RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG ADOLESCENCES

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: As the Internet progressively becomes part and parcel of our lives, Internet addiction disorder has received much attention. The general reasons and consequences of this disease can be similar to that of alcohol addition, drug abuse, and obsessive viewing of television. Persons who are addicted to internet may come from all walks of life and as a result they are suffering in the main aspect of everyday life in situations such as school, family, work and relationships, emotional problems like depression and anxiety. Though it is used for education, entertainment, social networking, and sharing of information, its excessive use among adolescents is becoming a major concern. Internet addiction is an impulse control disorder and develop an emotional attachment to on-line friends. Hence the cordial relationship in the family and the society is curtailed. As a result, many of them have turned out to be very aggressive and engage themselves in various types' unhealthy practices. Blue whale game (suicide game) is one example for this. Hundreds of deaths were reported to be connected to the so-called "suicide game". **Aims & Objectives**: Since internet addiction has received much attention in present day situation, it is an urgent necessity to consider obsessive internet usage as a complete and distinct mental illness. With this background the present study was conducted to study the internet use and addiction among students of higher secondary schools. **Material & Method:** The internet addiction test (by Dr. Kimberly Young) which is the reliable and validated measure of severity of internet addiction, was conducted in 200students of Higher Secondary Schools of Prayagraj city, of which 111 were male students and 89 were female students. Students were in the age group of 16-19 years. Based upon the six point scale, the response that best represented the frequency of the behavior described in the 20 items was selected. The severity of internet addiction was found out. **Results:** Approximately 57% of the students were suffering from mild Internet addiction, 38% were suffering from moderate Internet addiction, 0.5% were suffering from severe Internet addiction and 4.5 % were suffering from no Internet addiction.**Conclusions:** Internet addiction in Students of Higher SecondarySchoolsare increasing and requires timely remedial action. Comprehensive program for students should be carried out to increase awareness of internet addiction.

INTRODUCTION

In the present 21st century, the age of growing communication system, education is an important tool, to bridge the gap between the past and the present. Education nurtures a person in all spheres of life. The evolution of digital era affected almost every aspect of modern life. The internet becomes an essential tool for people and plays a significant role in our daily life; socially, politically, economically, and even emotionally. People use the internet at work, school, and home as well as in public places to communicate, business, shop, pay bills online, entertainment, and much more. The internet can be accessed using smartphones, laptop, tablet, computer, and smart television. Since the inception of internet in the field of education, the education has reached every doorsteps of the students.

Now a days the internet has become essential need of school system. But youth using internet continuously, gradually slip away from the ultimate goal and become a prey to this modern technology. This affect their emotional, social and academic adjustment adversely. Indications of Internet addiction include feeling guilt-ridden, embarrassed, nervous, depressed or dejected as a result of online behavior, failed attempts to control behavior, neglecting sleep to stay online, weight gain or loss, back pain, headaches, withdrawing from other pleasurable activities. Internet Addiction, otherwise known as computer addiction, online addiction, or Internet addiction disorder (IAD), covers a diversity of impulse-control problems like Cyber-Relationship Addiction, Net Compulsions, Information Overload, Computer Addiction.

Internet addiction: Internet obsession is a real deal with us, millennials. It hampers with our daily activities and responsibilities with an overpowering desire to ditch

everything in order to 'Netflix and chill' all the time. According to an alarming AIIMS report, patients coming in with the complaint of "internet addiction" has almost doubled, over the time span of past two years. And experts at AIIMS claim that increasing number of young minds are developing "severe behavioral and psychiatric problems". In another insightful observation, the report claims this addiction might have something to do with depression and anxiety disorders. People suffering from depression might find internet, an alternative form of indulgence and entertainment as opposed to social engagement. The problem is reportedly even more serious for Indians. According to a survey, Indian viewers spend 8 hours 29 minutes watching online video content, whereas the global average is six hours and 45 minutes each week in 2018. Only recently, for the first time an Indian man suffering from Netflix addiction was admitted in Service for Healthy Use of Technology (SHUT) clinic at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (Nimhans) in Bengaluru. According to Professor R. K. Chadda, HOD of the Department of Psychiatry and National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre (NDDTC) 20 to 25 per cent of youth in India suffer from one or another form of mental disorder including mood disorders and even substance abuse. According to DNA, spending 8-9 hours being glued to electronic screens, getting annoyed if a family member or a friend tries to interject, being angry for no apparent reason and procrastination could be signifiers of an underlying issue related to internet addiction.

METHODOLOGY

Sample: The sample comprised of 200 Higher secondary students further classified into two groups: male (n=111) and female (n=89) in the age range of 16-18 years, respectively. Participants were chosen from Eight Schools of Payagraj City. They are

- YMCA Centenary School and College, Allahabad
- Girls High School, Allahabad
- Balbarthi School, Allahabad
- Benhur High School and College,
- St. Joseph's College, Allahabad
- St. Mary's Convent Inter College, Allahabad
- IPEM International School, Allahabad
- Bishop Johnson School and College, Allahabad

Measurements: Internet Addiction Test: The test is designed by Dr. Kimberly Young in 1998 has 20 item questionnaires. It covers the degree to which individual's internet use influences their daily routine, social life, sleep patterns and efficiency. Reliability coefficient Cronbach alpha was calculated as 0.90 and Spearman Brown value was calculated as 0.86 and each factor had internal reliability. Higher score indicates the greater level of internet usage by individuals and the problems your Internet usage causes.

The IAT presents few difficulties in administration. The testing environment in which the IAT is given, provided the client with sufficient illumination for reading and be quiet enough to afford concentration. Also it was made sure that the client comprehend the IAT's item content. The IAT required between 5 to 10 minutes to complete when it is self-administered. "The questionnaire consists of 20 statements. After reading each statement carefully, based upon the 5-point Likert scale, they are asked to select the response 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 which best describes the client. If two choices seem to apply equally well, circle the choice that best represents the client most of the time during the past month. The students were instrumented to read all the statements carefully before making their choice. The IAT total score is the calculation of the ratings given by the examinee for the 20 item responses. Every item is rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 to 5. The maximum score is 100 points.

The results were tabulated and statistical analysis was done by using Microsoft Excel. After all questions were answered, response of each participating student to each of the 20 questions was noted. All the 20 responses, with respect to 6 point scale, were added to obtain a final score for that student. The score was indicative of level of internet addiction of that student. (Table 1) Higher the score, greater the level of addiction and more are the chances of creation of problems resultant from such internet usage.

Distribution of severity scale of Internet addiction (N=200)

Approximately 57% of the participating students were suffering from mild Internet addiction, 38% were suffering from moderate internet addiction, 4.50% were suffering from no internet addiction and 0.50 % were suffering from severe internet addiction.

Gender wise distribution of severity scale of Internet addiction (N=200)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study explored the problem of internet addiction among students of Higher Secondary Schools. It was observed that 95.5% of Higher Secondary students are suffering from internet addiction.(Table 1, Graph 1)The finding is much more greater than the prevalence of 56.6% (as reported by Duraimurugan *et al.* in a study among college students from South India. They found 41.3% to be mild addicts while 15.2%to be moderate addicts, while in the present study it was found that about 57% of the students were mildly and 38% moderately addicted to the internet. However, some studies have also represents lower prevalence of Internet addiction. A cross-sectional survey was conducted among undergraduate students of DattaMeghe Institute of Medical Sciences (DMIMS) in the city of Wardha, Maharashtra during August-September 2015 showed prevalence of internet addiction to be 19.85%, with moderate and severe addiction being 19.5% and 0.4%, respectively.

In the present study, internet addict students were found to spend significantly greater amount of time on internet as compared to non-addicts. Greater expenditure of money and time among internet addicts may lead to financial problems and distraction from academic achievements. Using internet for social networking, watching videos, and visiting websites with sexual content were significantly associated with internet addiction. Anonymous nature of online interaction, achieving altered sense of personal identity online and need for developing intimate relationships can be the reasons for excess internet use. There were major gender difference in severity of internet addiction.(Table 2 (a & b), Graph 2 (a &b) Majority of both male and female students of higher secondary schoolsare suffering from internet addiction.

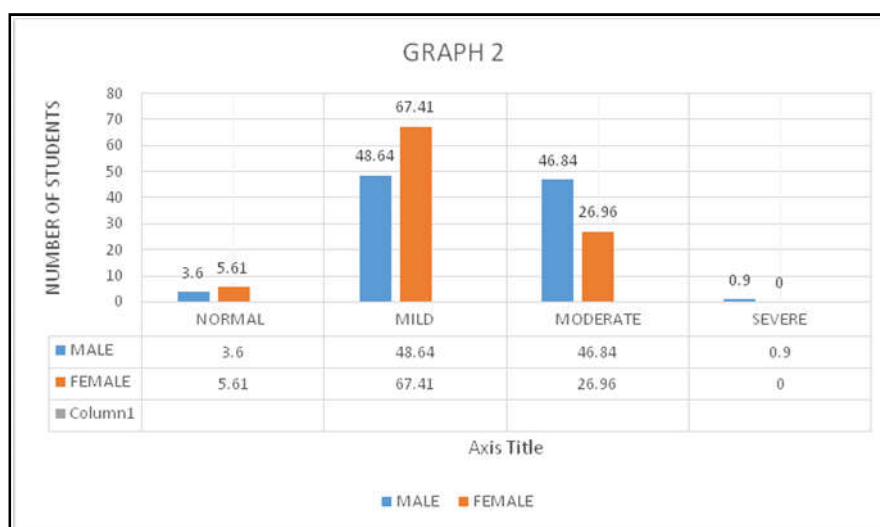### Table 1. Percentage Of Internet Addiction Among Students (Male & Female) Of Higher Secondary Schools

1	0-30	A normal level of internet usage	4.5%
2	31-49	Mild level of internet addiction	57%
3	50-79	Moderate level of internet addiction	38%
4	80-100	Severe level of internet addiction	0.5%
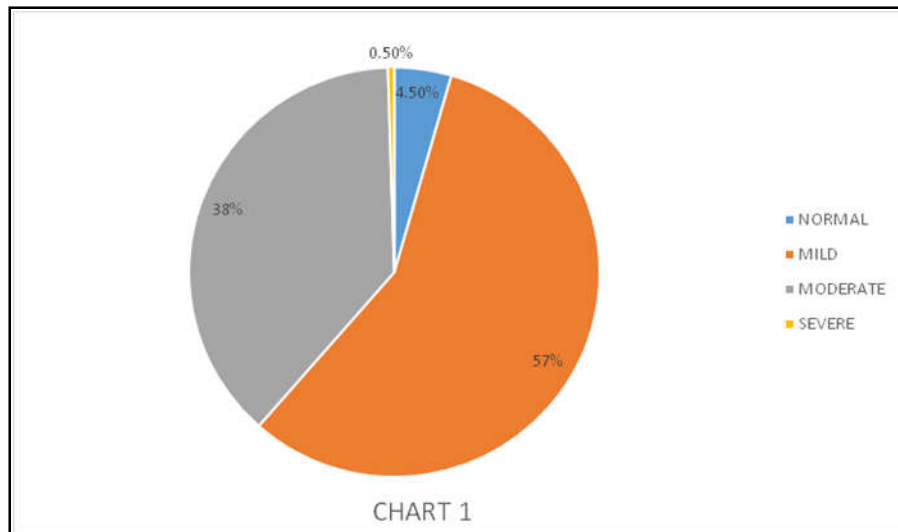
Table 2 (a). Percentage Of Internet Addiction Among Male Students Of Higher Secondary Schools

Sl No	Score points	Number of students	Level of internet addiction	Percentage
1	0-30	4	A normal level of internet usage	3.60%
2	31-49	54	Mild level of internet addiction	48.64%
3	50-79	52	Moderate level of internet addiction	46.84%
4	80-100		Severe level of internet addiction	0.90%

Table 2 (b). Percentage of internet addiction among female students of higher secondary schools

Sl No	Score points	Number of students	Level of internet addiction	Percentage
1	0-30	5	A normal level of internet usage	5.61%
2	31-49	60	Mild level of internet addiction	67.41%
3	50-79	24	Moderate level of internet addiction	26.96%
4	80-100	0	Severe level of internet addiction	NIL%

The statistical data reveals that 48.64% male students and 67.41% female students are having mild level of internet addiction. But when it came to moderate level of internet addiction male percentage has gone up to 46.84% and female 26.96%. Though this is a less number as compared to the numbers of mildly suffering students, these students are at increased risk of getting severely addicted. Only 3.61% of Male students while 5.60% female students were found to be

free from any type of Internet addiction. This study unfolds that internet addiction in the majority of the adolescents is a dark reality that requires timely remedial action. Detection of internet addiction therefore assumes greater importance in academic institutions. It needs to be emphasized that students will have to be educated in safe and healthy practices for internet use. Appropriate preventive and interventional strategies need to be developed to encourage rational use of internet in order to protect the physical and mental health of the users. Comprehensive program for students should be carried out to increase awareness of the internet addiction.Hence we can conclude that the youth of our country is growing on the path of danger. It is a peak moment that proper action should be undertaken to prevent our youth from this danger.

Limitations

The present study has delimited to following aspects:

- Male and female students of Higher Secondary Schools of Prayagraj City (Allahabad) has been taken into consideration for the study.
- This study has been conducted on the Students of Higher Secondary Schools of Class XI and XII of Prayagraj City (Allahabad)
- Only 200 students has been selected as a sample for the purpose of studies
- Eight Schools from Prayagraj city (Allahabad) has been selected for the data collection
- Due to the time & money factor and other things, the researcher has been constrained to delimit the study in the eight Higher Secondary Schools of Prayagraj City.

Conclusion

In the present era, where young people have been more exposed to the internet and use online activity as an important form of social interaction. However, it may still remain a matter of debate whether to call internet addiction a distinct disorder by itself or a behavioral problem secondary to another disorder. But at present, it is not medically or psychologically accepted criteria to diagnose or label internet addiction. Whether or not we will have any such diagnosis included in the future is yet to be seen. In future, if it is added, more likely to be categorized as a compulsion control disorders rather than in the diagnostic criteria for substance dependence. By reviewing the association of internet usage and its effects on human behavior, we can formulate interventions like setting boundaries and detecting early warning signs of underlying psychopathology at the earliest.

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