



A STUDY ON MENTAL HEALTH AND INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

In the past few years, Internet addiction among university students has gained more popularity than leading to various mental health issues among them. Low self-esteem, poor sleep quality, suicide, and mood disorder are the common health problems faced among university students due to excessive use of the Internet. Internet addiction (IA) is considered a major concern among the students of Indian universities. The mental health of the students is associated with the addition of the Internet. Internet addiction is defined as the poorly controlled behaviors of university students regarding the use of computers and the use of the Internet that lead to distress and impairment. Internet addiction among university students is on the lines of substance abuse. Internet addiction among university students leads to depression, stress, and anxiety. The Internet has been considered as one of the good sources for getting knowledge; however, the addition of the Internet among university students makes them lazier and diverts them from their purpose.

Key words: Internet Addiction, Mental Health, Students, Depression, and Stress.

Introduction

The capacity of the Internet for socialization is a primary reason for the excessive amount of time people spend having real-time interactions using e-mail, discussion forums, chat rooms, and online games (**Grohol, 2005**). Internet addiction among university students is defined as an impulse control disorder that doesn't involve an intoxicant (**Gupta et al. 2018**). The Internet has made life a lot easier by making information more accessible to all and creating connections with different people around the world. However, it has also led a lot of people to spend too much time in front of the computer, so much so that it becomes the center of their lives. **Kendal (1998)** characterized Internet Addiction as a sort of psychological Addiction addressing should be dynamic on the Internet. Web based gaming, urgent utilization of informal communication and long distance race internet riding meetings are completely remembered for this incredible addiction. r. According to **Anand et al. (2018)**, psychological difficulties

are also faced by the person who is addicted to the Internet. Pathological Internet users cause social, academic, and interpersonal problems. According to **Anand et al. (2018)**, psychological difficulties are also faced by the person who is addicted to the Internet. Pathological Internet users cause social, academic, and interpersonal problems. In the various studies, it has been found that excessive usage of the Internet is responsible for a higher risk of mental problems such as depression, stress which later become the reason for suicide. In the various studies, it has been informed by the researchers that the person who is addicted to the Internet feels more lonely and isolated. Addiction to the Internet makes the person more inadequate about life or appearance (Sharma and Sharma 2018).

Review of Literature

Advancement in the Smartphone is one of the major reasons that has made access to the Internet easier among students (**Kumar et al. 2018**). Easy access to the Internet provides major support to university students by becoming a major source of knowledge. Internet addiction among university students is common due to various reasons. According to Bisen and **Deshpande (2020)**, the syllabus of the University is quite difficult for which students to take the support of the Internet to clear their doubts as well as for solve the problems. Another reason for becoming Internet-addicted among university students is the easy availability of mobile phones (**Jaiswal et al. 2020**). Internet-addiction, impulsivity and psychological distress among 150 Kashmir university students were studied by **Kawa and Shafi (2015)**. **Amin and Mattoo (2015)** studied the attitude towards research of internet-users and internet non-users of university students. **Mark & Ganzach (2014)** analyzed personality and internet usage and the results revealed that extraversion, neuroticism and conscientiousness are completely associated with overall internet use. On the whole results indicated that extraversion and neuroticism are the strongest predictors of internet use. **Alam, et al. (2014)** explored and identified pros and cons of internet addiction on young adults in Malaysia. **Sharma and Anu (2018)** examined influence of internet-addiction on mental health and adjustment of college students. **Charlton, et al. (2012)** studied religiosity, adolescent internet usage motive and addiction and analyzed correlation between different religions with youths' Internet addiction tendencies through possible mediating Internet usage motivations.

Objectives of the study

- ❖ To study the demographic profile of the respondents.
- ❖ To assess the level of Mental Health and Internet Addiction.
- ❖ To examine the relationship between Mental Health and Internet Addiction.

Hypothesis

H01: There is a significant variation in Mental Health based on demographic variables.

H02: There is a no significant variation in Internet Addiction based on demographic variables.

H03: There is a significant association between Mental Health and Internet Addiction.

Methodology

The descriptive research design is used in the study. The Arts and Science College students in Coimbatore district is taken as the universe of the study. A sample of 100 college students was included in the study by using convenience sampling. Questionnaire method was adopted for the data collection. The questionnaire consists of demographic variables namely age, gender, Education, etc and mental health scale propounded by Warwick and Edinburgh in 2006, which consists of 14 items with three dimensions measured on 5 point scale was used. Internet Addiction scale was propounded by chen

(2017) which consists of 26 items measured by 4 point scale. The data was analyzed using mean, SD, t-test and ANOVA to analyze the data.

Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Variables

The demographic profile of the respondents shows that majority 58.0% belong to 18-30 years, Female respondents constitute 57.0%, 49.0% of them are college students who belong to arts stream.

Table 1: Mental Health

Variable	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Mental Health	High	20	20.0
	Moderate	62	62.0
	Low	18	18.0
	Total	100	100.0

Table 1: Shows that, 62.0% of college students had moderate level of Mental Health, 20.0% of college students had high level of Mental Health and 18.0% of college students had low level of Mental Health.

Table 2: Internet Addiction

Variable	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Internet Addiction	High	44	44.0
	Moderate	5	5.0
	Low	51	51.0
	Total	100	100.0

Table 2: Shows that, 44.0% of college students had high level of Internet Addiction, 5.0% of college students had moderate level of Internet Addiction and 51.0% of college students had low level of Internet Addiction.

Table 3: Difference in Mental Health based on Demographic Variables

Variables	Test	Value	Result
Age & Mental health	ANOVA	F=1.355	.261(NS)
Gender & Mental health	T-test	T= -.753	.453(NS)
Educational qualification & Mental health	ANOVA	F= 2.934	.058(NS)

NS- Not Significant S - Significant at 0.05 levels

Table 3: The table reveals that there is no significant variation found in mental health based on demographic variables.

Table 4: Difference in Internet Addiction based on Demographic Variables

Variables	Test	Value	Result
Age & Internet Addiction	ANOVA	F= .502	.681(NS)
Gender & Internet Addiction	T-test	T= 3.028	.134(NS)
Educational qualification & Internet Addiction	ANOVA	F= 2.567	.082(NS)

NS- Not Significant S - Significant at 0.05 level

Table 4: The table reveals that there is no significant variation found in internet addiction based on demographic variables.

Hypothesis testing:

From the above tables it can be inferred that there is no significant influence of demographic variable namely Age, Gender, Educational qualification on the mental health and internet addiction of the respondents. Hence the research hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

The study revealed that moderate Mental Health and low level of Internet addiction was found among the students in higher educational institutions. The result indicates that Mental Health and Internet addiction are negatively related. That means when Internet addiction increases Mental Health of the students decreases.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Mental Health and Internet addiction of the students in higher educational institutions were found to be moderate. The Demographic variables Age, Gender, Educational Qualification had no significant influence over the Mental Health and Internet addiction. The study also concludes that increase in internet addiction leads to decrease in mental health among the college students.

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