

Internet Addiction and Quality of Life among Young Adults: An Exploratory Study

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ABSTRACT

Use of internet facility has increased in recent few years. It has observed that mostly youngsters have been affected from recent development of information and communication technology (Maurya et al., 2018). The present study explores the impact of excessive use of internet on quality of life of young adults. A sample of 60 young adults has been selected from Delhi/NCR region out of 60, 23 individuals fulfilled the criteria of internet addiction. A personal data sheet consisting age, gender, religion, education etc., and Internet Addiction Test (IAT) was used as a screening test followed by WHO Quality of Life Scale BREF (WHOQOL BREEF). Findings suggested that there is no significant difference in patterns to use of internet among young adults male and female. Findings of the present study also depicted negative correlation between addiction and quality of life which may clinically significant but not statistically proven. Thus, it can be noted that internet use is not only the sole predictor of influencing one's quality of life.

Keywords: *Quality of life, Internet Addiction, Young Adults*

Internet has become an important tool for education, entertainment, and information-sharing. In tandem with indulge in access to the globally, the risk of "Internet addiction" is raising as a significant behavioural addiction pandemic (Bharwaj, & Rai, 2018). Hence in present scenario internet has become a necessity for all age groups as it is used for information seeking, easy social connectivity and pleasure as well as professional work. Children use it for learning and play time as most schools used technology for teaching children, young adults use internet usually for reports writing, making presentations, chatting and other leisure activities and older adults' internet for their job purposes. Nevertheless, now a day's

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people use internet for food recipes, creative ideas, online shopping, etc. Internet has become integral part of every individual's life hence it has both positive and negative aspects according to the time spend and use we do from it.

The vast network offers numbers of advantages and features for personal, professional and social awareness. People are also reporting that increased use internet is good realm for the fast moving and developing nations. Some are seeing internet as a positive influencer for political and social activities as well.

Another benefit of internet are the awareness programs and articles about health, social activities, political activities or any issue affecting the society gain great popularity and people support such events which is contributing for the betterment of the society directly or indirectly. Studies found that internet helps in maintain personal relationship and self – disclosure and helps in positive well-being of individual (Baker and Moore, 2008).

Internet and social media are doing more harm than good according to the surveys reports by people in the past few years. At the most risk is the younger generation includes children, adolescent and young adults who are prone to the ill effects and negative consequences of internet. Researchers have found that there is negative impact of internet usages such as physical problems, psychological problems, behavioral problems, interpersonal; problems and work problems (Alam and Hasim et.al.2014). Another research depicted that the advancement of information and communication technologies are enhancing individual's performance but simultaneously reducing their self-abilities, self confidence and memory and developing dependency which is the dark site of it. It needs to be handled carefully before it became harmful for the individual and society (Maurya et al. 2018).

Sites that contains sexual materials (porn sites),cyber bullying, communicating to strangers, posting personal details and pictures are some of the activities that can lead the young ones as well as their family into trouble as many kidnapping and black mailing are happening due to internet and social sites only. A web based survey of over 1000 high school students found that 72% of respondents reported at least one incident of online bullying (Jovunenand Gross, 2008).

Internet addiction is a broad concept. Today there is neither a conclusive nor a consistent definition for this disorder. Despite efforts made to reach one information, and inclusion in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5 (DSM5), the authoritative guidebook for the diagnosis of psychiatric disorder by American Psychiatric Association, difficulty establishing a coherent picture for this disorder is often encountered by researchers and clinicians (Block, 2008). Ivan Goldberg 1995 was first person who proposed internet addiction as a disorder. Young 1996 proposed diagnostic criteria for internet addiction disorder. She identified major symptoms: (1) Preoccupations with use of internet. (2) Previously fails personal attempt to cut or stop internet use. (3) Losing track of time on the internet. (4) Is restless, moody, depressed or irritable when putting cut down or stops internet use. (5) Has stayed longer than original intended. (6) Putat risk important responsibilities, serious relationship or

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advancement opportunities. (7) Lying about the use of internet and time spent on internet activity (8) Using the internet activity as a means of escaping problems.

If someone has five or more symptoms in out of eight, the person comes under the internet addiction disorder which further leads many other psychological, physical, social and occupational problems which are the part of individual's quality of life

The World Health Organization defines Quality of life as “an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. It is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and their relationship to salient features of their environment”(Oort, 2005).

The quality of life consist of physical, psychological, social and environment aspects of life and excessive use of internet is a new problem which is arising among adolescence and young adult effecting all the areas of life starting from physical to psychological such as sleep patterns, relationship, mind activities, thinking, body etc. and hence it is very important to focus on their life style and living patterns.

Quality of life is a complex collection of interacting objective and subjective dimensions (Lawton, 1991). Young generation consist of young adults, adolescence and children are more prone to ill effects of life style and habits which are contributing to negative aspects of their life. And youngsters nowadays are more prone to the excessive usage of internet and technology for personal as well as professional works which is hampering their relationships, physical and mental health.

Over all, internet and information technology helps to reduced physical activities, decreased financial expenses, reduced pollutions, save environment, time, money and energy of individual while it also make easy to communicate with others, enhance social networking, new relationship, maintain relationship, marriage, shopping, learning, teaching, training, supervision, information sharing, tracking the place and person, courier and career etc. which is basic need of individual's life and life style. In the process of taking help and making easy their life individual adopt internet knowingly or unknowingly as a necessary part of life which helps to improve their quality of life but it sexcessiveor unhealthy use effects negatively their life such as increased virtual life instead of real life, physical and mental health problems, interpersonal relationship problems, communication pattern, miscommunication and misperception, marital discords, offending behaviors, terrorism, decreased face to face communication, self-skills and cognitive abilities etc. which is decrease quality of life in later stage of life.

Internet influenced individual's life positively and negatively both but pathological use of internet is always harmful and develops many psychological problems. Young (1996)

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reported internet addiction is a kind of disorder which affects individuals personal social and professional functioning. Prabhakaran, et al., (2016) conducted a study on 724 adolescents of Vadodara, in his survey he found that internet use for online friendships to be a significant predictor of IA and internet use for searching information was found to be protective against IA. Conclusions: IA is prevalent in the adolescent population and requires awareness and intervention. Characteristics of internet usage found to be associated with IA needs to be considered while developing strategies for interventions.

Liang (2011) explored the relationship between the use of Internet services and quality of life in Taiwan. The study revealed that broadband, wireless, and mobile Internet is found to be positively correlated with the people's overall quality of life. People using more Internet services in their daily activities also have higher self-esteem and less psychological pressures. However, people involves more on internet services for e shopping, tickets booking etc. they are less satisfied with community support.

Sugiyama et al., (2009) investigated the associations of leisure-time spend on internet and computer use with overweight and obesity, leisure-time physical activity, and other sedentary behaviors. 2650 adults living in Adelaide, they suggested that participants with low leisure-time on internet and computer use had the highest levels of educational attainment and employment, and engaged in less other sedentary behaviors when compared to participants with high Internet and computer use.

Elizabeth, and Clark, (2008) examined the relationship between quantity of internet use and the common concerns of college students. They depicted that male students who were online more than 10 hours per week expressed significantly less concern about their emerging role definitions and autonomy and female students who used the Internet for more than 10 hours per week reported significantly less concern about being sad or depressed.

Aim: To study the effect of excessive internet usage on quality of life of young adults: males and females.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The sample comprised of 60 young adults further classified into two groups: male(n=30) and female (n=30) in the age range of 18-23 years, respectively. Participants were chosen from Delhi/National Capital Region (NCR).

Measurements

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

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WHO Quality of Life (WHOQOL-BREF):The WHOQOL-BREF-quality of Life Scale is developed by World Health Organization to assess the health related quality of life of people. This test is a revised version of WHO-quality of life scale which consists of 100 items. The revised version has 26 item in total, out of which first 2 items assess the overall quality of life and the rest 24 items measures the individual overall perception towards his quality of life on different domains , physical health, social relationships, psychological and environment.

Procedure

All the participants were informed that information provided by them will be used only for research purposes and not be misused by any other way. Personal schedule was also attached to the questionnaires to know the family status, parent’s occupation, gender and level of internet usage by each participant and their consent was taken for the participation in the study. After taken consent the Internet Addiction Test was administered on young adults to found their level of internet usage. Out of 60 participants 23 were meet the criteria of internet addiction as per the cut off scores of the test. WHO-BREF Quality of Life Scale was administered those participants for assess their quality of life.

RESULTS

Table : 1

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-value	P
Females Internet Usage	30	75.86	7.61	-0.472	Insig.
Male Internet Usage	30	76.73	6.56		

Above table indicates the no difference between the Internet usage of males and females young adults as the value of ($t = -0.47$) at 0.1 level.

Table:2

Variables	N	Correlation		P
		IA	QoL	
Internet Addiction	23	1		Insig.
Quality Of Life	23			
		-.219	1	

From the above table it can be seen the relationship between Internet addiction behaviour and Quality of Life are insignificant as ($r = -.219$).

Table:3

Mann - Whitney Test					
		Z-test			
		N	Mean	SD	Z
QOL	Female	11	55.81	5.94	-2.56
QOL	Male	12	62.25	6.34	

Above table indicates the non- significant difference between the females and males young adults quality of life as the value of ($Z = -.219$).

DISCUSSION

Present study was aimed to explore the effect of excessive of internet on the quality of life of young adults male & female. Table 1. Shows that mean score of internet use is bit higher than female participants but it is not statistically significant. Study the finding suggests that there is no significant difference found between the patterns to use of internet among young adults male and female, similar finding is reported by Maurya et al., (2018).

Researches also show that internet was dominated by men in its early days, but by 2000 and continuing on to today, the user population has been evenly divided between men and women. Further, the proportion of women online is nearly equal to that of men (Deborah, 2005). Among college students, it was investigated that “males and females students use the internet equally often, but used it differently”. Females used e-mail more than did males; males used the Web more than did females (Jackson, 2001). Noted that males and females exhibited similar academic uses of the Internet, and also similar rates of e-mail use, although male college students are more likely to use the Internet as a source of entertainment, while female college students are more likely to go online for communicative and educational purposes (Fortson, et al., 2007).

Table 2. shows correlation between excessive use of internet and quality of life young adults result depicts that negative correlation between these two variable which may consider on the clinical background but it is not significant on the statistical ground previous studies also reported the similar results. (Gupta & Sharma, 2016) has conducted a study in Delhi NCR they sated that excessive use of internet has no effect on quality of life. It should be considered that internet use not always have ill effect on quality of life among people, nevertheless internet related activities are proved to be beneficial for college students (Shields, 2011). Literatures have also found that internet is not the sole predictor of influencing quality of life but there is other factor also that affects one's life quality spheres.

Result of the current study also reveals quality of life of male and female participants Table3. Means score of Quality of life is higher than the female participants but current result is not statistically proven. Kaur (2018) found the female higher on internet addiction were lower on perceived self-efficacy. Homs (2008) identified the relation between internet addiction and social interaction skills and reported significant difference between male and female, female with internet addiction were poor in social interaction. In another research Armum and Chellappan (2016) have indicated that female participants had lower level of self-efficacy and emotional efficacy in comparison to their male counter parts. Information technologies make students not just to consume technology but also lead them to produce it. Shortly, spending long hours during online might be helpful for young to make some contributions to their knowledge about information technologies and unlike some people's prejudices, surfing internet is not totally waste of time for students but more or less a productive facility (Deniz,2015).

CONCLUSION

In today's life style and need of using internet, no difference has been found in internet activities of males and females. Quality of life is negatively correlated with excessive use of internet but is not significant. Thus, it can be concluded that internet usage is not a only sole predictor of influencing the quality of life of individual's if they use in healthy manner but it is difficult to generalized the finding of present study on whole population because of small sample size. Although it's needed to explore further on larger sample but the study findings provides future direction to think and identify the relationship between internet addiction and quality of life and also to identify the factor influencing quality of life among people suffering with internet addiction disorder.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors colorfully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

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