IMPACT OF INTERNET ADDICTION ON MENTAL HEALTH OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to know the impact of internet addiction on general health of college students and also found its relationship with general health of college going students. The present research is a descriptive survey method. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The sample comprised 108 college students of three colleges of Bangalore city. The sample included 50 male and 58 female. Internet Addiction Scale (1996) developed by Dr. Kimberly Young was used in the present study to measure internet addiction of college students. The General health Questionnaire-28(GHQ) was developed by devised by David Goldberg and Paul Williams was used to assess the general health of college students. The Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation and independent 't' test was used. The level of significance was fixed at 0.05 level. The correlation result shows negative relationship between general health and internet addiction of college students. The said factors are associated with each other and the result shows that internet addiction affected negatively on health of the students. From the 't' test examination this was also found significant difference in the general health due to variations in the levels of addiction towards internet. Social interactions, playing sports and practice of yoga should be suggested to overcome internet addiction in the childhood itself

Index Terms - Mental Health, Internet Addiction, college students, significance

INTRODUCTION

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. This can lead to an Internet or computer addiction. Internet addiction is a common problem in university students and negatively affects cognitive functioning, leads to poor academic performance and engagement in hazardous activities, and may lead to anxiety and stress. Behavioral addictions operate on a modified principle of the classic addiction model. Internet is being integrated as a part of day-to-day life because the usage of the Internet has been growing explosively worldwide. It has dramatically changed the current communication scenario, and there has been a considerable increase in the number of Internet users worldwide in the last decade

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. 'Internet Addiction' is extreme PC utilize that meddles with every day life of an individual. Anderson (2001) explored on Internet use among understudies. Youthful and Rodgers (1998); Morgan and Cotten (2003) discovered connections between Internet Activities and Depressive Symptoms in a Sample of College Freshmen. Kanwal and Archana (2003) considered Internet Addiction in understudies: a reason for concern. People are being more conscious towards their health and fitness as time changes. Everybody is doing lots of struggle on daily basis to achieve a perfect body. Getting healthy and fit body and mind requires lots of patience, time, commitment, goal, believe, and a strong mind to face all the struggles. Some people have ability to maintain fitness on their own however some need a good qualified personal trainer to take care of the daily exercises and diet. It is proved with studies that people who are more fit and healthy achieve greater success in life.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

A person with good health and fitness becomes able to live his/her life to its fullest extent. It is very important for a person in life to be physically and mentally fit to live a healthy and happy life. Healthy and fit people become less prone to the medical conditions. Fitness does not mean to be physically fit only, it also means with healthy mental state of the person. One can get healthy mental state if he/she becomes physically fit. The simple way to remain healthy and fit is having stress free mind with regular exercise and balanced diet. People who maintain their ideal weight become less prone to the cardiac and other health problems. People who are physically active can easily maintain a relaxed state of mind. Healthy and fit people can easily face all

the ups and downs of their life and less affected by any drastic change. Internet addiction is a behavioral addiction in which a person becomes dependent on use of the Internet, or other online devices, as a maladaptive way of coping with life's stresses. Internet addiction is becoming widely recognized and acknowledged, particularly in India and other developing countries. Exploration on internet addiction exhibited that the more prominent utilization of the internet is related for certain friendly and psychological factors, for example, decrease in the size of group of friends, gloom, forlornness (Kraut et al) lower confidence and life fulfillment (Ko, Yen Chen et al. 2005), sensation chasing (Lin and Tsai 2002), poor psychological wellness (Mang, 2001; Young and Rogers, 1998), and low family work. The reason for this investigation will know the situation with general health of college students with regard to internet addiction..

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"IMPACT OF INTERNET ADDICTION ON MENTAL HEALTH OF COLLEGE STUDENTS"

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the level of internet addiction among college students.

2. To examine the general health of college students.

3. To find out the relationship between Internet Addiction and General Health of college students.

4. To find out differences in the General Health of college students related to sex and internet addiction levels.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses are formulated for empirical research.

1. There is no significant relationship between Internet Addiction and General Health of college students.

2. There is no significant difference in the General Health between college male and female students.

3. There is no significant difference in the General Health of college students having different levels of internet addiction.

METHODOLOGY

1. **Research Design:** The present research is a descriptive survey method

2. **Operational Definitions:** The following terms have been used in the study.

   Internet Addiction: Internet Addiction defined as "an uncontrollable desire for excessive use of the Internet, devaluation of time spent without connecting to the internet, intense nervousness and aggression in the case of deprivation and progressive deterioration of social and family life."

   General Health: It is defined as "a person's health is the condition of their body and the extent to which it is free from illness or is able to resist illness." In the present study, it was used to detecting distress among students in terms of somatic, anxiety/insomnia, social dysfunction and severe depression

3. **Variables of the Study:** The following variables were treated for the study:

   A. Dependent Variable : General Health

   B. Independent Variable : Internet Addiction

   C. Moderate Variable : Sex

4. **Sample of the Study:** A simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The sample comprised 108 college students of three pre university colleges of Bangalore city. The sample included 50 male and 58 female.

5. **Tools of Research:** The following tools were utilized for data collection.

Internet Addiction Scale: Internet Addiction Scale (1996) developed by Dr. Kimberly Young was used in the present study to measure internet addiction of college students. The Internet Addiction scale consists of 20 items scored on a 6-point scale, namely Does not apply (0), Rarely (1), Occasionally (2), Frequently (3), Often (4), Always (5). The test – retest reliability of coefficient was 0.81. The tool was content validated by experts in the specialized field.

General Health Questionnaire: The General health Questionnaire-28(GHQ) was developed by devised by David Goldberg and Paul Williams was used to assess the general health of college students. This questionnaire consisted of 28 items distributed over 4 dimensions namely 1. Somatic; Anxiety/insomnia; social dysfunctioning; and severe depression. These items are followed by four options that is not at all (0), no more than usual (1), rather more than usual (2) and much more than usual (3). The reliability of coefficient was found to be 0.75.

6. **Statistical Techniques used to Analyze the Data:** The Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation and independent 't' test was used. The level of significance was fixed at 0.05 level.

RESULTS

A) **Correlation Results**

The data was analyzed by computing coefficient of correlation in the following table along with graphical presentation.

Table-1

Karl Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation and its significance between General Health and Internet Addiction of college students (N=70 and df=68).

Variables	'r' value	Tabled Value	Level of Sig.
General Health and Internet Addiction	0.521	0.195 (0.05)	Significant at 0.05 level

This table explores that the obtained 'r' value -0.521 is greater than the table value 0.195 at 0.05 level of significance, therefore the stated hypothesis has been rejected and an alternate hypothesis has been formulated that "there was a significant negative relationship between General Health and Internet Addiction of college students." The 'r' value is indicate negative indication this may be due to the general health question indicates higher the scores high distress/disorders and in internet addiction questionnaire indicates higher the scores higher addiction.

B) **'t' test Results**

Table-2

Table shows independent 't' test results related to General Health scores of college students over sex.

Sex	Number	Mean scores	Std. Deviation	't' value	Sig. Level
Male	50	33.980	11.701	0.40	NS
Female	58	32.931	15.142		

NS=Not Significant

Table-2 reveals that the calculated 't' value 0.40 is less than the table value 1.99 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is found that "there was no significant difference in the General Health between male and female college students"

Table-3

Independent 't' test results related to General Health scores of college students due to variations in the levels of internet addiction

Levels of Internet Addiction		Number	Mean scores	Standard Deviation	't' value	Sig. Level
A group	Low	8	17.000	7.855	5.49	Sig. at 0.05 level
	Moderate	91	33.857	12.477		
B group	Moderate	91	33.857	12.477	1.68	Not Significant
	High	9	43.555	16.830		
C Group	Low	8	17.000	7.855	4.24	Sig. at 0.05 level
	High	9	43.555	16.830		

From the table it shows that the calculated 't' value 5.49 is greater than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it was found that "there is a significant difference in the General Health of college students who had low and moderate level of internet addiction." The table shows that students who had low addicted (M=17.000) had better health when compared with students who had moderate (M=33.857) addiction to the internet. The GHQ higher score indicates distress.

The calculated 't' value 1.68 is less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is found that "there is no significant difference in the General Health of college students who had moderate and high levels of internet addiction."

The calculated 't' value 4.24 is greater than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is found that "there is a significant difference in the General Health of college students who had low and high levels of internet addiction towards internet usage." The table concludes that students who had low addicted (M=17.000) had better health when compared with students who had high (M=43.555) addiction to the internet. The GHQ higher score indicates distress.

FINDINGS OF STUDY

1. There was a significant negative relationship between General Health and Internet Addiction perceived by students

2. There was no significant difference in the General Health between male and female college students.

3. There was a significant difference in the General Health of college students who had low and moderate levels of internet addiction.

4. There was no significant difference in the General Health of college students who had moderate and high levels of internet addiction.

5. There was a significant difference in the General Health of college students who had low and high levels of internet addiction.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The correlation result shows negative relationship between general health and internet addiction of college students. The said factors are associated with each other and the result shows that internet addiction affected negatively on health of the students. From the 't' test examination this was also found significant difference in the general health due to variations in the levels of addiction towards internet. Further the result also shows that there was no significant difference in the male and female student's general health.. The study suggests that parents should monitor regularly towards usage of internet by their children. Teachers and parents should monitor the time spent over internet regularly. Parents should encourage their children to utilize limited internet for academic purpose. Social interactions, playing sports and practice of yoga should be suggested to overcome internet addiction in the childhood itself.

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