

Association of Demographic Profile and Motivational Factors with Internet Addictions

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Abstract

Objective: To study the association between demographic profile and motivational factors with internet addiction. **Methods:** This was a cross sectional study, conducted in 347 internet addicted teenagers (screened through Young's Internet Addiction Test) with the help of a semi-structured questionnaire consisting of questions related to demographic information and information related to motivational factors for internet use. Data were collected and evaluated through regression model. **Results:** Both demographic profile and motivational factors had association with internet addiction at 0.05 level of significance. Demographic profile e.g., gender ($p=0.01$), duration of approval for internet access ($p\leq 0.001$), family income ($p=0.001$), and motivational factors, e.g. availability of privacy for internet use ($p<0.001$), location of internet use ($p\leq 0.001$), number of gadgets with internet access ($p=0.01$) and purpose of internet use ($p\leq 0.001$) are some of the factors highly associated with severity of internet addiction. **Conclusions:** Demographic profile and motivational factors are highly associated with severity of internet addiction. Teenagers are vulnerable for internet addiction and efforts should be taken to increase awareness and prevent the problem of internet addiction in them.

Keywords: Internet; Addiction; Teenagers; Motivational; Demographic.

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Introduction

Long before the age of the mobile phone, Albert Einstein, one of the most brilliant brains of the 20th century, had predicted: 'I fear the day technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots.' Einstein's forebodings about scientific advancement devoid of human values. (The Daily Mail website concocted an entire feature around it in 2015.)

Integrating modern technologies, such as cellular phones and the Internet, have allowed people to communicate at long distances as well as facilitating many tasks, including shopping, paying bills, taking educational classes, working, and keeping in touch with loved ones so affordably. People of all age group including children and adolescents also use the Internet for socializing and for leisure activities such as watching movies and television programs, listening music, and playing games. The Internet has made life more convenient, saves time and shortens the distance between people; however, it presents risks.¹

The terms normal Internet use and addictive use are still debatable and researchers trying to differentiate between these two categories. Holmes defines normal Internet use to mean any amount of use that does not exceed 19 hours per week (Holmes 1997). This definition is derived from a survey conducted by Holmes. Young offers a more generous definition for the term "normal Internet usage." According to her, an addicted person is one

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who spends at least 38 hours per week or 8 hours per day on the Internet (Young 1998). According to pathological theory, any person that reported 2 to 3 hours per week of Internet use is considered a normal user and anyone who logged 8.5 hours or more per week is a pathological user (Morahan; Schumaker 1997).²

According to some addiction theorists because of the mental pleasure that people find in their addictions, they begin to behave more intensely. Internet addicts turn to the computer/mobile phone to find relief from stress/mental tension and agitation.³

Internet addiction is defined as “the presence of the three basic factors, e.g. preoccupation, tolerance, and withdrawal symptoms in any individual for internet use.”⁴ The term preoccupation refers to individual’s mind constantly thinking of what he/she will be going to do online later while he/she is still in other offline work, tolerance refers to spending considerably longer time online to feel the same level of satisfaction as before and withdrawal symptoms refers to exhibition of violent behaviors when the individual not allowed to use internet and such behavior not normally seen in other circumstances. Internet addiction leads to various physical, psychosocial as well as academic and work related issues.⁵⁻¹³

The problem of internet addiction is so evident that, now people need specialist assistance; therefore specific centers are being opened across the globe. The Governments of China, Japan and South Korea have set up boot camps, to clamp down on Internet addiction.⁵ Such centers are also setup in some of the major cities of India such as Sarvodaya Enclave in Delhi, which is the second in the country after the SHUT (Service for Healthy Use of Technology), National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) in Bangalore.¹³⁻¹⁵

A high prevalence of internet addiction is observed across the world¹⁶⁻³⁰ and its association found with various demographic variables and motivational factors.²⁸⁻³³ However, such addiction can be prevented by focusing and modifying the motivational factors. Very few studies have been conducted in different parts of the world to study the demographic profile and motivational factors associated with internet addiction.

The present study was conducted to look at the profile of the internet addicted teenagers in selected school of Mumbai and to study the modifiable motivational factors associated with internet addiction.

Materials and Methods

The present study was a cross-sectional analysis of data collected from 347 teenagers those are identified as internet addicted as per the screening done through Young’s Internet Addiction Test (IAT). The study conducted at Mumbai and data collected during December to March 2016.

A semi-structured questionnaire was administered which consisting of section-A (age, gender, class in which they are studying, duration of internet use, religion, type of family, socioeconomic class) and data to assess the motivational factors for internet use also collected which consisting of section-B (types of gadgets they have, whether having personal gadgets, where they use internet, availability of privacy for internet use, use of internet at school, ranking of internet use purpose, feel the need to have cell phone with and mode of internet access) was also administered.

The prevalence of internet addiction was calculated through frequency and percentage. Regression model was used to evaluate the teens’ profile and motivational factor associated with various levels of internet addiction.

The study was approved by the Ethics Committee at MGM Institute of Health Sciences and Permission obtained from the principals of the schools, also written consent taken from the parents of the teens as well as assent taken from the teens.

Results

Table 1 shows demographic profile had high association with internet addiction at 0.05 level of significance. Demographic profile, e.g. gender ($p=0.01$), duration of approval for internet access ($p<0.001$), family income ($p=0.001$), are highly associated with severity of internet addiction.

Table 2 depicts motivational factors, e.g. availability of privacy for internet use ($p<0.001$), location of internet use ($p<0.001$), number of gadgets with internet access ($p=0.01$) and purpose of internet use ($p<0.001$) are some of the factors highly associated with severity of internet addiction.

Discussion

Internet is useful, as it keeps the world at our fingertip. Teenagers get approval from their parents for its use for academic purpose. Like they can easily

Table 1: Association of demographic Profile with Internet addiction

N = 347

Independent variables	B	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	t	p value
Profile					
Age	0.521	0.404	0.048	1.289	0.001
Gender	1.244	0.508	0.055	2.447	0.198
Class in which studying	-0.472	0.365	-0.049	-1.293	0.015
Duration of approval for internet use	6.381	0.725	0.281	8.804	0.197
Type of family	-1.175	1.087	-0.038	-1.081	< 0.001
Family income	0.000	0.000	0.184	3.455	0.281

Table 2: Association of motivational factors with Internet addiction

N = 347

Independent variables	B	Standard Error	Regression Coefficient	t	p value
Motivational factors					
No. of gadgets with internet access available at home	4.701	1.812	0.221	2.594	0.010
Location of internet use	-7.940	1.811	-0.347	-4.384	< 0.001
Availability of privacy for internet use	10.595	0.981	1.022	10.798	< 0.001
Purpose of internet use	-4.665	0.945	-0.385	-4.937	< 0.001
Data using mode	1.241	1.792	0.016	0.692	0.489

contact with class fellows to get help in studies by sharing the notes, timetable, useful information, etc. But permission for academic search also leads to net surfing for other purpose like chatting, socializing, internet gaming, music download, etc. and eventually leads to addiction to internet. Both demographic profile and motivational factors had high positive correlation with internet addiction at 0.05 level of significance. Demographic profile, e.g. gender ($p=0.01$), duration of approval for internet access ($p<0.001$), family income ($p=0.001$), and motivational factors, e.g. availability of privacy for internet use ($p<0.001$), location of internet use ($p<0.001$), number of gadgets with internet access ($p=0.01$) and purpose of internet use ($p<0.001$) are some of the factors highly associated with severity of internet addiction. The result finds its support from the earlier findings of Bhagat G.²⁹ and Varghese T.³⁰

Conclusion

Demographic profile, e.g. gender, duration of exposure to internet access, family income, and motivational factors, e.g. availability of privacy for internet use, location of internet use, number of gadgets with internet access and purpose of internet use are some of the factors highly associated with severity of internet addiction. Teenagers are vulnerable for internet addiction and efforts should

be taken to increase awareness and prevent the problem of internet addiction among them.

As a holistic care provider, nurses can make important contribution towards the prevention and management of internet addiction. Seminars, workshops or symposiums can be planned by the nurse educators to update the knowledge of students and staff nurses about internet addiction. Nurse administrators can take the lead to spread the awareness about internet addiction among general public.

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