

INTERNET ADDICTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Context : Day by day the usage of internet is increases, especially in young adults their use of internet has become more than a hobby; it has become an addiction or compulsion that has become out of their control. **Aims :** The aim of the study was to examine the internet addiction and their association with psychological well-being among college students. **Design :** A comparative and correlational study on conventional degree college students in Nashik district, Maharashtra, India. **Material and Methods :** The total sample of 360 college students (180 boys and 180 girls) from various colleges in Nasik city. The age group of the sample was 18 to 22 years. Internet Addiction Test (IAT) by Kimberly Young (1998) and Psychological Well-Being Scale by D.S. Sisodia and Pooja Choudhary were used for data collection. **Statistical Analysis :** Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were used. Student's t-test and Pearson product moment correlation has been used for finding gender difference and association between variables. The correlation score between internet addiction and psychological well-being is **-0.585** and it is significant. **Results :** The mean of males and females male (M = 80.5, SD = 6.128) and female (M = 80.340, SD = 6.229) and the value of $t = 0.170$ was found to be statistically not significant. **Conclusions :** College students irrespective of gender have same level of internet addiction their internet use and addiction is not based upon their biological gender. There is negative relationship between internet addiction and psychological well-being. Those who had higher level of internet addiction showed low on psychological well-being, this should be considering during the study.

Keywords : Internet Addiction, Psychological Well-Being, College Students

Introduction

Internet is a very important element of life which cannot be ignored. Internet is used for educational purpose by a large community but unfortunately we have a large community including majority of youth and teenagers who use Internet for only social networking sites. The Internet as a global village has become an important information and entertainment source for adolescents serving substantial role in changing the social lives of people. Internet has become more than a hobby; it has become an addiction or compulsion that has become out of their control.

Internet addiction is described as an impulse control disorder, which does not involve use of an

intoxicating drug and is very similar to pathological gambling. Some Internet users may develop an emotional attachment to on-line friends and activities they create on their computer screens. Internet users may enjoy aspects of the Internet that allow them to meet, socialize, and exchange ideas through the use of chat rooms, social networking websites, or "virtual communities

According to Young (1998), "Internet addiction is defined as any online-related, compulsive behavior which interferes with normal living and causes severe stress on family, friends, loved ones, and one's work environment".

Kandell (1998) define internet addiction as "A

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psychological dependence on the Internet characterized by an increasing investment of resources on Internet-related activities, unpleasant feelings when off-line, an increasing tolerance to the effects of being online, and denial of the problematic behaviors”.

Psychological and physical problems (sleep deprivation, excessive fatigue, decreased immune system, lack of proper exercise, poor personal hygiene and back or eye strain), social isolation and lack of real-life social relationships, familial (relationship problems with family, neglect of daily chores and increased family conflicts), academic problems (drop in grades, missed classes, decline in study habits) and other problems have all been identified as consequences of excessive Internet use. The internet is one of the biggest non-drug addictions of the 21st century.

Regarding the internet issue and accessing world channels, Young (1996) opinion that the technology of such communication can be very fruitful to provide platforms for expanding interactions, but excessive use of it can create some problems. One of the disease like-problems originating from excessive use of internet is internet addiction.

College students are most susceptible to developing the Internet addiction because they are considered to be the heaviest users of information and technology with an increased usage of smart phones throughout the day. Anderson studied the effect of Internet addiction on college students. In a study of 1,200 undergraduates, he found out that one third of them had academic problems traceable to heavy Internet usage (Anderson 1997).

Psychology Well-being

The psychological well-being is one of the components related with feeling of wellness and few researchers conducted the study for finding the relation between well-being and internet addiction. Cardak (2013), Rehman et al (2016), Pal (2017), and other concluded that psychological well-being was affected by Internet addiction negatively.

Psychological Well Being is the measure of an individual's perception about the purpose and overall control of his or her life, the degree of achievement of

one's potential, and the nature of interpersonal relationships built.

According to Levi (1975), “Psychological well-being as a dynamic state characterized by a reasonable amount of harmony between an individual's abilities, needs and expectations and environmental demands and opportunities”

Cecola (1975), opinion “Psychological well-being is a connotative as a harmonious satisfaction of one's desires and goals”

Carol Ryff was doing pioneering work on the study of psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is a very subjective term but from all the research that has been carried out, the term is used throughout the health industry as kind of a 'catch-all phrase' meaning contentment, satisfaction with all elements of life, self-actualization.

More recently Seligman (2011) introduced the PERMA model of flourishing, which has five core elements of psychological well-being: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Consistent with these definitions is the approach taken by the Wellbeing Institute at the University of Cambridge, which defines wellbeing as 'positive and sustainable characteristics which enable individuals and organizations to thrive and flourish'.

Review of Literature

Huang (2010) conducted the study to find out the relationship between types of internet uses and measures of psychological well-being, including depression, loneliness, self-esteem, and life satisfaction and found negative (-0.0504) relationship between internet addiction and psychological well-being

Another study conducted on Taiwanese college freshmen by Chen (2012) to find out the relation between Internet use and psychological well-being (PW) and revealed that there was no relationship between PW and online behaviour.

Cardak (2013) conducted a study on Turkish university students to examine the relationship between Internet addiction and psychological well-being among. The result shows that psychological well-being was predicted negatively by diminished impulse control,

loneliness/depression, social comfort, and distraction. Students with higher levels of internet addiction are more likely to be low in psychological well-being.

The study was done on 100 students studying in various colleges of two districts namely Srinagar and Ganderbal in Kashmir by Rehman et al (2016) to examine the relationship between internet addiction and psychological well-being conducted and they found that there was negative correlation between internet addiction and psychological well-being among youths of Kashmir.

Positive feelings and life satisfaction predicted internet addiction negatively; but negative feelings predicted the internet addiction in a positive way shows by Pınar Koç (2017).

Cross-sectional study was done in Jabalpur city of Madhya Pradesh, India on relationship between internet addiction and PWB of 461 college students by Sharma A et al (2018). The result of this study shows that PWB and sub-dimensions of PWB was significantly negatively correlated to internet addiction. Students with higher levels of internet addiction are more likely to be low in PWB.

A cross sectional research study on internet addiction among undergraduate from urban medical college students conducted by Siva Kumar Chennam Setty, Sudha rani K ,Lanka V.R.Usha. (2015) and found that there is no difference in internet addiction score across both genders.

The qualitative study conducted by Munusamy, Komathi & Ismail, Maimunah (2009) for investigating the role of gender in internet usages academicians in Malaysia they collected the data by interviews and found that shows that gender does not influence on internet usages.

The correlational study conducted on 411 undergraduate students for examine the Internet use, abuse, and dependence conducted by Beverly L. Fortson PhD, Joseph R. Scotti PhD, Yi-Chuen Chen, Judith Malone BS & Kevin S. Del Ben. (2007). the result found 90% students use daily Internet and half of the sample met Internet abuse, and one-quarter met criteria for Internet dependence. It also shows Men and women did not differ on internet usages.

Research Methodology

Design of the study

To study the relationship between internet addiction and psychological wellbeing among college students this was the main purpose of this study. For that purpose researcher decided to use the survey research design. Considering the objectives, the correlational research was found to be the most suitable design, to serve the aims of the research.

Hypotheses

1. There would be high level of internet addiction among college students.
2. There would be gender difference in terms of internet addiction among college students.
3. There would be negative relationship between internet addiction and psychological well-being and sub domains of psychological well-being.

Variables :

Research variables

1. Internet Addiction
2. Psychological Well-being
3. Gender

Controlled variables

1. Age of the college students: The students who are participated in this study were between 18 to 22 years of age.
2. Geographical area: The students were selected only from Nashik city colleges.

Sample

It was a conventional sampling. Initially, researcher meets 450 college students out of which only 360 students were selected for study because they were getting high level of internet addiction as measured by the test. The total sample was of 360 college students, out of which 180 boys and 180 girls were selected from various colleges in Nashik city. All the participants were residents of Nashik city. The age group of the sample was 18 to 22 years.

The inclusion criteria

The inclusion of a sample was dependent on two criteria.

1. Those students who are using a Smartphone/ i-phone or laptop/ computer more than three hours per day.

2. Those students who are pursuing education first year graduation to post graduation in conventional colleges (Arts, Commerce & Science colleges).

Tools

Internet Addiction Test (IAT) by Kimberly Young (1998)

This test is suitable for measuring internet addiction of a person of any age group. The test has 20 items and requires 10 minutes to complete it. The response is given on 5 point scale. Young's 20-items questionnaire it is a type of Likert scale. The assignable scores in this test range from 0 to 100 and are interpret in this way that the more score is admitted, the more dependency on the Internet. Scores ranging from 20 to 39 indicates average use of internet, score from 40 to 69 indicates vulnerable user of internet, and finally score from 70 to 100 indicates excessive uses of internet.

The psychometric properties of the test are good and it is widely used for research purposes. The Reliability of the test range from internal consistency reliability is .62 - .89. The validity of the test is

satisfactory.

Psychological Well-Being Scale (D.S. Sisodia and Pooja Choudhary)

This scale is based on the five point scale contains 50 items on the five areas of Psychological wellbeing namely Satisfaction, Efficiency, Sociability, Mental Health and Interpersonal Relation are measured of any age group. The score for whole scale is ranging from 50 to 250 and for area wise is 10 to 50. The individual scoring 50-58 indicates very low level of well-being, scoring 58-83 shows low level of well-being, scoring 83-217 indicates moderate level of well-being, scoring 217-242 indicates high level of well-being and scoring 242-250 indicates very high level of psychological well-being.

The test-retest reliability of the test is .87 and the internal consistency is .90. The external criterion validity of the test is .94.

Result

H – 1. There would be high level of internet addiction among college students.

Table 4.1. Shows Mean, Standard Deviation, Standard Error, Skewness, Kurtosis and for the variables of the present study (N = 360)

Variable	Mean	Std. Error	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Internet Use and Addiction	80.447	0.326	6.183	-0.605	0.537
Psychological Well-Being	93.878	2.270	43.078	1.279	1.493

The table 4.1 above shows the measures of central tendency, standard error, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis values of internet addiction and

Psychological Well-being.

H – 2. There would be gender difference in terms of internet addiction among college students.

Table. 4.2. Shows Mean, SD, SEM and t-value for gender difference of Internet use and addiction among college students (N = 360)

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	Std. Error of Mean	t	Level of Sig
Internet Addiction	Male	180	80.5	6.128	0.457	0.170	NS
	Female	180	80.340	6.229	0.466		

Table 4.2 shows the gender difference in terms of internet addiction for this analysis t value was calculated. For the obtained values in above table the mean of males and females male (M = 80.5, SD = 6.128) and female (M = 80.340, SD = 6.229) and the value of t = 0.170 was found to be statistically not significant. This indicated that there is no gender difference in terms of internet addiction it means male and female both are using same level of internet.

The increasing numbers of research studies in this area highlight the lack of gender difference in terms of internet use and addiction. Fortson et al, 2007; Munusamy and Ismail, 2009; Chennam et al, 2015. Gender is not the dominant factor which responsible for excessive usages of internet and addiction.

This finding suggest that college students either they are male or female they are having same level of internet addiction their internet use and addiction is not

based upon their biological gender. Gender is not the dominant factor which responsible for excessive usages of internet and addiction. It May happen because females are now aware about the importance of technological knowledge in each and every field of career so they are trying to make their self more familiar with this new era of socialization. In the academics also colleges are encouraged students the utility of internet how this thing help them in their study and self-help. Internet is not only provide the academics related help but it also provide the different services such as online shopping, online bill payments, relationship maintenances, financial and banking transactions, online exams, online result checking, online food orders and so on to make their live easy.

H – 3. There would be relationship between Interpersonal Relation (as factor of Psychological well-being) and internet addiction.

Table 4.3. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between Internet addiction and Psychological well-being (N = 360)

	Psychological Well-being	Significance Level
Internet Addiction	-0.585	0.01

Table 4.3 shows the correlation between internet addiction and psychological well-being among college students. For this analysis Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was calculated. For the obtained value in table no 4.3 show the negative correlation between internet addiction and psychological well-being is **-0.585** and it is significant it shows that students with high level of internet addiction have low level of psychological well-being.

The result shows that students with higher level of internet addiction have lower levels of Psychological well-being. A study conducted by Huang (2010) to find out the relationship between types of internet uses and measures of psychological well-being and found negative (-0.0504) relationship between internet addiction and psychological well-being. Cardak (2013) conducted a study on Turkish university students to examine the relationship between Internet addiction and

psychological well-being and concluded that psychological well-being was predicted negatively by diminished impulse control, loneliness/depression, social comfort, and distraction.

Another study conducted by Rehman et al (2016) in Kashmir and they found that there was negative correlation between internet addiction and psychological well-being. Pınar Koç (2017) also suggested that positive feelings and life satisfaction predicted internet addiction negatively; but negative feelings predicted the internet addiction in a positive way. Students with higher levels of internet addiction are more likely to be low in PWB suggested by Sharma A et al (2018). Their study findings shows that PWB and sub-dimensions of PWB was significantly negatively correlated to internet addiction.

Conclusions :

In the present research following are the conclusions :

1. There is high level of internet addiction among

college students.

2. There is not significant gender difference in terms of Internet addiction among college students.
3. There is negative relationship between internet addiction and psychological well-being and sub domains of psychological well-being.

Implication :

The Present research study will be helpful in developing insight into one's own Internet usage pattern and their impact on behaviours. This study can be beneficial for parents and teachers also to understand the behavior of students. In terms of excessive Internet use or Internet addiction, colleges can attempt to sensitize teachers and enlighten them about the effects of Internet addiction on students. It can also educate the students themselves about these ill effects. So with the help of this kind of research we can identify students' problems and give them a proper help so the health issues can be substantially reduced. These students can control their internet using behavior with the help of supportive psychotherapies and counseling. Yoga, meditation and physical exercises can also be helpful.

Strength of the Study :

This study focused on Psychological well-being of students and internet addictive behavior. Decrease in psychological well-being can foster addictive behavior. This study gives a insight to other researchers for focusing on association of psychological well-being and addictive behavior. This study highlighted some interventions which can be useful to students, parents and teachers for identifying and controlling addictive behavior.

Limitations of the study :

Small sample group, types of college, age of sample group, mood or bias during self report of behavior and other confounding factors such as peer influence, psychological reasons, stress or exam tension.

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