

## Internet Addiction and Mental Health of Higher Secondary Level Students

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### Abstract:

*In present time Internet has become very important in our life which cannot be ignored. The last decade there has been an explosive growth in the use of internet not only in India but also worldwide. Overuse of internet creates a particular addiction which is called Internet Addiction, which can affects one's physical health, mental health, social relationship and academic achievement. The main objective of the study was to find out the relationship between internet addiction and mental health. The present study conducted on the sample of 100 higher secondary level students of public schools from Dehradun district of Uttarakhand state of India. Internet addiction scale, a self made tool and Singh & Gupta's mental health battery were used for the data collection. The major findings of the study showed that internet addiction has significantly negative relationship with mental health. The findings of the study also showed that there is a significant difference between the level of internet addiction of boys and girls students.*

**Keywords:** Internet Addiction, Mental Health, Higher Secondary Level Students, Public Schools.

### I. INTRODUCTION

In present time Internet has become very important in our life which cannot be ignored. The internet is a global system of interconnected computer networks that are setup to exchange various types of data. Internet provides a wide range of information interaction functions, including: communication i.e., sending e-mails, chatting, transmitting data, social networking, etc., accessing information i.e., searching databases, reading electronic books, etc., and supplying information i.e., transferring files, graphics, etc. (Stallings, 2004).

The last decade there has been an explosive growth in the use of internet not only in India but also worldwide. The Internet connects information, resources and provides various services, such as electronic mail, online chat, file transfer and file sharing, online gaming, and interlinked hypertext documents and resources of (www) World Wide Web (new world encyclopedia). Overuse of internet creates a particular addiction which is called Internet Addiction. The term Internet addiction was first proposed by Dr. Ivan Golberg in 1995 for pathological compulsive internet usages. Growing evidence suggests that the use of the Internet can become dysfunctional and cause negative impacts on daily living. Internet addiction has been almost systematically conceptualized within the framework of behavioral (nonchemical) addictions (Joel Billieux 2015). "Addiction" has been defined as "a persistent behavioral pattern characterized by: a desire or need to continue the activity which places it outside voluntary control; a tendency to increase the frequency or amount of the activity over time; psychological dependence on the pleasurable effects of the activity; and, a detrimental effect on the individual and society" (Walker M. B. 1989). Researchers have attempted to operationally define IA by examining its diagnostic criteria,

including (i) preoccupation, (ii) social isolation, (iii) anxiety, (iv) psychological addiction, (v) loss of control, (vi) withdrawal symptoms, (vii) lack of ability to decrease Internet use, (viii) increasing tolerance, and (ix) increasing Internet use despite awareness of its detrimental consequences (Widyanto et al. 2007).

Overuse of internet or Internet Addiction affects one's physical health, mental health, social relationship and academic achievement. Internet addiction leads to symptoms traditionally associated with substance-related addictions, namely mood modification, salience, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse (Griffiths, 2005). Many studies have shown that the Internet Addiction is one of the major factors influencing physical and mental health. Mental health is defined as a state of well being in which every individual realize his and her own potential, cope with the normal stress of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to her and his community. Researches show that internet addiction is often associated with other forms of mental distress such as depression; impulse control disorder and low self esteem (Young K.S., Rodgers R.C., 1998).

Nalwa and Anand (2003) conducted a study for preliminary investigation of the extent of Internet Addiction in school children. They identified two groups, dependents and independents and found that the dependents were found to delay other work to spend time online, lose sleep due to late night logons and feel life would be boring without the internet and scored higher on loneliness measures than independents. Jahanian Ramezan & Seifury Zeinab (2013) conducted a study and the results reveal that there is a significant and inverse relationship between Internet addiction and students' mental health.

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The number of Internet users in India has reached 354 million by the end of June 2015. The latest figure indicates that India has more Internet users than US and become the second largest country by the number of internet users after China. According to the report published by the “Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)”, the Internet users in India have grown 17% in the initial 6 months of this year, adding 52 million new users (dazeinfo.com). These figures clearly indicate the massive growth of Internet users in India.

In India very few researchers have been conducted in the field of cyber world and its impact on mental health. The present study was undertaken to determine the relationship between internet addiction and mental health. The study is only delimited to Dehradun District (block Doiwala and Raipur) of Uttarakhand state of India.

### II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the level of internet addiction of boys and girls.
2. To know the mental health of boys and girls.
3. To know the relationship of internet addiction and mental health of students.

### III. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference between the level of internet addiction of boys and girls.
2. There is no significant difference between the mental health of boys and girls.
4. There is no significant relationship between internet addiction and mental health of students.

### IV. SAMPLE

In the present study, random sampling was used for the collection of data. A sample of 100 Higher Secondary level students was taken from Public Schools of Doiwala and Raipur block of Dehradun district of Uttarakhand state of India. There were 57 boys and 43 girls students included in the sample.

### V. TOOL USED

The following tools were used in the study-

1. Internet Addiction: Internet addiction was measured by Internet Addiction Scale, which was developed by the researcher to measure the level of Internet Addiction among students. It consisted of 60 items and it has six dimensions viz; For Educational Purpose, For Online Shopping Purpose, For Watching Different Programmes, For Playing Video Games, For Social Networking and Watching Porn Sites. The reliability of this scale is **0.80** by test-re-test method and **0.74** by split half method.
2. Mental Health: Mental health was measured by Mental Health battery (MHB) developed by A. K. Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta (2013) was used for assessing mental health of 13 to 22 years age group. It consists of 130 items. This Mental Health Battery consists of six popular indices of mental health i.e., (1) Emotional Stability, (2) Over all Adjustment, (3) Autonomy (4) Security- Insecurity,

(5) Self-Concept and (6) Intelligence respectively.

**Results:** Following Tables present the results of the current study-

**Table: 1** Difference Between The Level of Internet Addiction of Boys and Girls

Dimensions Of Internet Addiction Scale (IAS)	Boys			Girls			t-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
For Educational Purpose	57	29.08	8.01	43	24.49	6.49	3.16*
For Online Shopping Purpose	57	30.54	9.31	43	25.28	7.97	3.04*
For Watching Different Programmes	57	30.70	8.98	43	23.77	7.09	4.31*
For Playing Video Games	57	23.42	10.42	43	15.67	6.81	4.48*
For Social Networking	57	26	8.66	43	20.02	7.22	3.76*
For Watching Porn Sites	57	18.07	10.31	43	12.51	5.97	3.39*
Total/ Overall	57	157.75	43.92	43	121.74	28.45	4.96*

Table: 1 shows the difference between the level of internet addiction of girls and boys students. The table indicates that boys obtained mean score 29.08 in dimension-I (For Educational Purpose), 30.54 in dimension-II (For Online Shopping Purpose), 30.70 in dimension-III (For Watching Different Programmes), 23.42 in dimension-IV (For Playing Video Games), 26 in dimension-V (For Social Networking) and 18.07 in dimension-VI (For Watching Porn Sites). Whereas girls obtained mean score 24.49 in dimension-I (For Educational Purpose), 25.28 in dimension-II (For Online Shopping Purpose), 23.77 in dimension-III (For Watching Different Programmes), 15.67 in dimension-IV (For Playing Video Games), 20.02 in dimension-V (For Social Networking) and 12.51 in dimension-VI (For Watching Porn Sites). Overall, the level of internet addiction scale, boys obtained high mean score (in total, m=157.75) in comparison to girls (in total, m=121.74). The t-value found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance for df 98, because in all dimensions of internet addiction scale, the calculated t-value (in total, 4.96) is higher than the table value (1.98). Therefore the hypothesis, ‘there is no significant difference between the level of internet addiction of boys and girls,’ stands to be rejected.

**Table: 2** Difference Between Mental Health of Girls and Boys

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	Level of significance
Boys	57	77.42	10.64	98	0.655	Not significance
Girls	43	78.6	7.47			

Table: 2 shows the difference between mental health of girls and boys students. Boys obtained high mean score (m=77.42) in comparison to girls (m=78.6). The t-value found not to be significant at 0.05 level of significance for df 98, because the calculated t-value (0.655) is lesser than the table value (1.98). Therefore the hypothesis, ‘there is no significant difference between the level of internet addiction of boys and girls,’ stands to be accepted.

Table: 3: Relationship of internet addiction and mental health of the students

Dimensions Of Internet Addiction Scale (IAS)	Mental Health
1.For Educational Purpose	-0.15
2.For Online Shopping Purpose	-0.19
3.For Watching Different Programmes	-0.32*
4.For Playing Video Games	-0.45*
5.For Social Networking	-0.39*
6.For Watching Porn Sites	-0.23*
<b>Total / Overall</b>	<b>-0.37*</b>

At df 98 the 'r' value is significant at .05 level = 0.195

Table: 3 shows the relationship of internet addiction and mental health of the students. The table indicates that overall, the internet addiction is negatively correlated with mental health (-0.37), it is significant at 0.05 level. Dimension wise, dimension-I (For Educational Purpose) And dimension-II (For Online Shopping Purpose) are found to be negatively correlated with mental health (-0.15 & -0.19 respectively) but not upto a significant level. whereas in case of dimension-III (For Watching Different Programmes), dimension-IV (For Playing Video Games), dimension-V (For Social Networking) and dimension-VI (For Watching Porn Sites) of internet addiction scale are also found to be negatively correlated with mental health (-0.32,-0.45,-0.39 & -0.23 respectively), these are significant at 0.05 level of significance.

### VI. CONCLUSION

One of the objectives of the present study was to know the level of internet addiction of boys and girls. The finding of this study showed that there is a significant difference between the level of internet addiction of girls and boys. It means overall the level of internet addiction is higher in boys than the girls. Same result has been stated by various studies. Akhter, N.(2013) found in his study that the male students had higher internet addiction than female ones.

The main objective of this study was to know the relationship between internet addiction and mental health. The findings of this study revealed that internet addiction has significant but negatively relationship with mental health. Same result has been stated by Jahanian, R. & Seifury, Z.(2013) in their study, that there is a significant and inverse relationship between internet addiction and students' mental health. This study support current finding that mental health is the most important predictor of internet addiction.

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