

## Consequences of Internet Addiction Among Adolescents

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### ABSTRACT

The Internet has become the global agent in the world of Information Technology. Nowadays it has become an essential part of an individual's life. It is helpful in every possible way whether it's positive or negative. It is giving comfort to the individuals as well as also making them a procrastinator and leading them to a path of addiction, commonly known as Internet Addiction. One of the reasons behind Internet addiction is the family environment as well as the parenting styles. Authoritative type of parenting styles is leading them to internet addiction as they are not having a cordial relationship with their parents and leading them to an identity crisis as they are compelled to behave according to the world of the Internet. Additionally, internet addiction is linked positively with aggression among individuals.

**Keywords:** *Internet, Internet Addiction, Family Environment, Parenting styles, Identity Crisis, Aggression, Adolescents*

Back in the '80s or 90's people used to communicate with letters or telephones, there was no source of communication. In today's world, the Internet has become one of the most important or vigorous aspects of a person's life. The Internet has become the most significant mediator in the Information Technology era, having a major influence on daily human existence, while the Internet is a great tool and can be used to make life easier. The internet has good qualities as well as bad qualities to it. But it seems that the good qualities outweigh the bad qualities most of the time. At the same time, the bad qualities may seem small, but they can cause great problems. The internet has some good qualities to its users like you can stay in connect with your near and dear ones. The internet has made the world look so small and everyone closer than before. Despite the many good qualities concerning the internet, there are some bad qualities concerning the internet as well. And one such bad quality is leading to addiction whether addiction to bad behaviours like gambling addiction, pornography, excessive use of social network sites, all these are leading to Internet Addiction. Internet addiction has emerged as a novel type of addiction that has gripped people around the world. People belonging to different age groups are coming under its radar, though it's more predominant among the youth. People access the Internet to kill boredom, find a way out of loneliness, or simply to have some fun in their lives. However, before they know it, they are hooked to it.

The term Internet Addiction has emerged newly in the town where there are no such definitions given by the Organization. No such exact definitions of Internet addiction are

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mentioned in the DSM-V nor in the World Health Organization (WHO). From 2G connectivity to 4G connectivity, it has come a long way and has turned the table by becoming the essential part of an individual and leading to Internet addiction. According to WHO, Internet Addiction is characterized by excessive or poorly controlled preoccupations, urges, or behaviours regarding Internet use that led to impairments or distress. This includes problematic Internet use, screen addiction, online gaming disorder, etc.

The family has an important role in influencing the socialization of adolescents. Family plays a protective factor in preventing adolescents from taking part in problematic and hazardous behaviors. Parental monitoring and parental style are the most common parental skills in the daily life of adolescents, rather than paying specific attention to particular types of adolescent activities. Family is a simple but yet tough to define the construct, many fields have their own definitions. A family is a group of two or more people who define themselves as related by blood, marriage, or some other bond. One of the important components of the family is a family environment which involves the circumstances and social climate conditions within families. It is a very integral process of every child's upbringing, with positive and negative influences. In particular, there's a burgeoning quantity of studies that specialize in own circle of family environment on adolescents Internet Addiction behaviors. Another important factor that plays an important role in the development of the child is the parenting style. Parenting styles are of different types:

- **Authoritarian type:** This type of parent values obedience. The type of parenting style has full command of their children's as well as on their day-to-day activities. In this type of parenting style, rules are made by their parents which are very clear and unbending.
- **Permissive type:** In this type of parenting style, instead of following the strict rules of parents, children are encouraged to take their own decisions instead of being spoon feeder. Parents take a hands-off approach i.e., allowing the children to learn from the consequences of their actions.
- **Uninvolved type:** In this type of parenting style, parents give full freedom to their children. They permit their children to do whatever they want to do and whenever they want to do it. There is no such pressure from their parents.
- **Authoritative type:** In this type of parenting style, parents establish basic guidelines for children. Here, parents clarify issues and also help them in taking responsibility and also helping them in coping with the consequences of their actions.

The latest systematic study found out that the parent-child relationship, as well as the family environment, are continuously related to Internet Adolescents amongst adolescents. In phrases of parenting, maladaptive parenting, such as indulgence, over-involvement, punitive disciplinary methods, common rejection, and occasional stages of heat are associated with the incidence of adolescents' complex Internet use. Addiction to the internet is common among young people, particularly college students. College students typically have unrestricted Internet access, flexible schedules, and are free of parental influence. They utilize the Internet to do things like study, play games, socialize, gamble, chat, shop, and watch pornographic movies.

Acceptance of physical changes, as well as the development of social and emotional competencies and self-efficacy, are all part of self-concept formation, also known as personal identity formation, as a major developmental task in adolescence. Individuals with Internet Addiction are shown to have severe deficiencies in self-concept construction when

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compared to those without. Low self-esteem, indecisiveness, inability to concentrate on required or suggested tasks, confusion about future aims, an ambiguous description of self, and difficulties engaging in personal relationships are all symptoms of a self-concept deficit. Identity Crisis is a period of uncertainty and confusion in which a person's sense of identity becomes insecure, typically due to a change in their expected aims or role in society. An identity crisis is a developmental event that involves a person questioning their sense of self or place in the world. The concept originates in the work of developmental psychologist Erik Erikson, who believed that the formation of identity was one of the most important conflicts that people face. According to Erikson, an identity crisis is a time of intensive analysis and exploration of different ways of looking at oneself.

Another aspect that is affecting or troubling the livelihood of teenagers is Aggression. Aggression is basically hostile behaviour or hurting others mentally or physically. There may be several other definitions for aggression such as, according to Buss it is a type of reaction that delivers toxic stimuli to other organisms (as cited in Geen & Donnerstein, 1998). According to Berkowitz (1968), people use the term “aggression” to explicate any behaviour which objective is to damage other people or things. The term “aggression” may be defined as any act that can cause suffering or antipathy to an individual.

According to Moyer aggression is a universal phenomenon and it is of various kinds. Almost all animal species portrays violent acts, for instance, territorial aggressive behavior, predatory aggression, and maternal aggressive acts (as cited in Hayes, 1994). Maguire and Pastore mentioned in 1998 that violence is one of the most dominant and negative behaviors that adolescents face at present because they are at particular danger of being either the prey or the committer of an act of hostility (as cited in Orpinas, 2001)

### *Objectives*

- To study the relationship of family environment, parenting styles of Internet Addiction among adolescents.
- To study the relationship between the Identity Crisis, Aggression, and Internet Addiction among Adolescents.

## **DISCUSSION**

Internet addiction is one of the leading issues in today's era which is leading to distortion in an individual's life socially, psychologically as well personally. It is affecting individuals in every possible way. A research study also viewed that the Family conflict and over-protection of the children can lead to Internet Addiction, this results in isolation with the environment as well as getting more closer to the Digital world. According to the developmental version of adolescent trouble behaviours family environment with excessive degrees of conflict have been the probable reason that is creating a havoc condition in adolescents' lifestyle and also inadequate parental monitoring and over parental monitoring can also leads the adolescents to the path of Internet Addiction Researches also suggests that authoritative parenting style can also be one of the reasons that are leading to Internet Addiction among adolescents.

The Internet offers the medium to explore personal goals, beliefs, and values, but the Internet is often used as a means of fleeing from the common daily problems arising from self-identity confusion by college students.

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Second, according to the self-concept fragmentation hypothesis, the online environment provides a conducive environment for college students with self-identity confusion to use their different personalities to interact with others and such students feel more comfortable when interacting on the various online platforms than the real-world interaction. Third, these online platforms also provide the required advice and suggestion to young adults with self-identity confusion from the other young adults with self-identity confusion on issues related to developing self-identity during adolescence. Although college students may use the Internet as a tool to develop their self-identity, Internet Addiction may limit real-world interaction and therefore slow the development of self-identity. The other finding indicates the presence of anger, physical aggression, hostility, and verbal aggression due to smartphone addiction whereas nomophobia only indicates the presence of anger. Augner and Hacker (2012) and Hong, Chiu, and Huang (2012) depicted a relationship between problematic phone use and psychological conditions such as mental depression, introversion, and anxiety. In another study by Boumosleh and Jaalouk (2017), it was shown that type A personality with aggressive features and smartphone addiction are positively related.

### CONCLUSION

Internet eases the lives of humans, as it provides work and as well as leisure depending on the need of the individuals. In other words, internet technology is useful but at the same time, it has some drawbacks. One of the drawbacks that it causes is the Identity Crisis of an individual and another is disconnecting from their social life. Family functionality as well as the parenting style plays an important role in an adolescent's life. The protective nature of parents towards their adolescents gives a warm environment like spending their leisure time, being aware of their adolescent's day to day activities and also adolescents feel free to share their problems because of the cordial environment. Overprotective behaviours of parents and control over their children also lead to Internet addiction in adolescents. Another issue that is being faced by the individual is the Identity Crisis. The excessive use of the internet may compel to lead a person to adopt another identity or persona in virtual reality which differs from the real identity which creates a conflict between their real identity and virtual identity. The person always tries to hide their real identity and always tries to be presented anonymously online in a decent manner in their virtual world. In essence, understanding identity relates to the understanding of one's self, and getting addicted to Internet persons are losing their true individuality.

Another study revealed that self-identity confusion was directly related to Internet Addiction and it should be taken into consideration by the professionals working and also should find a way for the prevention of Internet Addiction.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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