



The association between internet addiction and self-harm behaviour among young adult

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the association between self-harm behavior and internet addiction amongst young adults as the behavior and action of parents and peer group play an important role in development of an individual mind. The data obtaining scales were questionnaires Beck Anxiety inventory (BAI) (Aaron T. Beck) and were Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS) by P.Y. Singh & Mahesh Bhargava (1990) This research study showed that there is a positive correlation between Internet Addiction and prevalence of Self-Harm Behavior in young adults using descriptive analysis 50 male and 50 female were selected to questionnaire. Furthermore, it was also found that there is significant difference between the relationship of Internet addiction based on gender; Self-punishment and Excessive use of Internet and Self Esteem and Excessive use of Internet of male and female on various dimensions. It was also found that in females the scores of Self-harm inventory were relatively higher than the scores of males; males scoring more in the Internet addiction test. This shows the tendency of males falling prey to Internet Addiction more and females getting involved in behaviors related to Self-Harm more than boys.

Keywords: self-harm behavior; internet addiction; young adult male and female

Introduction

Self-Harm –“Self harm is defined as the direct or intentional mutilation or injuring of body tissue, without any suicidal intention. This term in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM- V) is referred to as self-mutilation. Self-harm is seen as a way that relieves the mind from the emotional pain as it transfers the emotional pain into physical pain.”

Internet Addiction: Internet addiction is described as an impulse control disorder, which does not involve use of an intoxicating drug and is very similar to pathological gambling. Some Internet users may develop an emotional attachment to on-line friends and activities they create on their computer screens. Internet users may enjoy aspects of the Internet that allow them to meet, socialize, and exchange ideas through the use of chat rooms, social networking websites, or "virtual communities." Other Internet users spend endless hours researching topics of interest Online or "blogging”.

Similar to other addictions, those suffering from Internet addiction use the virtual fantasy world to connect with real people through the Internet, as a substitution for real-life human connection, which they are unable to achieve normally.

Review of literature helps to develop the researcher, an insight of the problem to be investigated, to get information of what others have done in related field, and what remains to be done. Psychologists theorize that self-harming behaviors helps to regulate sufferers' negative emotions. If a person is feeling bad, angry, upset, anxious or depressed and lacks a better way to express it, self-injury may fill that role. Thompson S.J. (1996) began his empirical Internet addiction research in 1995 with focus on the mass media effects of the Internet on society. The research, also evaluating dependency, was presented at the McNair Conference at SUNY Buffalo, and at the Penn State McNair Conference in 1996. He academically surveyed over 100 people in 1995 who claimed online addiction at the time, and, after winnowing down viable participant response to a value of N=32, concluded in his published Internet Connectivity: Addiction and Dependency Study that Internet addiction, while needing more research, was often the way people felt rather than what was actually transpiring clinically, with his research results statistically confirming that the newness of the Internet, its empowerment of the individual with learning and knowledge, along with online community development and relationships, was why people were spending inordinate amounts of time on the Internet.

According to Buchholz (2009) ^[3], teenagers who are addicted to the Internet are more likely to engage in self-harm behavior. Researchers surveyed 1,618 adolescents aged 13 to 18 from China's Guangdong Province about behavior such as hitting themselves, pulling their own hair, or pinching or burning themselves, and gave them a test to gauge Internet addiction. The test found that about 10 percent of the students surveyed were moderately addicted to the Internet, while less than one percent was severely addicted. The students ranked as moderately

addicted to the Internet were 2.4 times more likely to have self-injured one to five times in the past 6 months than students without an addiction. The 16 moderately-to-severely addicted students were almost five times more likely than non-addicted students to have self-injured six or more times in the past 6 months. According to the results suggested a "strong and significant" association between Internet addiction and self-injury in adolescence even after accounting for other variables previously associated with the behavior, including depression, family dissatisfaction, or stressful life events.

In a study done by Peng (2009), a population-based cross-sectional survey of 1618 high school students aged 13-18 years in Guangzhou city, Guangdong Province, PR China. Deliberate SIB (Self-Injurious Behavior) was measured using self-reported questionnaire; internet addiction was assessed using the Internet Addiction Test (IAT). The results came out to be: 263 (16.3%) participants reported having committed some form of SIB in the past 6 months. 73 (4.5%) had committed SIB 6 times or more, and 157 (9.7%) 1-5 times. The majority of respondents were classified as normal users of the internet ($n = 1392$, 89.2%), with 158 (10.2%) moderately and 10 (0.6%) severely addicted to the internet. After adjusting for potential confounders, the odds ratio for SIB was 2.0 (95% CI 1.1 to 3.7) for those who were classified as moderately and severely addicted to the internet when compared to the normal group. The conclusion of the study conducted was that SIB is common in adolescence in the study population in China. Addiction to the internet is detrimental to mental health and increases the risk of self-injury among adolescents.

According to Yen (2014), there are associations between the severity of Internet addiction symptoms with various dimensions of anxiety and depression symptoms and self-esteem among adolescents diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in Taiwan. A total of 287 adolescents aged between 11 to 18 years who had been diagnosed with ADHD participated in this study. Their severity of Internet addiction symptoms was assessed using the Chen Internet Addiction Scale. Anxiety and depression symptoms and self-esteem were assessed using the Taiwanese version of the Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children (MASC-T), the Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), respectively. The results indicated that higher physical symptoms and lower harm avoidance scores on the MASC-T, higher somatic discomfort/retarded activity scores on the CES-D, and lower self-esteem scores on the RSES were significantly associated with more severe Internet addiction symptoms.

Problem

The present study was to assess the Internet addiction and Self harm behavior among young adult

Objectives of the study

1. To study the relationship between Internet addiction and Self harm.
2. To study the relationship of Internet addiction based on gender.
3. To study the differentiation of self-harm between boys and girls.
4. To study the relationship of Self-punishment and Excessive use of Internet.
5. To study the relationship of Self Esteem and Excessive use of Internet.

Sample

The study was conducted on 100 students (50 male and 50 female) selected from Delhi Public School sector 45, Gurgaon (Haryana). The sample was collected from students of all different classes from 10th to 12th etc. of age group 15 to 20 years.

Tool

For obtaining reliable and valid data, researchers used Internet-Addiction Test (IAT) by Dr. Kimberly Young, 1995 to measure Internet Addiction, Inventory of Statements about Self-Injury (ISAS) by E. David Klonsky & Catherine R. Glenn, it assesses lifetime frequency of 12 NSSI behaviors performed "intentionally (i.e., on purpose) and without suicidal intent and Socio-demographic. It included details of name, age, sex, address, religion, marital status, family type and monthly family income.

Procedure

To begin with the research, the researcher was contact the 200 college students from Delhi. The nature of the study was explained to the students and their respective consent was taken regarding collection of the data. The questionnaire was distributed among the students. Two questionnaires Beck Anxiety inventory (BAI) (Aaron T. Beck) and were Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS) by P.Y. Singh & Mahesh Bhargava (1990) were given to students. Instruction was given to the students regarding the how to fill the questionnaire. It can empirically determine, the time factor for responding to the questionnaire, and we can get acquainted with time factor because time is one of the important aspects for research work. After that, the filled questionnaire was collected online from the students and they were assured of confidentiality.

This was done mainly to find out the reliability of the research tools used in the study. This ensures that the data to be collected for investigation is free from errors, and worthy enough to use for testing the set of hypothesis with much confidence.

The test was conducted, score obtained was calculated for each subscale, raw score was converted into percentile score and then interpretations, conclusions and suggestions was made on that basis.

Result

Table 1: The correlation between internet addiction and self-harm in the sample of females

	Internet Addiction Test Total	ISAS Total
Internet Addiction Test Total		
Pearson Correlation	1	.320*
Sig. (2-tailed)	.50	.025
N		50

Note: * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table -1 discusses the correlation between internet addiction and self-harm among females. It was found that there was a significant correlation of 0.05 level (2-tailed). This correlation according to the hypothesis came out to be more than the correlation between internet addiction and self-harm behavior in boys. This interprets that somewhere girls are more prone to getting involved in self-harm behavior due to spending excessive time online. It is already evident that girls post more pictures on social media than boys do, they link their self-esteem to the number of likes and comments on their pictures more than boys. And when their expectations of likes and comments are not met they tend to feel small or bad about themselves. Low self-esteem is a big cause behind self-harm behavior which was also a part of the objectives of this dissertation report. Low self-esteem accounts for low levels of confidence in self and internet addiction only worsens the case, not only internet addiction but any addiction is formed only when a person lacks will and determination in him or herself.

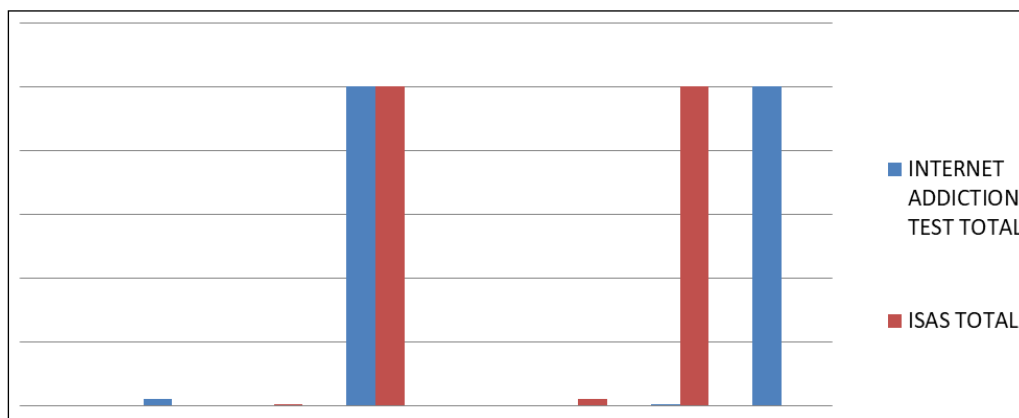


Fig 1

Table 2: Mean Scores, S.D. and ' Value for emotional maturity of Boys and Girls

	Internet Addiction Test Total	ISAS Total
Internet Addiction Test Total		
Pearson Correlation	1	.553**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.50	.000
N		50

Table 2 discusses the correlation between Internet Addiction and self-harm among males. It was found that there was a significant correlation of 0.01 level (2-tailed). In accordance with the hypothesis, the correlation in males between internet addiction and self-harm behavior came out to be less than the correlation for females. The fact that Internet Addiction scores individually were found to be more in case of males but their self-harm tendency due to it was a lot less low. This shows that males are less likely to put values on their life online, but not in all cases. Generally, males tend to not overthink about themselves which saves them from obsessing about self-worth. And hence, generally have an average amount of self-esteem. This saves them from falling prey to low self-esteem issues but on the other side their high score in internet addiction is dangerous because this shows that they tend to spend more time online and less time doing other activities, or being with friends and family. Internet addiction in itself is a dangerous addiction with a lot of implications of its own.

Table 3: Mean, SD, and t-values of Internet Addiction Test

Gender	N	MEAN	SD	t-test
Male	50	34.9	15.6	0.76
Female	50	32.6	14.3	

Table 3 discusses the mean, SD and t-test values of internet addiction test for both males and females. It was found that for males, the mean and SD were 34.9, 15.6 respectively. And for females, the mean and SD were 32.6, 14.3 respectively. The t-test value for these scores were found to be 0.76. This shows the relation between the two variables taken is significant and the hypothesis was found to be true.

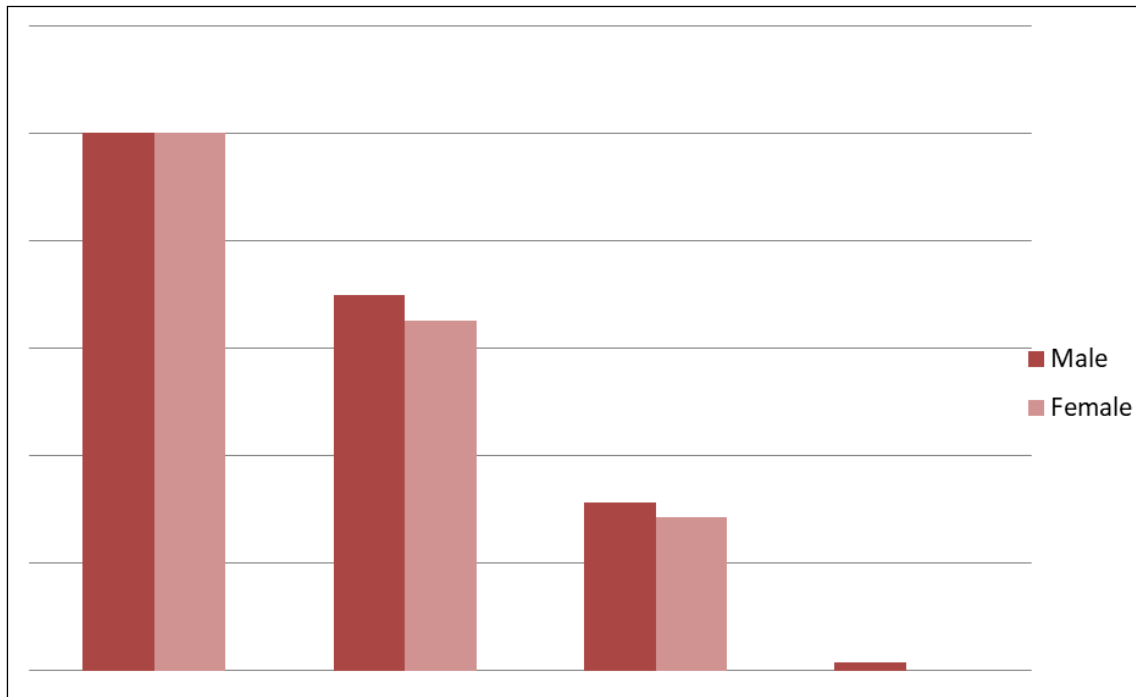


Fig 3: Mean, SD, and t-values of Internet Addiction Test

Table 4: Mean, SD, and t-values of Inventory of Statements about self-injury

Gender	N	MEAN	SD	t-test
Male	50	15.7	17.32	0.81
Female	50	12.89	16.6	

Table 4 discusses the mean, SD and t-test value of Inventory of statements about self-harm for both males and females. It was found that, the mean and SD for males were, 15.7 and 17.32 respectively. And the mean and SD for females were found to be, 12.89 and 16.6 respectively. The t-score was found to be 0.81 for these scores. This shows that there is a significant relationship between both Internet Addiction and Self-harm behavior among young adults.

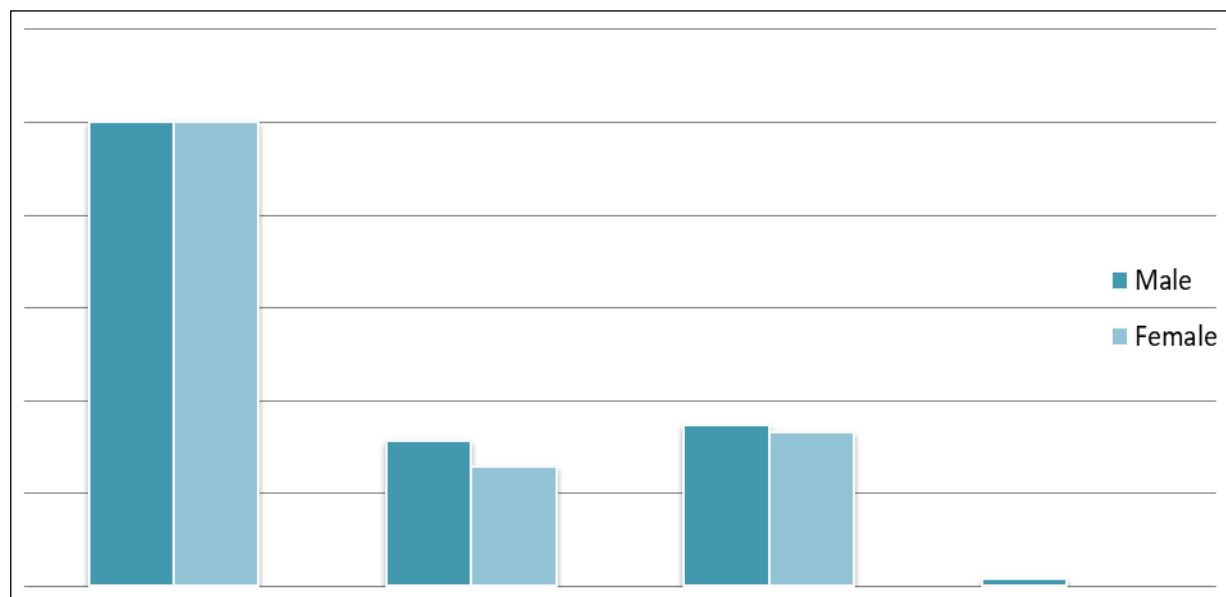


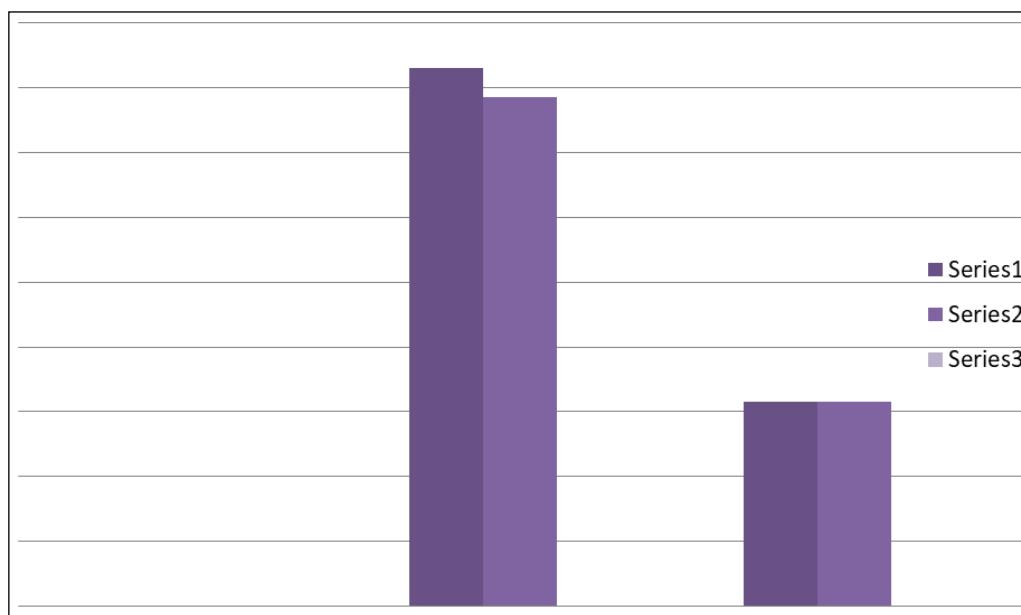
Fig 4: Mean, SD, and t-values of Inventory of Statements about self-injury

Table 5: Total scores for IAT and ISAS for males and females

Gender	IAT Total	ISAS Total
Male	1661	630
Female	1570	632

Table 5 The total scores of males for IAT and ISAS tests were found to be 1661 and 630 which were more in number for the case of IAT and lesser in case of ISAS than female scores. Female scores for both IAT and ISAS test were found to be 1570 and 632 respectively which were more in case of ISAS than male scores. This also goes according to the hypothesis that females are more likely to get involved in behaviors like self-harm because they depend less on other kinds of coping behaviors like alcohol or drug abuse during a difficult situation when talking in comparison to boys.

For the internet addiction scale scores, males scored more according to the samples that were collected. This shows that in comparison to females males spend more time online and are more likely to be a prey to internet addiction disorder.

**Fig 5:** Total scores for IAT and ISAS for males and females

Discussion

Analysis and interpretation are considered as the heart of the research work. It is associated with the drawing of inference from the collected facts after an analytical study. Analysis of data means studying the organized material in order to discover inherent facts. "Two or more variables considered to be related, in a statistical context, if their values change so that as the value of one variable increases or decreases so does the value of the other variable {although it may be in the opposite direction}" (Trochim, 2006). The scholar had respected the professional ethics and valid and authenticated data was put forth for study, duly collected from primary as well as secondary sources. "The extent to which data are obscured in these ways is unknown; however, more extreme ethical violations involving the complete fabrication of data are thought to be exceeding lyrarein science" (Marshall, 2000). In a sense, data analysis begins with a statement of hypotheses, the construction of the cortical model, or at the very least, anticipated relationships among a set of variables" (Singleton & Straits, 2005).

These data are studied from various angles in various accordance with the objective of the study whether to explore new facts or to interpret already existed facts. The utility of collected information is in the proper analysis and interpretation. The major objectives of the present study are to:

1. To study the relationship between Internet addiction and Self harm.
2. To study the relationship of Internet addiction based on gender.

Conclusion

The aim of the article was conceptualized on the basic thought that the young generation many a times struggles a lot while getting addicted towards internet so much that it turns them towards self-harming behavior in such young age. It can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between Internet Addiction and prevalence of Self-Harm behavior in young adults. And in females the scores of Self-harm inventory were relatively higher than the scores of males; males scoring more in the Internet addiction test. This shows the tendency of males falling prey to Internet Addiction more and females getting involved in behaviors related to Self-Harm more than boys. The reason for the above results may be because of the fact that females depend less on other coping behaviors like alcoholism, or drug intake. Also, they like to form groups and talk about subjects to people more

than boys so it is more relatable for a girl to go online and chat on a secret self-injury group to share her life problems and gain motivation to perform self-harm behavior.

For the internet addiction scale scores, males scored more according to the samples that were collected. This shows that in comparison to females males spend more time online and are more likely to be a prey to internet addiction disorder. The relation between self-punishment and the excessive use of internet also was also shown. High scorers for the subscale of excessive use of internet in the IAT test were reported to score high in the self-punishment subscale as well. So, a direct link could be monitored in both. The study of relation between self-esteem and internet addiction shows that the number of cases with lower self-esteem reported higher in the internet addiction test; because they are more likely to form an addiction than the people with a high level of self-esteem.

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