ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Psychology

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS AND INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

KEY WORDS: Internet Addiction, Internet Users, Dimensional personality inventory

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ABSTRACT

Aim: Our study was aimed to examine the association between personality traits and internet addiction among college students.
Material and Methods : The sample consisted of (n=120) participants of either sex (Group I, n=74) addicted and (Group II, n=46) Non -addicted age ranging between (18 - 25) years. The subjects were randomly selected. Data was collected by two questionnaires including the Internet Addiction Test and Dimensional personality inventory (DPI). The data was analyzed using Mean, SD, t- test and Chi-square.
Results: Findings indicated that there was significant difference in the mean scores (p<0.01) on all the dimensions of DPI between addicted and non addicted group, excluding dimension Assertive- Submissive.
Conclusion: Internet addicted were found to be more passive, reserve, shy ,inhibited depressive in current study.

INTRODUCTION

Personality can be described as distinctive patterns and specific characteristics of thinking, emotion and behavior which determine the style of interaction with the physical and social environment.[1] Personality traits indicate a relatively stable profile in people's morale. These characteristics are appeared as consistent and coherent throughout their life when faced with different situations. It is believed that personality characteristics such as experience acceptance, loyalty, extroversion, harmony, and neurosis affect a wide range of human activities including sexual behavior,[2] listening to favorite music,[3] and rate of using technologies, especially the Internet, by people.[4]

A lot of psychiatric disorders have been correlated with IA. It has been reported to be associated with low self-esteem, impulsivity, poor sleep quality, mood disorder , and suicide [5].

Personality traits such as increased emotional reactivity, proneness to stress, impulsivity, and negative effect in drug addictions are associated with addictive behaviors[12].The internet has revolutionized the information age, more so with the explosion of wireless communication. It helps students to broaden their academic knowledge, research and assignments by accessing to the information world and also by easy communication to their academic community[10,11]. In another study using the Eysenck personality questionnaire, students addicted to internet had higher neuroticism/stability and psychoticism socialization but lower lie scores, suggesting neuroticism, psychoticism, and immaturity[13]. Consequently, identifying the personality traits that may predict IA would allow for an early identification and intervention on the population at high risk. To our knowledge, there is a lack of literature on personality traits of internet users in Malaysia.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the association between personality traits and internet addiction among college students, while specific ones are as follows:

To examine the association between Internet addicted and Non-addicted on the basis of dimension personality inventory

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested:
To find out the association between two groups on the basis of dimension personality inventory

Instruments

Scale used in this study was dimensional personality inventory (DPI)

[6] deals with six dimensions by which ones personality can be evaluated. They are: Activity- passivity, enthusiastic-non enthusiastic, assertive-submissive, suspicious-trusting, depressive-non depressive and emotional instability-emotional stability. It is similarly applicable for normal as well as psychotic patients. Score 10 or more indicative of left sided dominated personality on that dimension and score less than 10 indicative of the other side of that dimension. For example if person scored 15 on the dimension 'activity-passivity', he/she is active.

Internet Addiction Test

Internet addiction was assessed with Young's IAT (Internet Addiction Test) [7]. The questionnaire contains 20 questions based on criteria for pathological gambling. These 20 questions reflect typical addictive behaviors. Widiyamto and McMurran report that the scale mirrors six dimensions of Internet addiction: preoccupation, salience, excessive Internet use, neglect of obligations/work, anticipation, lack of self-control, and neglect of social life [20]. Degrees of Internet addiction have been classified using a point's scale; the scoring range is 20-100: (a) 20-49 points - normal, (b) 50-79 points - moderate addiction, and (c) 80-100 points - severe addiction. Every question scores up to 5 points, with 1 point for very rare, 2 for rarely, 3 for often, 4 for very often, 5 for always. The scale shows very good internal consistency.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The sample consisted of (n=120) participants divided into two groups (group I, n=74) i.e. Addicted (group II, n=46) Non-Addicted age ranging between (18 -25) years. Mean age of (group I, n=74) was found to be 21.18±2.30 and mean age of (group II, =46) was found to be21.68± 3.51year respectively.

Procedure

The sample comprised of 120 college going students (55 girls and 65 boys) who were randomly selected. Data was collected by two questionnaires including the Dimensional Personality Inventory and the Young's Internet Addiction Test. The data was analyzed using t- test and Chi-square.

Statistical Analysis

Chi-square, Percentage, t-test and Mean, SD was used to analyze the data.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

The result of present study has been given below and consecutively discussed.

Sample Characteristics

With regard to socio demographic characteristics of the subjects

(54.66%) were male and (46.33%) were female in both groups.

Table-1 Representative sample on the basis of gender

Gender	Internet Addicted	Non-addicted	X2
Male	33(50.76%)	32(59.23%)	7.89**
Female	41(74.54%)	14(25.45%)	Df=1
Total	74	46	120

**Significant at p<.01 level, *at p<.05

Result shows that females (74.54%)were found to be more addicted in comparison to male(50.76%) The difference was statistically significant p<.01.

Table -2 Comparison of personality of two group on the basis of dimension personality inventory

Dimensions	Group	N	Mean	S.D
Activity- Passivity	Addicted	74	12.62	3.25
	Non-Addicted	46	16.70	2.93
Enthusiastic- Non enthusiastic	Addicted	74	11.62	3.49
	Non-Addicted	46	16.21	3.39

	Addicted	74	11.50	3.57
Assertive- Submissive				
	Non-Addicted	46	10.95	2.52
Suspicious- Trusting	Addicted	74	16.04	2.93
	Non-Addicted	46	9.65	3.46
Depressive-Non depressive	Addicted	74	15.43	3.51
	Non-Addicted	46	11.56	3.32
Emotional instability- Emotional stability	Addicted	74	14.62	3.37
	Non-Addicted	46	11.82	3.04

**Significant at p<.01 level, *at p<.05

Table 1 shows that there was significant difference in the mean scores (p<0.01) on all the dimensions of DPI-B between addicted and non addicted group, excluding dimension III . But in the dimension of 'suspicious-trusting' the mean score of non-addicted group was found to be less than 10. It indicates that non-addicted group is more trusting , cheerful, adaptable, however addicted were found to be suspicious and apprehensive . Though, the significant differences were found but both the groups were 'active', 'enthusiastic', 'suspicious' and 'depressive', 'emotionally instable'.

Table- 3 Comparison of addicted and non-addicted group on six personality traits

Dimensions	Group	Above average%	Average %	Below average %	X2
Activity- Passivity	Addicted	18(24.34%)	22(29.72%)	34(45.94%)	7.75*
	Non-Addicted	22(47.82%)	12((26%)	12(26%)	
Enthusiastic- Non enthusiastic	Addicted	18(24.34%)	31(41.89%)	25(33.78%)	6.96*
	Non-Addicted	20(43.47%)	19(41.30%)	7(15.21%)	
Assertive- Submissive	Addicted	32(43.24%)	19(25.67%)	23(31.08%)	0.21
	Non-Addicted	17(36.95%)	14(30.43%)	15(32.60%)	
Suspicious- Trusting	Addicted	30(40.54%)	18(24.32%)	26(35.13%)	3.61
	Non-Addicted	11(23.91%)	13(28.26%)	22(47.82%)	
Depressive-Non depressive	Addicted	30(40.54%)	20(27%)	24(32.43%)	8.76*
	Non-Addicted	9(19.56%)	10(21.73%)	27(58.69%)	
Emotional instability- Emotional stability	Addicted	30(40.54%)	19(25.67%)	25(33.78%)	0.4
	Non-Addicted	16(34.78%)	13(28.26%)	17(36.95%)	

**Significant at p<.01 level, *at p<.05

Activity- Passivity
A significant difference (p<.05) was present on dimension (Activity- Passivity) between both group. 45.94% internet addicted participants scored in below average range on dimension Activity- Passivity but non addicted 26%. which indicate internet addicted used to be more passive in comparison to non- addicted. It suggest that internet addicted tend to be more dull, inactive, slow and irregular in working.

Enthusiastic- Non enthusiastic
A Significant difference was found to be (p<.05) between both the group. It suggests that 33.78% addicted found to be more reserve, shy ,inhibited, whereas non-addicted 15.21% were found to be warm hearted social and outgoing.

Depressive-Non depressive
A significant difference (p<.05) was present on Dimension (depressive-non depressive) between both the groups. 40.54% internet addicted participants scored in above average range on dimension depressive -non depressive in comparison to other 19.56% which indicate internet addicted used to be more depressive, highly frustrated, feeling of inferiority in comparison to other.

DISCUSSION:
The results show that there was significant difference in the mean scores (p<0.01) on all the dimensions of DPI-B between both group except dimension III. Though, significant differences were found in the mean scores but both the groups were found to be 'active', 'enthusiastic', 'suspicious' and 'emotionally instable' because the mean score was found to be more than 10 cut off score on these dimensions (Table-2). Thus, both the groups fall in the same dimension of personality. However, it was observed that mean scores of addicted were higher as compared to non addicted. It means addicted are significantly more 'depressive' 'suspicious' and 'emotionally instable' as compared with non

addicted subject. In a study involving 6,900 young adults in the United States, internet use was positively related to extraversion, neuroticism and conscientiousness [8] A recent study shows that 62.1% internet addicted participants were found to be more anxious, feeling of tense, fatigue compared with non-addicted participants. [9]

Neither premorbid nor post morbid personality of internet addicted was assessed in the study and thus we can draw inference for personality at morbid state only. There is need to study those persons who are non-addicted and share common personality with internet addicted and later develop any kind of addiction longitudinally. There is study limitation that we could not control severity of internet addiction

CONCLUSION:
Internet addicted were found to be more passive, reserve, shy ,inhibited depressive, in present study.

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