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ASSESSMENT OF INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

Aim: To examine the assessment of internet addiction among adolescents. **Design:** The present study is based on 200 subjects equally divided into two groups on the basis of gender (boys and girls) further these two groups were also divided into two more groups on the basis of socio economic status (high and low socio economic status). Internet addiction test (IAT) constructed by Dr. Kimberly Young was used for data collection. Mean, SD and t-test were applied for statistical analysis. **Findings:** In general results reveal that there is no significant difference found between the mean scores of internet addiction of boys and girls and high and low socio economic status subjects in respect to internet addiction.

KEY WORDS: Internet Addiction, Gender, Socio Economic Status.

INTRODUCTION

Internet is becoming a widely accepted channel for information exchange and networking. It is experiencing tremendous growth and development in its size and numbers of users all over the world. The benefits of the internet have been widely researched and include keeping in touch with friends, making vacation plans, managing finances, assisting with educational needs etc. The advantages of the internet are plainly true, genuine, unquestionably excellent and well evidenced in the literature.

Nowadays, the process of adopting digital technologies is known to be higher in young adolescents than adults. Tuik (2010) revealed that in turkey the highest percentage of computer and internet usage belongs to the 16-24 year old, where as internet users aged 15 and older were reported as

the most engaged users in Europe in terms of time spent and the content consumed on the internet (Comscore, 2009). The important and unique characteristics of the internet is its 24 hour availability, simple working, low cost, anonymity of its users and etc. have welcomed many people throughout the world (Beard, 2005). Such in turn makes young people early adopters and heavy users of digital technologies. This involvement paired with the psychologically sensitive development of adolescent period can make teenagers more susceptible to digital disturbances such as internet abuse (Chou *et al.*, 2005; Tsai & Lin, 2003).

Internet addiction or internet dependency is considered as a psychological problem throughout the world since it has a negative effect on behaviour of the individuals, such as preventing them from social interactions and reduce their

performances (Martin and Schumacher, 2000; Young, 1998) impairing personal functions (Tsai and Lin, 2000) and harming their personal relationships (Beard, 2002). Internet addiction is the form of impulse control disorder (Young, 1998).

Access internet use leads to internet addiction, a serious problem in present days, though researchers conducted studies every year to highlight the problems faced by people while using internet. Bayraktar and Gun (2007) found that secondary and high school students' grade point averages decreased as their disturbed use of the internet increased. Cardak (2009) found that internet addiction effects social relation as well as social well beings, it makes a person more introvert and away from family and society. Chen *et al.*, (2004) revealed that internet abusers often preferred interactive online activities such as chatting and playing online games. Cho *et al.*, (2013) found a significant relationship between anxiety and depression in childhood with internet addiction in adolescent. Christos (2007) revealed that excessive use of internet also effects the academic achievements of students. Findings also show that students addicted to internet are more involved in it than their studies, results poor academic performance. Jalalinejad (2012) found that anxiety significantly predicts internet addiction. Researcher also revealed that internet addiction in boy students is more than girl students. King (1996) found that people who have internet addiction are alone and shy and are suffering from depression. Kubey *et al.*, (2001) revealed that use of internet as an entertaining tool is related to serious damages in individual function including educational problems, loneliness and insomnia. Musarrat *et al.*, (2014) found that prevalence of internet is more in male students than female students also regression analysis showed a positive and significant relation between internet addiction and anxiety level among university students. Niemz *et al.*, (2005) found that people who use the internet for a long period of time will have interpersonal social and academic problems. Noreen (2013) found that internet addiction was significantly negatively correlated with academic performance of university undergraduates. Results also revealed that male students had higher internet addiction

than female ones. Ramezan *et al.*, (2013) reveal that there is a significant and inverse relationship between internet addiction and students' mental health. Soule *et al.*, (2003) reported that young internet users (that is between 19 to 24 years old) were more at risk of becoming internet addicts than older users. Suhail *et al.*, (2006) reported that internet usage impacts education in a positive way by increasing communication with classmates and professors, increasing access to libraries and educational databases, and improving study hours and study habits. Yang and Tung (2007) revealed that the likelihood of internet abuse was higher for vocational high school students compared to other high school students. Young (1999) revealed that about 54% of internet addicts have a background of depression and 34% of them have a background of anxiety.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the level of internet addiction among adolescent boys and girls.
2. To find out the level of internet addiction among high socio economic status (HSES) and low socio economic status (LSSES) adolescents.

HYPOTHESES

1. Girls would have high level of internet addiction than boys.
2. High socio economic status adolescents would have high level of internet addiction than low socio economic status adolescents.

SAMPLE

The present study was conducted on the sample of 200 subjects equally divided into two groups boys and girls further these two groups were divided into two subgroups high socio economic status and low socio economic status, random sampling method was used for collection of data.

INSTRUMENTS

Internet Addiction Test (IAT) constructed and standardized by Dr. Kimberly Young was used for data collection. This test consists of 20 items that measures mild, moderate and severe level of internet addiction.

RESULTS

The obtained results are shown in table 1st and 2nd respectively.

Table - 1

Showing Mean, SD and t-value of Internet addiction scores of boys and girls

Groups	Total score	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Boys	5917	100	59.17	63.59	198	1.56
Girls	4637	100	46.37	51.49		

Table - 2

Showing Mean, SD and t-value of Internet addiction scores of high socio economic status and low socio economic status subjects

Groups	Total score	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
High SES	5866	100	58.66	62.53	198	1.44
Low SES	4688	100	46.88	52.63		

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to assess the level of internet addiction among adolescents. For that purpose 200 subjects were selected in Chidambaram city of Cuddalore of Tamil Nadu, obtained data was analysed by using t-test. The obtained results show that there is no significant difference found among boys and girls, high and low socio economic status. The mean scores of boys and girls were found 59.17 and 46.37 respectively and the t-value is found 1.56 with df 198, which was not found significant at any level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference found between the mean scores of boys and girls. Therefore our first hypothesis that girls would have high level of internet addiction than boys is rejected.

The mean scores of high SES and low SES subjects were found 58.66 and 46.88 respectively and the t-value is 1.44 with df 198 is less than tabulation value at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of HSES and LSES subjects. Therefore our second hypothesis that high socio economic status subjects would high level of internet addiction than low socio economic status subjects is also rejected.

CONCLUSION

The results of the present will be concluded as adolescent boys have high level of internet addiction than adolescent girls. As the obtained mean scores of boys (59.17) is more than the mean scores of girl subjects (46.37). Similarly subjects with HSES have high level of internet addiction than LSES subjects.

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