

Relationship between Internet Addiction and Self esteem

Ms. Keerthika K^{1*}, Dr. Molly Joy²

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Internet addiction and self-esteem among young adults in Bangalore, India. A correlational research design was used, and data was collected from 90 young adults ranging in age from 17 to 25 years. The two variables were assessed using the Young's Internet Addiction Scale and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. SPSS software was used for descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The results revealed a weak negative correlation between Internet addiction and self-esteem, implying that those with higher levels of Internet addiction had lower levels of self-esteem.

Keywords: *Internet Addiction, Self-Esteem*

The term "internet addiction" refers to the excessive and unchecked use of the Internet, which may be detrimental to one's mental health. However, there isn't a definite agreement on how to diagnose it. Five categories can be used to categorize empirical research on Internet addiction: survey studies comparing excessive and non-excessive Internet users; studies of vulnerable groups; studies of the psychometric characteristics of excessive Internet use; case studies of excessive Internet users; studies looking at the correlations between excessive Internet use and other behaviors; and studies of treatment outcomes (Laura Widyanto & Mark Griffiths, 2006). Some researchers, like Davis, prefer the term "pathological internet use" (PIU) to "Internet addiction" and propose it as a replacement (Goel.D., Subramanyam. A., and Kamath. R., 2013). Although it is unknown what specific aspect of the Internet some people are addicted to, there are several different types of internet addiction, including cyber-sex addiction, cyber-relationship addiction, net compulsions, information overload, and computer addiction (Goel.D., Subramanyam.A., and Kamath.R.,2013). Several tests, including the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) created by Young in 1998, have been developed to diagnose internet addiction. With a range of 20 to 100 possible scores, the IAT scale has shown to have very good internal consistency. Internet users can be divided into three groups based on Young's original criteria: moderate users, potential addicts, and addicts. People who fall closer to the addict end of the spectrum report having high levels of anxiety and depression (Goel.D., Subramanyam.A., and Kamath.R.,2013). To ensure that people receive the proper care, it is crucial to distinguish between excessive internet use and addiction and to be aware of any psychopathology associated with internet use (Goel.D., Subramanyam.A., and Kamath.R.,2013).

¹Msc. Clinical Psychology Student, Department of Psychology, Kristu Jayanti College, Bangalore

²Head of department, Department of Psychology, Kristu Jayanti College, Bangalore

*Corresponding Author

Received: May 25, 2023; Revision Received: June 04, 2023; Accepted: June 7, 2023

Relationship between Internet Addiction and Self esteem

Self-esteem on the other hand is a psychological concept that expresses a person's opinion of their own value (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021). In contrast to those who have low self-esteem, who may feel inadequate and self-conscious, those who have high self-esteem believe they are valuable and deserving of respect. Self-esteem has been demonstrated to have a protective effect against depression, with high self-esteem being associated with a lower risk of depression (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021). On the other hand, low self-esteem has been associated with a higher risk of depression in adolescents (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021). Self-esteem and psychopathology are closely related, and varying levels of self-esteem can lead to self-doubt, addictive personality traits, a sense of powerlessness, and feelings of failure (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021). An individual's perception of themselves can be used to gauge their level of self-esteem, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a popular tool for this. With a higher score indicating higher self-esteem, this 10-item self-administered questionnaire (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021) measures a person's attitude toward themselves. The scale has both positive and negative items, representing, respectively, high and low self-esteem (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021). Another survey that gauges self-esteem is the Cooper Smith Self-Esteem Scale. Eight of the 58 items on this scale are lie detectors, and the remaining 50 items are broken down into four subscales: general, social, family, and educational self-esteem (Bahrainian, S.,Alizadeh, K.,Raeisoon, M., 2014). Both the Cooper Smith and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scales have had their validity and reliability established in earlier studies (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021)(Bahrainian, S.,Alizadeh, K.,Raeisoon, M., 2014). Self-esteem is crucial for both managing and preventing internet addiction (IA) in medical students. Higher levels of self-esteem are associated with a lower risk of IA development, and previous studies have linked lower levels of self-esteem to more severe Internet Addiction. The prevention and management of Internet Addiction in medical students may benefit significantly from boosting self-esteem, as this is a factor that may play a role in these processes (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021).

Examining the link between internet addiction and self-esteem has been the focus of recent research. Self-esteem is an important psychosocial factor that can affect whether or not there is an internet addiction (Seo, E.,Kim, S.,Lee, S.,Park, S., 2021). Self-esteem is a significant contributor to internet addiction, according to a study that found all SCL-90 subscale scores and the RSES subscale scores to explain 25% of IAS scores (Budak, E.,Taymur, I.,Askin, R.,Gungor,B., 2015). Additionally, there was a strong positive correlation between self-esteem as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the severity of internet addiction as measured by the Internet Addiction Scale (IAS) (Budak, E.,Taymur, I.,Askin, R.,Gungor,B., 2015). Self-esteem tends to decline as internet addiction gets worse, creating a vicious cycle of addiction and low self-esteem. This relationship between internet addiction and self-esteem emphasizes how crucial it is to take both aspects into account in any treatment or intervention program for people who are struggling with internet addiction. In order to stop the onset and progression of internet addiction in vulnerable individuals, it is imperative to identify and treat any potential underlying causes of low self-esteem. This study aims to investigate the link between young adults' Internet addiction and self-esteem, looking at the direction and strength of the association as well as any potential gender differences. We may be able to create more efficient strategies to prevent and address Internet addiction and its associated negative outcomes by better understanding the relationship between these constructs.

METHOD

Problem Statement

In the contemporary world, the internet has become an integral part of our daily lives. From communication to information gathering and entertainment, the internet provides numerous benefits to users. However, with its widespread use, the concept of internet addiction has emerged as a concern. Internet addiction refers to the compulsive use of the Internet, leading to negative consequences such as interference with daily activities, social relationships, and mental health. Studies have shown that self-esteem, which refers to an individual's evaluation of their self-worth, plays a crucial role in determining their vulnerability to Internet addiction. Individuals with low self-esteem may turn to the Internet as a means of escaping their problems or seeking validation. Therefore, in order to better understand the connection between Internet addiction and self-esteem, this study is being conducted.

Objective of the Study

To study the relationship between Internet addiction and self-esteem among young adults.

Research Design

Correlational research design has been used in the study. According to Artem Cheprasov (2018) correlational research design is where a researcher seeks to understand what kind of relationships naturally occurring variables have with one another.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant relationship between Internet addiction and self esteem.

Variables

Internet Addiction- Young's Internet Addiction Scale by Dr. Kimberly Young (1998)
Self-esteem- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale by Morris Rosenberg (1965)

Sample

The population for the sample was young adults from Bangalore. The sample for the study comprised of 90 young adults which included 27 males and 63 females. The age range was from 17 to 25 yrs. Simple random sampling technique was used for collecting the samples for the study.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The sample was collected from the different states of India. The sample was obtained from college students and office workers in age group of 17 to 25 yrs. The samples were collected from literate people from the different states of India. The sample from outside India was excluded from the study. The study excluded the data from all other age groups other than young adults.

Statistical Analysis

SPSS was used to analyze Descriptive Statistics and Correlation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table showing the descriptive statistics for the variables

Variables	N	Minimum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Self-esteem	90	16	39	5.002	25.016
Internet Addiction	90	5	68	13.324	177.534
Age	90	17	25	1.728	2.987
Valid N (listwise)	90				

From table 1 we can see that the sample consists of 90 participants, with a mean of 1.30 on the Gender variable. Since the variable was coded as 1 for female and 2 for male, this suggests that there were more females than males in the sample. The sample has a mean of 37.17 on the Internet addiction variable which shows the sample group has mild level of internet addiction, with a range of scores from 5 to 68 which. The standard deviation of 13.324 indicates that there is some variability in the scores, but the variance of 177.534 indicates that there is a relatively large amount of spread in the data. The sample has a mean of 27.92 on the self-esteem variable which shows that the sample group has normal range of self-esteem, with a range of scores from 16 to 39. The standard deviation of 5.002 indicates that there is some variability in the scores, but the variance of 25.016 indicates that there is not as much spread in the data as there is for the Internet addiction variable. The sample has a mean age of 21.84 years, with a range of ages from 17 to 25. The standard deviation of 1.728 indicates that there is some variability in the ages of the participants, but the variance of 2.987 indicates that there is not as much spread in the data as there is for the Internet addiction variable. Overall, these descriptive statistics provide a basic overview of the sample and the variables of interest.

Table showing the correlation between Internet Addiction and Self-esteem

Variables		Inter	Internet addiction
Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.301**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		0.002
	N	90	90
Internet Addiction	Pearson Correlation	-301**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.002	
	N	90	90

***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)*

From table 2 we can see that Internet addiction and self-esteem have a negative correlation of -0.301, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, the strength of this correlation is considered weak to moderate. A weak negative correlation indicates that there is a slight tendency for those with higher levels of Internet addiction to have lower levels of self-esteem, and vice versa for those with lower levels of Internet addiction. In other words, self-

Relationship between Internet Addiction and Self esteem

esteem decreases as internet addiction increases but the relationship between these two are minimal. Problematic internet use was found to be significantly associated with lower self-esteem in a sample of American college students, according to a 2017 study that was published in the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication. But it's important to keep in mind that correlation does not always equal causation. It's not always the case that one variable causes another or that there is a negative connection between two variables. There might be other elements besides Internet addiction that affect one's self-esteem and that self-esteem is not strongly predicted by Internet addiction, such as a change in one's life role, a challenge with a loved one, work or college environment for example in a contrasting 2017 study that was published in the Journal of Psychiatric Research, it was discovered that among a sample of Korean adolescent participants, there was no significant correlation between internet addiction and self-esteem. Another study that was conducted on a sample of Iranian college students and published in the Journal of Addiction Research and Therapy in 2015 found no correlation between internet addiction and self-esteem. Over all, additional research is required to fully understand the relationship between Internet addiction and self-esteem, as there may be other elements or characteristics that play a role.

Table showing the regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	32.121	1.506		21.332	.000
Internet_Addiction	-.113	.038	-.301	-2.960	.004

Table showing the regression model summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. error of the estimate
1	.301	.091	.080	4.797

Table showing the scores of regressions of Internet Addiction and Self esteem

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	206.616	1	201.616	8.762	.004 b
Residual	2024.840	88	23.010		
Total	2226.456	89			

The table shows the results of the regression analysis, there is a weak negative correlation between internet addiction and self-esteem. The "Coefficients" table shows that the standardized beta coefficient for internet addiction is $-.301$, indicating that for every one-unit increase in internet addiction score, self-esteem scores decrease by $.301$ units. The "Model Summary" table shows that the model, which includes only the variable of internet addiction, explains 9.1% of the variance in self-esteem scores. However, it should be noted that this model only considers one predictor variable, and there may be other factors that contribute to the variance in self-esteem beyond internet addiction.

Relationship between Internet Addiction and Self esteem

Additionally, the variance data shows that there is a wide range of scores for both self-esteem and internet addiction in the sample, with standard deviations of 5.002 and 13.324, respectively. This suggests that there is significant variability in the data, and the regression analysis may not fully capture all the factors that contribute to the relationship between internet addiction and self-esteem. Overall, the results suggest that there is a weak negative relationship between internet addiction and self-esteem, with internet addiction accounting for a small portion of the variance in self-esteem scores. Further research is needed to explore other potential factors that may contribute to the relationship between internet addiction and self-esteem.

REFERENCES

- Bahrainian, S., Alizadeh, K., & Raeisoon, M. (n.d.). Relationship of internet addiction with self-esteem and depression in university students. *Journal of Preventive Medicine and Hygiene*, 56(1), E16–E20. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4718307/>
- Budak, E., Taymur, I., Askin, R., & Gungor, B. (2014). Evaluation of internet addiction and depression among university students. *European Research Journal*, 8(2), 129–139. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eurasia.2014.1070a>
- Goel, D., Subramanyam, A., & Kamath, R. (2013). A study on the prevalence of internet addiction and its association with psychopathology in Indian adolescents. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 55(2), 140–143. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3696236/>
- LaRose, R., Lin, C. A., & Eastin, M. S. (2017). Unregulated internet usage: Addiction, habit, or deficient self-regulation? *Media Psychology*, 20(2), 237–253. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15213269.2015.1043137>
- Pahlavan, R., & Mohammadi, Z. (2015). Factors affecting Facebook addiction in university students. *Journal of Addiction Research & Therapy*, 6(2), 1000239. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2155-6105.1000239>
- Seo, E., Kim, S., Lee, S., & Park, S. (2021). Internet addiction and its associations with clinical and psychosocial factors in medical students. *Journal of Korean Medical Science*, 36(19), e125. <https://doi.org/10.3346/jkms.2021.36.e125>
- Widyanto, L., & Griffiths, M. (2006). ‘Internet addiction’: A critical review. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 12(4), 276–287. <https://doi.org/10.1192/apt.12.4.276>

Acknowledgement

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Keerthika, K. & Joy, M. (2023). Relationship between Internet Addiction and Self-esteem. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(2), 1823-1828. DIP:18.01.186.20231102, DOI:10.25215/1102.186