Effect of Internet Addiction

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ABSTRACT-- Internet addiction is a behavioral pattern characterized by excessive or obsessive online and offline computer use that leads to distress and impairment. Internet addiction has been connected with dimensionally measured depression, anxiety and indicators of social isolation. The current research paper explains the effects of internet addiction in the 19 to 25 years age group, a pilot research work based on a case study and internet addiction test was conducted. The paper further explains effects after applying Pearson's correlation. The Pearson's correlation value come out to be 0.08. After studying this work and calculating scores, effects were compared by analyzing the high scores which are more addicted to the internet and low scores which are less addicted to the internet. It was observed that subjects suffer more mental effects like anxiety, depression than physical effects. The authors through their work have been able to draw the conclusion that there is a dire need on part of the teen adolescents to take measure and the control the use of their time spent on digital platforms. From conduction it is found that there is great need for awareness of the effect of Internet addiction among the adolescent.

KEYWORDS-- Anxiety, Depression, Emotional effect, Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Internet addiction, Insomnia, Physical effect.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, internet and computer use are ingrained in contemporary society and have changed the way we live in our society more than any other technological medium yet. The internet has become an integral part of modern-day life. We are inventing new ways of communication, doing business, sharing information both personal and public. Different culture of people with diverse ethnicities, backgrounds, social standing use the net on a daily basis. The Internet was created to facilitate our lives, however the dramatic increase in the use of the internet among students in the last few years has led to pathological concern. Also, the internet brings problems like excessive use that are also apparent. Neglect of academics, work and domestic responsibilities, conflicts of relationship, social isolation and financial problems have all been identified as consequences of prolonged internet usages.

Internet use, especially of social media, has dramatically changed the way children tears communicate, socialize, make and maintain friendships, while there are benefits to living in digital space there are also risks involved. Nowadays, most children lack skills of social development and they spend the majority of their face time interacting via screen. Over the past few years, the study of correlation between excessive internet use and mental disorders has rapidly exponentiates. So excessive use of the internet makes the person more addicted to the internet. It brings changes in mood, an inability to control the amount of time spent on the internet, withdrawal symptoms when not engaged, a diminished social life and adverse work or academic consequences, and it also affects self-esteem of the students.

Dr. Young first introduced the term "Internet Addiction" and defined "It is terming an impulsive control disorder which does not involve an intoxicant." In 1995, Dr. Kimberly S. Young first identified addictive use of the Internet as a distinct psychological disorder utilizing comprehensive case studies of Internet users. Dr. Kimberly Young, a professor at St. Bonaventure University and director of the Centre for Internet Addiction Recovery, developed the IAT to assess symptoms of Internet addiction and compulsivity in a variety of test settings.

The concept of addiction is not easy to define but central to its dependence on substances or activity. Dependence is characterized by overindulgence tolerance, withdrawal, craving and loss of control. Internet access among adolescents has grown exponentially. It becomes a complex virtual universe behind a small screen on which developmental issues play out in odd and new ways, offering new views into thoughts, feelings and behaviour of children and adolescents.

Internet addiction is one of the most recent forms of addiction recorded through Goldberg and young surveys and it is defined as "The forced and excessive use of the internet and the irritation that occurs when the internet is deprived." (Pipperopouls 2002, Mitchell 2000). One of the groups that are at higher risk for Internet addiction is children. Due to educational, recreational, entertainment needs and for other requirements, students tend to use the Internet more. Since they have more free time to use the Internet, they are more susceptible to the phenomenon of "Internet addiction". Internet addiction is associated with various disorders, which leads to poor performance in school and society. It seems essential to investigate the relationship of Internet addiction with psychological disorders symptoms carefully in students.

Studies have reported exponential use of social media, when the government imposed the lockdown during covid 19 period. During these pandemics, the studies showed that TikTok and Instagram were the most widely used applications overshadowing other very popular applications with similar visual affordances and it is a way of escapism. Social media is usually full of unrealistic image and depictions of a glorified life and style. As long as we use social media there is strong belief that I am the best than any other, this means we can only see the side which they want to show us and they

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try to portrait themselves to other which they are not at all. Also, they try to change their physical appearance and compare themselves to every next person they see in the social media. These were some of the pitfalls of extensive use of internet and continuous social media use majorly visible through parameters of in the Personality as aloofness, alienation, identity crisis, self-harm, self-sabotage emerging from learned helplessness. Thus, contributing to lowered self-esteem and confidence heavily dependent on technological use these days.

In addition to the suffering and limitations that the mental disorder creates in the individual, it also causes the person to suffer from discriminations in his/her social and professional activities because of the stigma of mental illness. The impact of mental disorders causes due to internet addiction on society is very important as well as rapid due to their need for care and physical support and their loss of productivity. The burden of emotional care and support for patients' families. Moreover, there is an economic burden, which should not be ignored.

Internet addiction in students is associated with problems such as loss of interpersonal communication, anger, aggression and irritability. It can also cause emotional disturbances to the person, including mental health (anxiety, depression, and loneliness), physical (sleep disorders, nutrition), familial (reduction of family relationships and increasing the distance between family members), job (reduced work effectiveness, dismissal from work) and education (school grades drop). Internet addiction in students is concomitant with depression and insomnia, suicidal thoughts, hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), social phobia and hostility, drug abuse, and problematic alcohol consumption.

Despite the advantages of social networking and the extensive use of the internet, these technological advances have also created several problems of a psychological and social nature that tend to exacerbate and with the increasing passage of time become addictive and affect the Personality of the individual. Researchers in fields as diverse as management, psychology, sociology, and anthropology are today studying these problems especially as it relates to Internet Addiction (Yung et al., 2015, Yen et al. 2008, Young, 1996). Internet addiction has created a new area of relevant research, and many researchers in the field of management are interested in understanding the phenomenon since it has a pervasive influence on factors as diverse as workforce productivity, student performance in school and college, the effect on student health (both physical and mental) and socially unacceptable behaviours. (Griffith 1995; 1996; 1998). Subsequently, outline are the basic conceptual boundaries of the dominant features of youth addiction on the Internet, by authors of this research paper as per the hypothesis.

HYPOTHESIS

To compare the effects of internet addiction if physical impact more than emotional in girls and boys aged between 15-21yrs

METHODOLOGY:

Sample

"The following research work is carried out by using internet addiction test developed by the research authors of this pilot research project work. This self-authored test compromised of 30 statements, where the responses the either be "Yes" or "No". All questions are mandatory to answer. It was conducted to compare the physical and mental effect of internet addiction among individuals. The statements were prepared by considering daily life behaviour, social awareness and online activity."

Procedure & Scoring

To carry out this hypothesis, author and co-authors conducted a self-developed test to prone the hypothesis. This test was administered on 300 individuals belonging to the age group of 15 to 25 years, out of which 150 responses were from girls and 150 responses from boys. These statements are scored in such a way that a response with positive feedback indicate that participate is more addicted to the internet or is unaware of his/her mental and physical impact is marked with a score 1 whereas the response with negative feedback is marked as score 0. In this test, if the participants score comes out to be high, he/she is regarded as more addicted towards the internet; whereas if the score is low, the addiction towards the internet is less of the participant. The total score calculated for the test is out of 30 in which the maximum score can turn out to be 30 and minimum score to be 0. From this test, two such case studies were analysed to note down the effect of Internet Addiction·

Data collection and analysis

For the data collection and analysis, the author and co-authored conducted the online test which comprises 30 statements. To collect the great number of samples, the test was sent to different age group students in the form of google form and made the individuals understand what the study is about, why it is conducted and how it is going to be analysed and what conclusions were given to them. After achieving the target of 301 individuals all the forms were scored in the format of points 0 and 1. Then calculating the final score for all questionnaires. Subjects scoring high in this test show more addiction to the internet and subjects which show low scoring show less addiction to the internet.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Instructions:

"This is a simple test to study the effect of internet addiction on an individual's behaviour, physically and emotionally. The test comprises of 30 statements with option "Yes" and "No". It is necessary to attempt all the statements. There is no time limit for the test."

Age: _____   Gender: _____
Educational Qualification: _____

Statements:

1) The first activity I do, is check my social media accounts in the morning. [Yes/No]
2) I sometime try to hide my online status due to my social awkwardness. [Yes/No]
3) I spend more than 5hrs surfing internet daily. [Yes/No]
4) I usually use my internet using Wi-Fi or from any data card. [Yes/No]
5) I prefer online chats over confronting someone personally. [Yes/No]
6) I manage to stay without being online once in a while.[Yes/No]
7) I'm aware of threats that lead to cyber-crime. [Yes/No]
8) I'm more habitual of giving excuses to avoid household chores, to spend more time online. [Yes/No]
9) At times when I'm offline, I am tempted to go online. [yes/no]
10) Generally, when I am online, I expect a new friend request. [Yes/No]
11) I am always concerned of increasing my friend list. [Yes/No]
12) Receiving positive comments on my post, make me feel better. [Yes/No]

13) Even when I'm out with others, I'm still active on my phone. [Yes/No]

14) I prefer finding solution to my problems online, rather than talking to people. [Yes/No]

15) My social media accounts are hacked sometimes. [Yes/No]

16) I feel relaxed and calm when I'm not online. [Yes/No]

17) I have disturbed sleep pattern due to my internet addiction. [Yes/No]

18) I am sometimes annoyed by the friend requests I receive. [Yes/No]

19) Online certification courses are stressful for me. [Yes/No]

20) I have been more active online to combat my anxiety. [Yes/No]

21) I check my social media accounts more than my mails. [Yes/No]

22) I'm often trolled for my posts on social media. [Yes/No]

23) People judge me by number of friends on my account. [Yes/No]

24) Longer use of internet has made me self-isolated and insomniac. [Yes/No]

25) The excess use of internet has reduced physical socialization. [Yes/No]

26) I prefer to stay alone rather than communicate with people after any problem. [Yes/No]

27) I feel irrited and anxious when there is no network. [Yes/No]

28) Half of time is spend socializing virtually and due to this I feel incapacitated to perform every data. [Yes/No]

29) In spite of being aware of my internet addiction, I'm unable to control it. [Yes/No]

30) My attempt to come out of social surfing are in vain at time. [Yes/No]

Case Study:
Case Study 1:

The first case study related to internet addiction was of a 19 yr old male studying in 9th std coming from a middle socio-economic and rural background. The parents gave him a laptop for his birthday. Gradually he started to use the internet 4-6 hrs and also, he used his play time for online activity. He is not able to control duration spent online. He started to remain aware till late night not give much attention to their study, do not interact with their family members. He also developed an idea of hopelessness and wished to die. In his last consultation from the physician, he was referred to us for sleep disturbance. On mental state examination he had a sad effect on pessimistic views about the future and self. After assessing diagnostic possibilities, it considered problematic internet use and childhood depression. Hence, from this case study, people with internet addiction, like most, produce depression. Also, people with depression use IA as a means of escape from their problem.

Case Study 2:

The second case was a 19 yrs. old boy of lower socio-economic status from Birgunj Nepal presented to our outpatient department with a complaint of being physically and verbally abusive to his mother. He uses his phone for a long time and continuously uses mobile applications overnight. He also searches the various sight like pornography, Omegle and messenger chatting. His mother found that accidentally. The parents seized his phone, then he demanded his mobile and appeared irritable and use abusive words towards his parents and became more aggressive. From this case study it was found that even though parents were unhappy about the child's excessive use of the internet they never sought help until either depression or aggressive behaviours started.

INTERPRETATION

Internet addiction is characterized by excessive or poorly controlled preoccupations, urges or behaviours regarding computer use and internet access that led to impairment or distress. The effect is seen as the person feeling overwhelmed, stressed, depressed, lonely, or anxious. They use the internet to seek solace and also studies show that internet addiction is quite common among the ages 20-30 years old who are suffering from depression and anxiety. Their lack of emotional support means they turn to the internet to fill his need.

Current study was a research work based on internet addiction test and case studies, which was used to compare the effect of internet addiction if the physical impact is more than the emotional effect in teen aged adolescent aged between 15-21 years. So, the internet addiction test comprises 30 statements and their response could either be "Yes" or "No".

The test was conducted to study the effect of internet addiction on participants behaviours physically and emotionally.

The entire sample for study consisted of participants that exhibited more problems, which distract attention and concentration which leads to criticism. Also, IAD (Internet Addiction Disorder) manifests both physical and emotional symptoms. The emotional symptoms include feelings of guilt, anxiety, depression, euphoric feeling when in front of a computer, isolation, defensiveness, etc. Physical symptoms include headache, weight gain or loss, disturbance in sleep, blurred or strained vision; it also causes social withdrawal, feeling more at ease when interacting with people online rather than in person. Internet addiction alters the volume of the brain. The brain changes are similar to those produced by alcohol and cocaine addiction. The IAD shrinks the brain's gray and white matter fibre which result in changes to emotional processing and functioning. The brain will continue to negatively transform as long as addiction continues.

Some of the reason of internet addiction are as follow:

There is no specific reason for internet addiction and the effect may be slow or fast with respect to the person.

- Interpersonal difficulties

Interpersonal difficulties such as introversion, social problems, and poor face-to-face communication skills often lead to internet addiction and also it offers Internet-based relationships to escape from difficulties.

- Social support

Individuals who are trying to overcome their loneliness and have poor communication skills, they resort to virtual relationships and become addicted to chat rooms, interactive games or social media. To reduce this addiction a good communication is established between parents and children and for positive youth development.
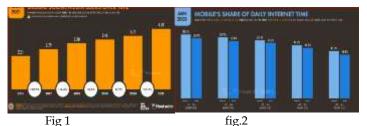
- Psychological factors

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and Depression are major comorbidities that are linked to IAD. The rate of ADHD and IAD is as high as 51.6%. To reduce psychiatric factors like anxiety and depression individuals use drugs like cocaine, nicotine etc. and alcohol, this substance feels usually pleasant, creating strong incentive to use them again.

- Neurobiological factors

Internet addiction belongs to the group of multifactorial polygenic disorders. For each specific case, there is a unique combination of inherited characteristics (nervous tissue structure, secretion, degradation, and reception of neuromediators), and many are extra-environment factors (family-related, social, and ethnic-cultural). One of the main challenges in the development of the

biopsychosocial model of Internet addiction is to determine which genes and neuromediators are responsible for increased addiction susceptibility.

Fig 1   fig.2

According to the Global Digital Report, internet users increase yearly. The typical user now spends 2 hours and 25 minutes on social media each day, equating to roughly one full waking day of their life each week. Mobiles are now the most widely used internet device in all countries. 9 in 10 internet users say they go online via a smartphone, but two-thirds also say that they use a laptop or desktop computer to access the internet. According to the Global Digital Report, females spend more time on the internet than males in the age group of 16-24 years.

From the conduction of Internet addiction test it was found that there are a total 300 responses. Acquired 150 responses were obtained by girl participants and 150 responses obtained by boy participants. In total 300 responses 72% are related to the age group 19-22 years old and 13% related to the 15-18 years old age group and also 13% related to the age group 23-25 years old. In this test, if the subject scores high it is regarded as more addiction towards the internet whereas if the subjects score is low the addiction of the internet is low. The test show results the majority of subjects found to be age group 19-22 years old students, while conduction of this test it was shown that the subject was more emotionally disturbed than physically and also the conduct shows that the girls are more addicted to the internet as compared to boys. After the conduction of the test, it was found out that those students who are more addicted to the internet and their score ranges from 18-25 and above. The average score to be calculated for this test is 15. Hence, according to their scoring which is above 20 and very close to 30 the subject is more addicted to the internet. The reason for this was due to poor communication skills and also the interpersonal difficulties such as introversion, social problems. The internet-based relationship offers a safe alternative for people with aforementioned difficulties to escape from potential rejection and anxiety of interpersonal real-life contact. Also, the individuals who lack a social connection, are feeling loneliness. Also, there is low bonding or connection between parents and their children. Hence, due to internet addiction, individuals suffer from anxiety, depression and other psychological problems.

There are three case studies that were found to be relevant as the case study material mentioned in methodology. So, this case study turns out to be,

In case study 1, the study is related to the effect of internet addiction of a 19 yr old male studying in 9th standard coming from low socioeconomic and rural background. His parents gifted him a laptop on his birthday. Gradually he used the internet for 4-6 hrs and later the time spent increased. He even used his play time for online activity not giving much attention to his studies and family and developed pessimistic views about the future and self and wishes to die. From this case study it was shown that the individual suffering from internet addiction produce depression and also the depression uses the internet as an escape from their problem.

Case study 2 includes a 19-year-old boy of lower socioeconomic status from Birgunj (Nepal) presented as out-patient department with a complaint of being physically and verbally abusive to his mother. He used his phone for a long time and continuously used mobile applications over the night. He also searched various sites and various mobile chatting applications like Omegle and messenger. His mother found his online activity accidentally. The parents seized his phone, then he demanded his phone, then he demanded his mobile and appeared irritable and used abusive words towards his parents and became more aggressive. From this case study it was found that even though parents were unhappy about the child's excessive use of the internet they never sought help until either depressive symptoms or aggressive behaviours started. It can negatively affect personal relationships with beloved ones as well as cause a negative impact on life.

After the complete administration of this test for study of effect of internet addiction on physical and emotional health between the girls and the boys it resulted out with the findings that the subject from various aged group showed more emotionally disturbed, having more behavioural changes and suicidal ideas. The reason for this is social isolation, less person-to-person communication and feelings of hopelessness, etc.

CONCLUSION:

Internet provides a vehicle to promote cognitive, social and physical development but if it is not utilized carefully it can lead to cybercrime and online harassment. Increase in internet usage leads to many emotional and physical health problems which may cause serious and permanent damage to emotional health. Therefore, attention must be given to this subject especially for the benefit of the younger generation. Teenager adolescents with high score represents leading to Internet addiction, by the author are more likely to suffer from emotional and mental stress, depression or social anxiety.

The conclusion of this study is that teenager adolescents more emotionally impacted towards internet addiction than physically, we have uncovered some ways to treat the IAD, such as doing sport or spending more time with friends and developing healthy social networks, parental guidance.

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