



RESEARCH ARTICLE

College Students' Internet Addiction against Emotional Reasoning

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Keywords

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The internet has influenced people in many means via smartphones, tablets, laptops and computers. The present study aims to examine college students' addiction to the internet and their emotions due to the addiction. Researcher employed a survey method to measure internet addiction and emotional reasoning. Two scales, namely Chens' Internet Addiction Scale and GnaWi's Emotional Reasoning Scale, were used to gather data for the attempt. The sample of the study consisted of 820 college students studying in the arts and science colleges of the Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu. The results of the study shows that males possess more internet addiction and emotional reasoning than their counterparts. Also, the students studying in co-education colleges have high internet addiction and emotional reasoning than students studying in women's colleges. It is recommended for reducing internet addiction and emotional reasoning, cognitive behaviour therapy may be practiced.

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INTRODUCTION

Addiction is a crucial issue and a universal disorder that leads to mental health problems in adolescents and young adults. Pathological internet use, which results in impairments or distress and is characterized by excessive or poorly controlled behaviours regarding mobile, tablet, laptop, and computer use. Previous research indicated that internet addiction was frequently associated with mental health conditions like affective and anxiety disorders (Adams, 2017). An internet-addicted individual may encounter risk factors for mental and physical issues. Sending illicit photos, having online affairs, and cyberbullying are some of the perilous effects of excessive use of the internet (Internet Addiction in Teenagers, 2021). This creates mental issues such as distortion in the emotional state.

Emotions are the evidence of truth in emotional reasoning, which is misleading because feelings reflect thoughts and beliefs, and distorted emotions have no validity. Things feel so negative during the depression, and most depression exists when things feel so negative (Burns, 1980). It is a process that goes within to correct and know well the other person's experience, evoked by another individual's situation that organizes and guides the process (Merritt, 2022).

Revealing from Reviewed Studies

The reviewed studies on internet addiction and emotional reasoning reveal what is the research gap. Students with certain disabilities have a greater susceptibility to internet addiction (Bedrossian, 2023). Internet addiction is more for males (Mlouki, 2023). There is a positive relationship between school victimization and internet addiction with life satisfaction and loneliness (Shi, 2023). Also a significant relationship was found between internet addiction with the potential of gained weight and quality of life on consuming food while using the internet (Slametiningsih, 2022). Highly lonely students were most addicted to the internet, followed by normal lonely students; however, non-lonely students were the least internet addicted (Bhandari, 2022). The various risk factors associated

with internet addictions, are psychological distress, anxiety, mood disorders, suicidality, aggression, stress and sleep problems (Periasamy, 2022).

Although there were some trends for depressed participants to show greater levels of emotional reasoning relative to non-depressed participants, none of these differences attained significance. Whereas, depressed participants engaged in more non-self-referent emotional reasoning than never-depressed participants (Berle, 2013a). Berle (2013b) found that both the low and high-dysphoric participants demonstrated emotional reasoning, and there were no significant differences in scores on the emotional reasoning task between the low and high-dysphoric groups. In another study of Berle (2013b), self-referent emotional reasoning interpretations showed small-sized positive correlations with depression symptoms.

Significance of the study

Twenty first century mankind is privileged to access the internet all through the day with the help of various gadgets. It is easier for everyone to access internet via an omnipresent mobile phone. Internet usage of people is drastically getting increased nowadays, including the college students. As a matter of fact, the amount of time spent on the internet is more and it affects emotions of the individual. The future leaders are starving to control doing, taking or using, which is harmful without knowing so, with the universe at the fingertip in the form of technology. Technology enables the students to feel and express emotions, as technology and emotions are viewed from a variety of disciplines. The positive effects enhance well-being and feel more connected with people, and the negative effect causes depression, and anxiety. So the investigator is curious to find out the relationship between internet addiction and emotional reasoning.

Research questions

1. How far the personal, familial and institutional variables influence internet addiction of college students?
2. To what extent the personal, familial and institutional variables influence emotional reasoning of college students?
3. Is internet addiction of college students related with their emotional reasoning?
4. Does internet addiction influence emotional reasoning of college students?

Objectives

1. To find out whether the college students differ in internet addiction with regard to the personal, familial and institutional variables.
2. To find out whether the college students differ in emotional reasoning with regard to the personal, familial and institutional variables.
3. To know whether the intensity of internet addiction of college students is related to their emotional reasoning.
4. To know whether the intensity of internet addiction influences emotional reasoning of college students.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the internet addiction of college students with regard to select attributive variables—personal, familial and institutional.
2. There is no significant difference in the emotional reasoning of college students with regard to select attributive variables—personal, familial and institutional.
3. There is no significant relationship between internet addiction and the emotional reasoning of college students.
4. There is no significant influence of internet addiction on emotional reasoning of college students.

METHOD

A survey method has been opted employing two tools namely, a five-point GnaWi's Emotional Reasoning Scale (GERS) developed by the authors (2022) containing 61 statements and an adopted tool, Chens' Internet Addiction Scale (2003) for collecting the data from college students studying in arts and science colleges of Tirunelveli district. After establishing content validity by three experts and item analysis, the final version of GERS contained 44 statements, to identify the emotional

reasoning of college students. The reliability for GERS and Chens' Internet Addiction Scale were 0.834 and 0.836 respectively. A sample of 820 students from government, aided, and self-financing arts and science colleges located both in rural and urban areas in Tirunelveli district were selected using stratified random sampling technique.

Data analysis

The statistical techniques used in this study were t-test for independent groups, pearson's product moment correlation and regression analysis.

Table 1: Significance of Difference in Internet Addiction with regard to Attributive Variables of College Students

Attributive Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	P
Gender	Male	371	68.1	16.99	8.90	0.001*
	Female	449	57.3	17.43		
Age	17-20	504	63.2	18.60	2.091	0.037*
	above 20	316	60.5	17.00		
Nature of Accommodation	Day Scholar	754	62.5	17.98	1.70	0.090
	Hosteller	66	58.6	18.44		
College Base	Rural	389	63.1	18.19	1.37	0.172
	Urban	431	61.4	17.88		
Nature of the College	Women	230	54.8	17.13	7.57	0.001*
	Co-ed	590	65.1	17.57		

* Significant at 1% level

Table 2: Significance of Difference in Emotional Reasoning with regard to Attributive Variables of College Students

Attributive Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	P
Gender	Male	371	123.7	20.26	5.08	0.001*
	Female	449	116.8	18.14		
Age	17-20	504	120.1	20.11	0.294	0.769
	above 20	316	119.7	18.27		
Nature of Accommodation	Day Scholar	754	120.0	19.50	0.470	0.639
	Hosteller	66	118.8	18.52		
College Base	Rural	389	120.0	19.77	0.1042	0.917
	Urban	431	119.9	19.11		
Nature of the College	Women	230	115.4	17.76	4.25	0.001*
	Co-ed	590	121.7	19.75		

* Significant at 1% level

Table 3: Correlation between Internet Addiction and Emotional Reasoning of College Students

Variables	N	r	P
Internet Addiction vs Emotional Reasoning	820	0.332	0.001*

*Significant at 1% level

Table 4: Regression of Internet Addiction on Emotional Reasoning of College Students

Variables	R	R ²	F	SE	T	p
Internet Addiction vs Emotional Reasoning	0.332	0.110	101	3.724	6.77	0.001*

*Significant at 1% level

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results on internet addiction

1. The male students are more internet addicted than their counterparts (Mlouki, 2023). This may be due to the insincerity and liberations by the parents of the male students. Lack of parenting for male students may also be a cause for the risk of addiction.
2. The students aged from 17 to 20 are more addicted than those above 20. The teenage is the stage of seeking for independence, new experiences and influenced by gender, peer group and family expectations. In today's context, the adolescents wish to spend their maximum time with peer rather than with family or they want to be alone, that may be a cause for internet addiction.
3. The nature of accommodation did not significantly affect college students' internet addiction.
4. There was no significant difference in internet addiction of college students with regard to college base.
5. The internet addiction is more for students studying in co-education than those at women's college. The influence of the opposite gender in the students of co-education colleges to treat themselves as hero/heroine to the counterparts. Since the college students at the end of adolescent stage and early adult stage they have more influence on the peer, induce to break the rules / doing the unfruitful things may be the reason for internet addiction of students studying in co-education.

Results on emotional reasoning

6. The emotional reasoning is more among males than females. Males believe that there is an issue for their counterparts and take the emotions as evidence and for favouring female may be served as a reason for the more emotional reasoning among males. It may be perceived that male students reason from their emotions and not from evidences. They may rely on that what they feel as true though there is no evidence against their belief. Eventually, his emotions turn out to be the evidence for the truth, his thoughts become biased and he form invalid conclusions about himself or the reality based on his emotions. Many studies reveal that anxiety tend to engage in emotional reasoning and lead to draw invalid conclusions about the situation depend on their subjective emotional response (Arntz et al., 1995 & Gangemi et al., 2007). Beck, Emery, and Greenberg clearly explained the mechanism of emotional reasoning (Beck et al., 1985). Several patients with anxiety use feelings to validate thoughts and start a vicious circle.
7. There was no significant difference in emotional reasoning of college students with regard to age, nature of accommodation and college base.
8. There was a significant difference in emotional reasoning of college students with regard to nature of college (Table 2). The mean scores indicate that emotional reasoning is more for students studying in co-education than their counter parts. This may be due to the environment in which the friendship, care and affection towards the opposite gender occurs that lead to the emotional situation wherein the emotions play a vital role.

9. There was a low and positive correlation ($r = 0.354$) between internet addiction and the emotional reasoning of college students (Table 3). Since more amount of time is spent on the internet, procrastination, blaming and a restless mind occurs which in turn affects emotions of an individual. Too much *internet* usage was related to various psychological disorders namely depression, anxiety and stress. This anxiety or depression or stress may affect the emotional status of the students and thus affect their emotional reasoning.
10. The result of linear regression (R) analysis shows that the internet addiction influences the college students' emotional reasoning by 11% (Table 4).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers, the second parents, may attempt genuine efforts to lead a successful and happy life, free from the internet related disorders. The peer influence that is not the everlasting one should be made clear to the students by the teacher. Apart from the peer another inspiration is there for the television artists, their real life vs reel life may be explained. More interesting movement based activities shall be monitored by the class in-charges. The unstable emotions of the students in the academic family or personal family may not be taken as the truth tracker. The emotional stability of the students may be observed by the teachers and the students in need may be given assistance.

Parents should observe the activities of their male wards, especially wards and monitor how and on what they are spending their majority of time. The male students who are fond of enjoying new experiences and wish to have an adventurous life should be advised that the new experiences may give pleasant results. The morality can be taught by engaging the children in doing household activities. Quality time is to be shared by the parents for the parental care. The emotions are not the only sign of the reality but it should be made understood by the parents to their children. Proper medication may manage symptoms of underlying mental illness and control intrusive thoughts about going online. Internet addiction may be reduced by keeping engaged in the interested work or hobbies. By improving the sleep quantity and engaging in physical activity internet addiction may be reduced. A better understanding of the co-parenting effect may be provided (Sun, 2023), to defend against internet addiction among the youth. Apart from peer influence, the media artists also influence the students lives. They should be made to realize that the reel life of these artists are not actually true about themselves.

Male students may show the benefits of being sincere, orderly and obedient. A 15 minute break for every 45 minutes of internet usage and administering relevant therapy may constantly incorporated in treatment of internet addiction. Such individuals may keep engaged in the assigned work and naturally get away from unnecessary things. For the work-life balance, there should be equal allotment for personal life too, especially self-love is irresistible for a happy living. In terms of hours in a day the quality of time spent for internet and other activities in a day may be administered. If the time is spent in a vain, the individual may get involved in the activity of his/her own interest. The more amount of time spent on internet may be due to some free Wi-Fi connections. Such things may be avoided by controlling the impulse of going online by utilising the public networks. In India more than half of the population includes women; the emotions of women may not be taken as the evidence of truth for furthering the decisions. The playful activities of friends may also influence the emotions of individuals; they may be controlled by the knowledge of emotions at the primary and secondary level of education. The emotions can be identified with the support of mood journals, accepting emotions, balancing the emotions by remaining calm and apparent minded in a stressful situation that may cope with the emotional reasoning. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and group therapy are common therapies for internet addiction and emotional reasoning.

Emotional reasoning is caused by how one looks at this world and real life experiences. When the individual is subjected to anxiety or stress the emotions are triggered in an unusual way. So, he becomes emotional and make assumptions based on these feelings. The excessive use of internet causes stress or some problems in their behavior which trigger the emotions and help them to make judgements which lacks evidence for truth. So, to overcome these type of unhelpful thinking style one can practice mindfulness, journaling, and meditation. Because these practices can give insight into his behaviour patterns and why he/she experiences these emotions. Once this fact is understood he

can modify his/her behaviour. Moreover, the exposure to situations or events that cause anxiety or stress which influence negative cognition should be reduced.

Thus from the study it is revealed that male students aged above from 17 to 20 studying in co-education college show more internet addiction. Emotional reasoning is high for male students studying in co-education colleges. There is a petite relation in internet addiction of college students with their emotional reasoning.

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