

## Relationship between Internet Addiction and Procrastination among College Students of Mumbai

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### ABSTRACT

Internet addiction is regarded to be a psychological issue with potential sociological effects. It is a behavioral addiction, in which an individual can become dependent on the internet and tend to neglect their scheduled work leading to procrastinating behavior. Considering this reality in mind, the purpose of this research aimed at investigating the relationship between internet addiction and procrastination among college students. Internet Addiction Test and General Procrastination Scale were used to gather data, a sample of 120 college students, mostly the undergraduates participated in the study. The Pearson's Product moment correlation coefficient was used to find the relationship between the two variables. i.e., internet addiction and procrastination. The findings of the research indicated a significant correlation between internet addiction and procrastination, concluding that college students engaging in uncontrolled and excessive use of internet tend to procrastinate their tasks. Internet is not a negative resource, millions of people use internet for work and communication purpose, but apart from this the use of internet for other purpose has also increased, excessive use has increased developing the addiction of internet and internet addiction can also be seen related to growing procrastination, a tendency to postpone task in order to engage in online activities.

**Keywords:** *Internet Addiction, Procrastination, College Students*

Almost everybody feels obliged to carry out certain tasks besides having duties to perform and responsibilities to fulfill in many areas of life. However, due to various reasons, it is commonly observed and experienced those tasks or responsibilities are postponed and left to the last minute. (Hülya ASLAN EFE1, 2018). This tendency to postpone tasks or responsibilities is procrastination. Procrastination is the tendency to delay a task or avoid it in a way that has negative effects on the individual (Tuckman, 1991). The phenomenon of procrastination has existed for years and continues to thrive in the modern day. (Thakkar, 2009)

Procrastination is the practice of carrying out less urgent tasks in preference to more urgent ones, or doing more pleasurable things in place of less pleasurable ones, and thus putting off impending tasks to a later time, sometimes to the "last minute" before a deadline. Procrastination is an automatic problem habit leading to a needless delay of a timely,

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Received: January 23, 2025; Revision Received: February 05, 2025; Accepted: February 08, 2025

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relevant, priority activity until another day or time. (Knaus, 2011) It is a form of self-regulation failure characterized by irrational delay of task despite being aware of negative consequences. (Steel, 2007; cf. Klingsieck, 2013)

Steel in 2007, indicated procrastination as “to voluntarily delay an intended course of action despite expecting to be worse off for the delay”. (p.22)

Procrastination in the academic realm holds many negative consequences including lost time, increased stress, lower grades, poorer health, decreased long-term learning and lower self-esteem (Hoover, 2005).

Over the years the general definitions and reasons for procrastinations have changed. From watching television for hours to watching web series online, the Internet has become an increasing cause of procrastination among young individuals.

The Internet has become an important part of people’s daily lives. Initially the internet was used for meaningful purposes, especially in early 1960s the US Department established the use of the internet primarily for military purposes (Schneider, Evans, & Pinard, 2006), over the decade, internet became a worldwide medium for research, academics, entertainment, business, news and communication. Due to the development of smartphones, people now find it convenient to use the internet wherever and whenever they need. The use of social networking sites has become the cornerstone of modern communication and connection as it allows users to create a sense of belongingness and redefine their way of living.

From a mental health perspective, concerns have been raised about the negative impact of excessive use of social networking sites on the health and wellbeing of the users, especially that of young people, who are enthusiastic users of technology (Griffiths, 2018). Young individuals for hours engage in online activities, while losing track of time, this often develops internet addiction among young individuals.

Addiction is where an individual finds it difficult for oneself to stop using a substance or engaging in a behavior. So is the internet addiction, a tendency where an individual finds it difficult to control their use of the internet and its applications (Young, 2007).

Internet addiction is the over usage of the internet. (Federwisch, 1997). In a study done by Nalwa and Anand in 2003, it was identified that excessive use of the internet also leads to the tendency to procrastinate, sleep loss and eating disorders. Specifically, a number of recent studies have observed that internet applications frequently lead to dysfunctional procrastination. (SALEEM, OWAISI, & TUFAIL, INTERNET ADDICTION: IT’S IMPACT ON PROCRASTINATION OF HIGHER LEARNING STUDENTS IN PAKISTAN, 2015)

Internet addiction is seen to increase the chance of developing a tendency to procrastinate the given task, due to spending a lot of time engaging in online activities. Many people find themselves surfing the internet while they should be working or studying on a specific task (Lavoie & Pychyl, 2001). These people put off their work or academic related responsibilities and spend an excessive amount of time on the internet (Davis, 2001). This kind of behavior was regarded as a modern type of procrastination mediated by the internet in most of the research (Lavoie & Pychyl, 2001; Davis, 2001; Thatcher, Wretschko & Fridjhon, 2008). Studies showed that both internet addiction and procrastination are

common among college students (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984; Lay, 1986; Yang & Tung, 2007, Tice & Baumeister, 1997; Kandell, 1998).

## **THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Procrastination is frequently associated with postponing to make a decision or to act. Such a phenomenon could be found in almost all walks of life. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding to alleviate it is urgently needed. (Siaputra, 2010).

As a recent and comprehensive approach, TMT has been used as the main theoretical framework in understanding procrastination. (Steel, 2007).

According to Brown, the psychoanalytic and psychodynamic approach, is the oldest theory developed to explain procrastination behavior. Temporal motivation theory (TMT), is a new approach coined by Steel and Konig in 2006.

### ***Procrastination theories:***

- **Psychodynamic and Psychoanalytic Approach**

In the 1950s, Freud tried to explain the tendency to procrastinate, based on the concept of avoiding tasks. According to this concept, tasks that are not completed will be avoided because it poses a threat to the ego. When the ego recognizes the existence of a threat posed by a task, defense mechanisms such as avoiding the task will be raised. In the tradition of classical psychoanalytic theory, Blatt and Quinlan in 1967 stated that the procrastinator is generally oriented towards the present and has difficulty in anticipating the future. (Siaputra, 2010)

Psychodynamic theories stated that an individual's behaviors and personality is closely related to childhood experiences. Based on this approach, the tendency to procrastinate is seen as a result of childhood experiences, traumas or problems in the process of parenting. Missildine in 1963 used the term chronic procrastination syndrome to describe the termination of work on task with daydreaming and acting slowly. Individuals' slowness allegedly rooted in unrealistic goals setting from parents, as well as providing conditional attention and affection. Permissive or authoritative parenting will increase the tendency of procrastination in children. (Siaputra, 2010).

- **Cognitive Approach**

The theory of cognitive approach is popular to explain behavior and other psychological functioning including procrastination. Ellis and Knaus identified procrastination to be an emotional disorder that is rooted in irrational thinking.

One of the irrational beliefs held by procrastinators is "I have to do something good that should be appreciated". This belief would have negative consequences when individuals fail to do something optimally. This belief often encourages individuals to delay starting the job for fear of wrongdoing. This belief is considered irrational because the high standards already determined before often failed to be met. These irrational beliefs were also likely to cause delay in starting, doing, and completing other tasks. For procrastinators, delaying a task would give a good reason, because they can attribute their failure to lack of time. (Siaputra, 2010)

- **Temporal Motivation Theory**

The Temporal Motivation Theory (TMT) is an integrative motivational theory. It is developed by Peirs Steel and Cornelius J Koing. The Temporal Motivation theory tried to explain decision making and other related behaviors. TMT suggests that any person always priorities activities which promise highest utility, at least in the perspective of that person for that certain time. In other words, people tend to procrastinate when they think the utility of doing the task is low. (Siaputra, 2010). TMT is described as one of the most comprehensive and promising theories to understand procrastination. It is a meta theory of motivation that integrates expectancy theory with need theory and prospect theory. (Steel, Svartdal, Thundiyil, & Brothen, 2018). The Temporal Motivation Theory Is also referred to as the Procrastination equation. A simple formula is use to understand the TMT model. Where motivation is the outcome of expectancy and value divided by impulsiveness and delay.

Where, expectancy is the confidence or probability for successful completion, value is the reward related to that task, delay is the amount of time available to complete the task and impulsiveness is the individual's sensitivity to delay. The reward for a task, its value may be how enjoyable the task is, its contribution to a career goal, a greater cause and so on.

So, if a task is overwhelmingly difficult (low expectancy) or boring (low value), you tend to procrastinate. Similarly, if the deadline is a month away (high delay) and you are not particularly good at self-control (high impulsiveness), you will put the task off for a while and will return to it only when you have a pressing deadline, i.e., the delay grows smaller (Steel, The Procrastination Equation: How to Stop Putting Things Off and Start, 2010)

### **THEORETICAL MODEL OF INTERNET ADDICTION:**

- **Generalized and specific Internet Addiction**

In 2001, Davis introduced a theoretical cognitive-behavioral model on problematic Internet use which differentiates between a generalized pathological Internet use, which is also termed as generalized Internet addiction, and a specific pathological Internet use, for which the term specific Internet addiction is used.

Davis argues that generalized internet addiction is frequently linked to communicative applications of the Internet and that a lack of social support in real life and feelings of social isolation or loneliness are main factors contributing to the development of generalized internet addiction. Maladaptive cognitions about the world in general and the own Internet use in particular may then intensify the overuse of the Internet to distract from problems and negative moods. In contrast, for the overuse of certain Internet applications, for example, gambling sites or pornography, a specific individual predisposition is the main factor, Davis argues. Consequently, it is assumed that generalized internet addiction is directly linked to the options provided by the Internet itself, while specific internet addiction can also be developed outside the Internet, but is aggravated by the enormous functions offered by the Internet applications. (Brand, Young, & Laier, 2014)

Also, Conditioning plays an important role which results in a strong relationship between internet related stimuli or even computer related stimuli and the positive or negative reinforcement. This relationship makes it increasingly harder for an individual to control the internet use, even though the individual is aware of the negative consequences related to internet overuse. (Brand, Young, & Laier, 2014)

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### *Research Objective*

The objective of the study is to find out the relation between internet addiction and procrastination among young college students.

### *Hypothesis*

College students engaging in uncontrolled and excessive use of internet applications, tend to procrastinate their task.

### *Variable:*

- Internet Addiction
- Procrastination

### *Participants*

The participants in the study are young college students from the age 18-22 years. Around 120 college students will be studied in this research. From the demographic area of Vasai and suburb.

### *Sample Size*

The sample size will include 120 individuals.

### *Research Design*

A correlational study with survey method

### *Sampling Method*

A convenience sampling method and snowball sampling method will be used (Mixed sampling method). google forms and survey methods will also be use.

### *Research Tools*

- **Young's Internet Addiction Test:** Developed by Dr Kimberly Young in 1999, it is used to measure the severity of compulsive use of the internet among adolescents and adults. It is a 20- item questionnaire, each statement is weighted along with a 5- point Likert scale ranges from 0= less extreme behavior and 5= most extreme behavior for each item. The Cronbach's alpha internal reliability coefficient ranges from 0.87-0.91. the test is considered to be reliable and valid to measure internet addiction among individuals of Asian population.
- **General Procrastination Scale (GPS):** The General Procrastination scale (GPS) was developed by Lays in 1986. It is considered to be one of the major measures of self-reported procrastinatory behavior. Originally it was developed as a two form 18- items true and false inventory, but now the present 20- item form examines procrastination across various tasks. The inventory has been used as a 5- Likert scale. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for internal reliability ranges from 0.80 to 0.88.

### *Procedure*

The study will be conducted with the students from colleges of Mumbai and its suburbs, it will mostly include college students from Vasai. The participants will be given the following forms: Demographic details, Informed Consent, and then a copy of IAT and GPS. The data collection will be done with the help of online forms or will be done in person.

**Ethical Consideration**

1. All the participants will be provided with a consent form, which they will be requested to read and inform their consent through the form.
2. The demographic details taken from the participant will be kept confidential and shall not be used for any other purpose other than this study.
3. The participants will be debriefed about the purpose of this study after the data collection so as to minimize the effects of social desirability factors.
4. The participants will be provided with a copy of the results of this study on demand.
5. Both the scales IAT and GPS are available in open domain

**Method of Analysis:**

Descriptive Statistics will be applied for Analysis of the obtained data. A scatterplot would be used to check for linearity of the collected data. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient will be used to analyze the obtained Data. If the variables are found to be significantly correlated regression analysis could be executed.

**RESULTS**

The study was primarily carried out to examine the relationship between internet addiction and procrastination among college students.

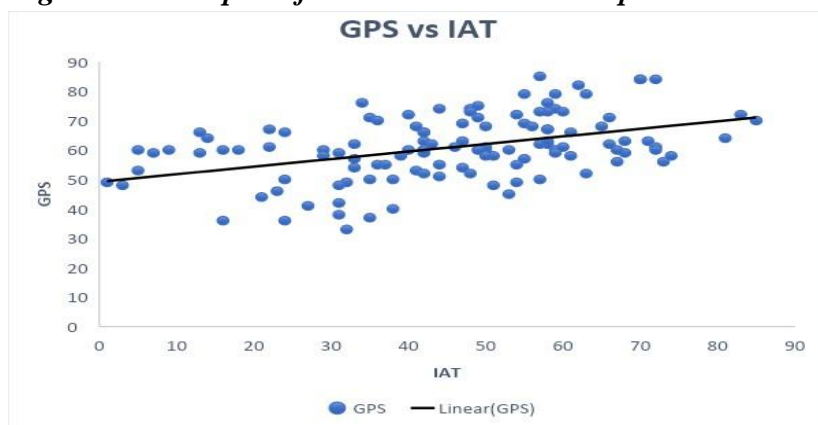
The variables in the study are internet addiction and procrastination. the quantitative analysis of the data was obtained using SPSS. The data was obtained from 120 college students. The data was collected using a convenience sampling method and the scale used were Internet Addiction Test and General Procrastination Scale with demographics and consent forms. A scatterplot was used to check for linearity of the collected data. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was applied for analysis of the obtained data.

**Table 1 Descriptive Statistic of the variable**

Variables	Range (Max)	Range (Min)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Internet addiction		1	45.39	18.452
Procrastination		33	60.86	10.904

Referring to the table, the descriptive statistics revealed that the mean value for participants’ internet addiction score was 45.39 with a standard deviation of 18.452, where the minimum possible score was 1 and maximum possible score was 85. The descriptive statistics of procrastination scores showed mean as 60.86 and standard deviation was 10.904. the minimum score was 33 and the maximum score was 85.

**Figure 1 Scatterplot of Internet addiction and procrastination.**



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The scatter plot above represents Internet addiction and procrastination scores. Therefore, by visual verification the relationship between the variables seems linear.

### CORRELATION

Pearson's product moment correlation was computed to assess the relationship between internet addiction and procrastination.

**Table 2 Correlation between Internet Addiction and Procrastination.**

		IAT	GPS
IAT	Pearson Correlation	1	.434**
GPS	Pearson Correlation	.434**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation was calculated using Pearson's Formula to see if there is a relationship between internet addiction and procrastination. the Pearson correlation coefficient  $r$ , can take a range of values from +1 to -1. A value greater than 0 indicates a positive association, that is as the value of one variable increases, so does the value of other variable increases. A value lesser than 0 indicates a negative association, that is, as the value of one variable increases the value of another variable decreases.

The hypothesis states that there will be a correlation between internet addiction and procrastination among college students. As given in the above table, the  $r$  value is 0.434. the  $p$  value is  $<0.01$  i.e.,  $r(119) = 0.434$ ,  $p < 0.1$  two tails, where 119 is the number of degrees of freedom.

Thus, the data supports the hypothesis that there is a correlation between internet addiction and procrastination among college students.

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to understand a relationship between internet addiction and procrastination among college students. The variables, i.e. internet addiction and procrastination in the study were found to be linear and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to analyze the obtained data. This study helps to understand the excessive use of the internet and its relation with the tendency to procrastinate the given task.

The hypothesis was that there is a relationship between internet addiction and procrastination. The results exhibit that the data obtained is statistically significant and hence, the results are in line with the hypothesis. The hypothesis has also been validated by past research.

This significant result indicates that there is a relation between internet addiction and the tendency to procrastinate among college students. The internet is an indispensable everyday tool for many students, but it poses certain problems and negatively affects students' health, academic career. Procrastination is also the most common issue amongst college students (JingyuGenga, 2018).

In the study conducted by Jingyu Genga et al in 2018 among Chinese young adults, indicated a positive correlation among internet addiction and procrastination.

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In research conducted by Lavoie and Pychyl in 2001, it was studied that many people find themselves on the internet as surfing, while they should be working or studying on a specific task, according to this research, these people put off their work or academic related responsibilities and spend excessive amount of time on the internet, this kind of behavior is also regarded as modern type of procrastination mediated by the internet. Studies conducted by Yang and Tung in 2007, showed that both internet addiction and procrastination are most common among college students. (Hülya ASLAN EFE1, 2018)

A study on internet addiction and procrastinatory behavior was conducted by Murat Uzun and Erhan Unal in 2014, the findings of the study indicated a significant correlation between academic procrastination and internet addiction and also significant correlation between general procrastination and internet addiction. (Ahmet Murat Uzun, 2014) This finding also suggested that one who delay their life routine responsibilities also tend to be more vulnerable to be internet addicts. The previous research studies were also in the supposed direction. Deficient time management skills may result in students failing to fulfill their daily routine responsibilities which may have an influence on being dependent on the internet.

### ***Implication and Future Scope***

This research confirms with the previous research findings which also establishes a significant relationship between internet addiction and procrastination. There is a limited literature available explaining the relationship between internet addiction and procrastination among college students. This current study on the same, can be beneficial for parents, teachers and also college students to get an insight about the status of internet addiction and procrastination.

Based on the understanding about internet addiction and its relation with procrastination, maybe it can be possible to detect the addiction and excessive use of internet and the procrastinatory behavior at an early stage and take the necessary precautions to control the behavior.

The result of the study indicates that there is a positive relation between internet addiction and procrastination, thus this result can be helpful in developing an effective intervention program to deal with procrastination and internet addiction. The program can include measures like; Time management and self-control, establishing a daily routine, also turning off the notification on personal electronic devices, while performing an important task.

### ***Limitations***

The present study has limitations.

1. The present study is a correlational study, it can only suggest that there is a relationship between the variables, however it cannot establish causation, thus limiting the findings. Correlation does not allow us to go beyond the data that is given. No inferences can be drawn from the results of a correlational study.
2. The study only included college students and vastly undergraduate students. The internet and its excessive use is also increasing among school going children, hence school children could have been also studied in the whole study of internet addiction and procrastination among students. Also, along with undergraduate college students, post graduates could also be included. Further the study could have also included young working adults.

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3. Due to time constraints a very small sample of 120 college students was studied hence, Generalization is also a concern, as the proposed study included a sample of undergraduate students mostly from the suburb of Mumbai, hence with the results obtained we cannot generalize over all the college students
4. Another limitation was that data was collected using google forms circulated online, rather than forms given out manually, hence this process made it difficult getting feedback and also difficult solving doubts if any.

### CONCLUSION

The study aimed at investigating the relationship between internet addiction and procrastination among college students. The results of the study are in line with hypothesis as well as with past research. The current study can be used to further study internet addiction and procrastination on a higher level. Neither internet nor procrastination are a new concept, but in changing times the internet has gained a different status and also the reasons for procrastination have increased. Internet addiction has also increased, having consequences on the health of an individual. Internet is not a negative resource, millions of people use internet for work and communication purpose, but apart from this the use of internet for other purpose has also increased, excessive use has increased developing the addiction of internet and internet addiction can also be seen related to growing procrastination, a tendency to postpone task in order to engage in online activities. This study shows a relationship between internet addiction and procrastination, Taking the current research into consideration, the implications and limitations, it can be stated that there are a number of possibilities for future research in the areas of internet addiction and procrastination.

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### **Acknowledgment**

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:** Alyssa, C.R. (2025). Relationship between Internet Addiction and Procrastination among College Students of Mumbai. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(1), 664-673. DIP:18.01.061.20251301, DOI:10.25215/1301.061