased job productivity, and social isolation. The addiction to the internet also could translate to low self-esteem, depression, boredom, and attention deficit hyperactive disorder.

3. Review of literature

Musarrat Azher, et al. (2014) studied the prevalence of internet addiction and the relationship between internet addiction and anxiety level of students in the University of Sargodha with 300 samples by using Young’s internet addiction scale, the result shows that prevalence level of internet addiction is more in male students than female students. It also indicated that there is a positive relationship between internet addiction and anxiety level of the students.

Karamjit Kaur (2015) studied the relationship between internet addiction and depression among 200 adolescent students each 100 sample studying eleventh standard in rural and urban areas of Punjab by using Young’s Internet Addiction Test, and Beck Depression Inventory Scale-II. The result revealed that adolescent boys have higher internet addiction than adolescent girls. Urban adolescents have higher internet addiction than rural adolescents and also it indicates that there is no relationship between depression and gender and locality

Singh and Barmola (2015) studied the effect of internet addiction on academic performance and mental health of 125 adolescent school students age ranging from 14 to 16 years at Rishikesh & Haridwar schools, Uttarakhand. The study reported that the students who were in the severe and profound groups of internet addiction were found to have detrimental effects on both in their academic performance and mental health status rather than the adolescent students who were addicted to the usage of internet moderately.

Goswami and Singh (2016) reviewed the internet addiction among adolescents. The study explored that internet addiction has become one of the leading challenge of the present society. It causes both physical and psychological destruction and it becomes one of the most important information resources for adolescents and also it makes innumerable disturbances in academic performance, social relationship and emotional wellbeing of adolescents.

Shahla Ostovar, et al. (2016) studied the association between internet addiction and depression, anxiety, stress and loneliness and also made comparison between internet addicts and non-internet addicts of 1052 Iranian adolescents and young adults. The result shows that internet addiction is highly associated with depression, anxiety, stress and loneliness. Adolescents with higher levels of internet addiction had higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression and loneliness when compared to non internet addicts.

Manohar Bhatia, et al. (2016) studied the level of internet addiction among 300 adolescent students in three private schools in the city of Gwalior, by using Young's internet addiction test. The result shows that out of 300 adolescent students, 24% were moderately addicted and 06.33% were severely addicted. 40.66% students give more importance to internet than physical activities. 25% students admitted that they remain online late in night. 29% students felt that they are having loss of interaction with society.

Stjepan Oreskovic (2017) studied the association between mental health, quality of life and the level of internet addiction among 667 adolescent students age between 11 to 18 years in Croatia and Germany. The results revealed that 39% of the adolescents were moderately addicted to internet, 20% of the adolescents were severely addicted and 13% of the adolescents were not addicted to internet. Adolescents in better health condition are less likely addicted to internet when compared to those respondents in worse health are more likely addicted to internet and also there is an association between adolescent mental health, quality of life and the level of internet addiction among adolescents.

Batool Gholamian, et al. (2017) investigated the prevalence of internet addiction and relationship between internet addiction and depression anxiety and stress among 417 high school adolescents ages between 12 to 17 years in Iran. The result revealed that 69.5% of the students were non-addicts. 27.6% of the respondents were mild addicts and 2.9% were severely addicted

and there is a higher relationship between internet addiction and the level of depression, anxiety and stress among adolescents than the normal internet users.

Hatice Odaci and Ozkan Cikrikci (2017) analysed the associations between internet use, depression, anxiety and stress among 543 youths by using problematic internet use scale and DASS scale. The result indicated that 17% of variance in depression, 18% of the variance in anxiety and 18% of the variance in stress, problematic internet use had a strong effect on increasing depression, anxiety and stress levels of the sample youths.

Kristina Sesar, et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between problematic internet use and negative emotional states among 326 adolescent students ranging from 16 to 19 years of age by using DASS scale adolescent girls had more difficulties with the inability to control or inability to end internet use, in comparison to adolescent boys. Moreover, adolescent girl students experienced higher level of anxiety and stress than adolescent boys. The results of this study confirm that there is a positive relationship between problematic internet use and negative emotional states in adolescents.

4. Summary of the reviews

S.No	Author(s)	Year	Major findings
1.	Musarrat Azher, et al.	2014	There is a positive relationship between internet addiction and anxiety level of the students.
2.	Karamjit Kaur	2015	Urban adolescents have higher internet addiction than rural adolescents and there is no relationship between depression and gender and locality.
3.	Singh and Barmola	2015	The students who were in the severe and profound groups of internet addiction were found to have detrimental effects on both in their academic performance and mental health rather than the students who were addicted to the internet usage moderately.
4.	Goswami and Singh	2016	Internet addiction makes innumerable disturbances in academic performance, social relationship and emotional wellbeing of adolescents.
5.	Shahla Ostovar, et al.	2016	Adolescents with higher levels of internet addiction had higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression and loneliness when compared to non-internet addicts.
6.	Manohar Bhatia, et al.	2016	40.66% students gave more importance to internet than physical activities. 25% students admitted that

			they remain online late in night. 29% students felt that they are having loss of interaction with society among adolescents.
7.	Silvana Karacic and Stjepan Oreskovic	2017	There is an association between adolescent mental health, quality of life and the level of inter addiction among adolescents.
8.	Batool Gholamian, et al.	2017	There is a significant relationship between internet addiction and the level of depression, anxiety and stress among adolescents than the normal internet users.
9.	Hatice Odaci and Ozkan Cikrikci	2017	Problematic internet use had a strong effect on increasing depression, anxiety and stress levels of the sample youths.
10.	Kristina Sesar, et al.	2018	There is a positive relationship between problematic internet use and negative emotional states in adolescents.

5. Conclusion

Adolescents are more vulnerable to internet addiction. Through this review papers, internet has become one of the most important information tool and it creates incredible impact on physical and mental health of adolescents. Internet addiction creates innumerable disturbances in academic performance, social relationship and emotional wellbeing. Adolescents with higher levels of internet addiction had higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression and loneliness when compared to non internet addicts.

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