



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Psychology

EFFECTS OF INTERNET ADDICTION DURING LOCKDOWN

KEY WORDS: Internet addiction, psychological impact, physiological impact, remedial measures.

Mahaalaxmi H J	2nd M. Sc Psychology Department of Special Education And Rehabilitation Science, Alagappa University.
Dr. J. Sujatha Malini	Professor and Head of the Department of Special Education And Rehabilitation Science, Alagappa University.
Dr. K. Gunasekaran	Assistant Professor Department of Special Education And Rehabilitation Science, Alagappa University.

ABSTRACT
 The recent global pandemic is multifarious, striking every aspect of human existence. Due to COVID 19 outbreak, expect the people who work in medical profession, mental health profession, police department, health department, and media, all the people were inside the house. This made people to use more internet during lockdown as they cannot go outside and bored of watching the programs in TV. So people started using more time in internet. Barriers of communication are falling against these wireless technologies. These technologies were boon to some extent during lockdown but it also had many negative impacts on several aspects of the human life. In this scenario, everyone started using internet to a larger extent and many became victims which resulted in internet addiction. This created opportunity for majority of people to get addicted to the internet. This article concluded that most of the individual were addicted to the internet during lockdown, the researcher suggested remedial strategies to overcome the internet addiction is to spend more time with family & peer groups, engaging in physical activities such as sports, exercise, yoga, etc., limit the internet usage by keep track of time, giving priorities to studies or work than spending more time on internet.

INTRODUCTION

Corona disease (COVID 19) has drastically spread to all parts of the world. The COVID 19 pandemic has notably disrupted normal activities globally. The impact of the COVID 19 pandemic is multifarious, it is affected every aspect of human existence. To avoid the spread of COVID 19, the Indian government had announced the lockdown; this has created the chance for most of the people to get addicted in internet, online gaming, etc.

In this scenario, everyone has easy access to the internet facilities and internet has broken the barriers of communication across the world. Internet use on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Skype provide compensation for face-to-face communication, and this is often as a result of low self-esteem. Similarly online gamers with negative life outcomes want escapism as a result of low self-esteem and high levels of stress. Several health issues occur as a result of the affordability and ease of internet access across the globe. The persistent internet usage is shown to affect quality of sleep and sleep deprivation. Studies on Young Bangladeshi and Iranian students show that loneliness, depression, anxiety and stress were significantly correlated with internet addiction. Anxiety and depression is constantly linked to internet addiction, for example internet addiction in adolescent foreseen social anxiety and depression, but also self-esteem.

Our brain are hard wired to make us novelty seeking and this is why apps on our phones or tablets are designed to constantly provide us with new content, make them hard to put down. As a result, 93% of young people aged 18 - 29 report using their smart phones or tablets as a tool to avoid boredom, as opposed to other activities such as reading books or engaging with people around them.

As the individual plays the game, they achieve small goals causing the brain to be rewarded with little bursts of dopamine and eventually the person is rewarded with new content (Eg. PUBG & Free fire). This novelty also gives little bursts of dopamine and together creates a "compulsion loop" which just happens to be the same loop responsible for the behaviors associated with cocaine or nicotine. We also see a change in brain pattern such as alpha rhythm are commonly

associated with wakeful relaxation like when the mind wanders off whereas game waves are associated with conscious attentiveness. The power of these alpha waves is significantly boosted people as phone transmission can literally change the way of brain function. The smart phone can also disrupt the sleep. The screen emits a blue light which has been shown to alter the circadian rhythm, diminishing the time spent in deep sleep which is linked to the development of diabetes, cancer and obesity. People who use their smart phone at night have a harder time falling asleep and produce less melatonin which is a hormone responsible for the regulation of sleep wake cycles. Harvard Medical School advises the last 2-3 hours before bed be technology free.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of this thematic article shows the effects of internet addiction during lockdown.

METHODOLOGY

This thematic article applies content review methodology and had gone through the contents related to the topic and analytically summarized the ideas.

**NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF INTERNET ADDICTION
 PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF INTERNET ADDICTION**

Social isolation:

People who spend more time on internet become a part of one or more online communities which lead to develop close relationship virtually with lots of people. To connect with these people, internet addicts keep on staying in online for long hours which may lead to often feel disconnected from their family, peer groups and real world.

Sadness, Anxiety And Depression:

Individual who spends a lot of time in virtual world moderately withdraws from real world. When they are not able to use the internet, they will start to experience sadness, anxiety and depression.

Insomnia:

Nowadays, most people carry their smart phone or laptop wherever they go. They use these devices to clasp on to internet to learn about on what's happening around them before going to sleep. Internet addicts carry on browsing

internet for a longer period of time. As a sequel of this behavior, these individuals suffer from sleep related problems like sleeping late at night, insufficient or restless sleep and waking up late or insomnia.

Fail to keep time track:

Internet addicts spend majority of their time engage in browsing, chatting or gaming which make them unable to keep track of the time. As a consequence of loss of time in real world, their studies, work and routine schedules are disregarded or ignored.

Mood changes:

People with internet addiction use internet to reduce their stress and boost their mood. These people feel delighted when they use the internet, whereas if they are not able to access the internet, they become irritated and angry.

Procrastination:

Internet addicts usually delay or postpone their works and prioritize using mobile phone or computer.

Dishonesty:

When internet addicts are questioned by their family or friends, they usually try to camouflage their habit of either by being dishonest or lying about the time they spend on the internet.

- Physical impact of internet addiction
- Dry eyes or other vision problems
- Neck pain
- Head ache
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Poor nutrition
- Weight loss or gain
- Poor personal hygiene

Social impact of Internet Addiction

The internet addicted people spends too much time on being socialization through online social media and forgets the actual real person. They don't make time for family and friends. The addicted people automatically convert the real world into a virtual world. The interpersonal and face to face communication are reduced.

DISCUSSION

The developing situation of digital world, all are using internet as a mode of communication whether it is students or working individual. Excessive use of internet leads to many difficulties such as vision problem, headache and addicted individuals will forget to take foods on time. Sometimes they skip eating because of playing or binge watching shows, etc. this can lead to poor nutrition and weight loss. The interpersonal relationship between individual is reduced because of people getting addicted to virtual world instead of real world.

How To Overcome

- To overcome internet addiction, the individual can
- Spend more time with family members and peer groups
 - Spend time in gardening and with pets, engage in doing physical activities such as sports, exercise, yoga, etc.,
 - Limit the internet usage by keep track of time
 - Giving priorities to studies or work than spending more time on internet
 - By doing self-care routine, self-confidence level can be increased.

Therapeutic Treatment

- The other remedial measures for Internet Addiction Disorder are some common psychological treatments such as
- Individual, group or family therapy
 - Behavior modification
 - Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

- EquineTherapy
- ArtTherapy
- RecreationTherapy
- RealityTherapy

The most important thing is the addicted individual has to take decision that he or she has to overcome the addiction, so that they can get over from internet addiction.

CONCLUSION

The COVID 19 pandemic has significantly impacted on every individual's life. Internet plays an essential role in our day to day life. Connectivity has enabled creative people to work together and diminishing boundaries and distance. Though internet has so many good things, Internet also has some demerits such as people getting addicted to internet, online gaming and access to wrong information, theft of personal information, wastage of time, obesity and physiological and psychological health issues occurs. The purpose of this descriptive study is to show the impact of internet addiction during lockdown. People were staying inside the house and not able to go outdoor during lockdown, this created the chance for most people to get addicted internet, online gaming, etc. Individuals with mild or moderate rate of internet addiction can be cured with normal strategies and therapy while severe internet addiction can be overcome with therapies and medication. In this analysis concluded that excessive use of internet during lockdown leads to social isolation, sadness, anxiety, depression, Insomnia, fail to keep time track, mood changes, procrastination and dishonesty. The scholar suggests that the alternative measures such as self-care routine, spending time with family, friends and pets, etc. and other therapies. The internet usage is based on our thoughts because it contains both useful and unnecessary side.

Every form of addiction is bad, no matter whether the narcotic be alcohol or morphine or internet. -Carl Jung

Acknowledgement:

This article has been presented in 5th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PANDEMIC TO PANACEA: BIO PSYCHO-SOCIAL STRATEGIES held on 4th & 5th March 2022 organized by Department of Psychology, Anugraha Institute of Social Sciences (Research centre, Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University) in collaboration with Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science & Education for Women Coimbatore. Department of Special Education & Rehabilitation Science Alagappa University, Karaikudi. Servite Arts and Science College for Women T.Idayapatti, Thogaimalai.

REFERENCES:

1. World Health Organization. (2020). Coronavirus Disease (COVID 19) Situation report 162. Geneva:World Health Organization.
2. Siste, K & et.al. (2021). Implications of COVID 19 and lockdown on internet addiction among adolescents. Data from a developing country. *Frontiers in psychiatry*.
3. Cheng, J. (2021). Internet addiction increases in the general population during COVID-19: Evidence from china. *The American Journal of Addiction* 30(4) , 389-397.
4. Gregory, C (2021). Internet Addiction Disorder. Retrieved from [HYPERLINK "https://www.psychom.net/iadcriteria.html"](https://www.psychom.net/iadcriteria.html) <https://www.psychom.net/iadcriteria.html>