Internet Addiction: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Addicted People do not have control over what they are doing. Their addiction may reach at a point which is harmful. A passion adds value to one’s life, an addiction takes away value. Internet addiction is described as an impulse control disorder. Individuals addicted to the Internet can develop many types of disorders. In extreme cases, persons addicted to the Internet may be destructive to themselves, their families, and their place of employment. 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. Other Internet users spend endless hours researching topics of interest Online. People suffering from Internet addiction connect with real people through the Internet, as a substitution for real-life human connection, which they are unable to achieve normally. This state creates the conditions of tolerance and withdrawal. Tolerance is the process by which the body continually adapts to the substance and requires increasingly larger amounts to achieve the original effects. Withdrawal refers to physical and psychological symptoms experienced when reducing or discontinuing a substance that the body has become dependent on. This study deal with addiction cases, human resource specialists seeking rehabilitation facilities for addicted employees, health related policy and computing consultants. This study is based on full research papers and some specific reports recording the treatment for Internet Addiction.

Keywords --- Internet addiction disorder, cyber addiction, Tolerance and behaviour

I. INTRODUCTION

The term internet was first introduced in 1982 came more widespread in the mid 90’s. Internet is being integrated as part of our everyday’s life because the usage of internet has been growing explosively worldwide. The use of the Internet in school campuses and in society has increased dramatically in recent years. Whereas the academic use of the Internet is primarily intended for learning and research, the Internet has also become an important part of student life. Homes, schools, colleges, libraries and internet cafes are the places which are more accessible to internet now a days. Completing schoolwork, playing online games, reading and writing emails and engaging in real time chatting are the common online activities. According to the Ministry of Information and Communication (2005), around 94.8% of teenagers are using the internet and this tendency suggests that teenagers may consider the cyber space as a real rather than virtual space. There are many studies about internet usage and internet addiction. Two researchers, Egger and Rautenberg have worked out a questionnaire to assess usage, feeling and experiences of internet use. When this questionnaire was posted, it and attracted 454 responses and 10% of them were identified as Addicted. While the other survey: Internet Usage Survey with 32-item true-false questionnaire had been posted by Brenner and received 563 responses. Besides that, Petrie and Gunn had conducted another online study with 27 questions about the participants internet use and yielded 455 valid responses. The result has shown that 46.1% of them classifying themselves as addicted to the internet. The purpose of this paper is to review the academic investigations on Internet addiction. The communication and information provided by Internet became widely acknowledged. Internet became widely acknowledged. Internet was spread and still spreads dramatically. Despite the fact that study focuses on the negative effects of internet use, its advantages should not be ignored. Socialization and exchange of ideas are the main advantages of internet use for students. Social relationships can be reformulated overcoming physical distance constraints that communication, while one can also develop new social contacts. Educational benefits for students are also of importance of Internet. Many studies have claimed that people may use the Internet addictively and that this can cause harmful effects on individuals, academic problems, changing their social behaviour, habits and abilities in a negative way (Young, 1996; Scherer, 1997; Kraut et al., 2002; Kubey et al., 2001; Nalwa&Anand, 2003).
II. INTERNET USE AND ABUSES

The Internet has many uses including sending and receiving emails, online chatting, video conferencing, and the transferring various files and documents. The Internet is also an open communication channel that allows individuals the opportunity to apply for jobs, or shop for essential items. Businesses use the Internet to retain customers, and introduce new products. The Internet is a powerful advertising and marketing tool. Other uses for the Internet include browsing and researching. Individuals use the Internet to locate lost friends, research projects or communicate with family members. In the right setting, the Internet is an effective resource, and an exceptional educational tool. The Internet is considered by some people to be a bad thing because it allows anyone to post information regardless of whether it is true or hurtful to another person. One of the biggest downfalls of the Internet is the spread of false information. This is especially a problem for open source websites that allow multiple users to edit web pages. The use of social media platforms to bully individuals is one of the worst aspects of the Internet. The Internet allows people to publish anonymously harmful comments that they might not say in person. In addition, the Internet allows people to impersonate other people or create an online persona with the intention of committing a crime. Another negative aspect of the Internet is that it facilitates the spread of private pictures and information. This is something that especially affects teens and children. The Internet also allows people to self-diagnose medical conditions, which is not always in a person’s best interests. Because the Internet is full of false information, researching medical information online can have severe consequences. Lastly, the Internet facilitates fraud. Fake websites often are used to lure people into providing sensitive information used to steal identities. The Internet also gives hackers the ability to steal banking information from shoppers who use online retail stores.

III. SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT FOR INTERNET ADDICTION

Symptoms: Internet addiction symptoms will vary from one person to the next. In other words, researchers cannot point to a set number of hours per day or a total number of messages sent or games played that would indicate a person is addicted to the Internet. However, there are some warning signs to watch out for that may indicate your Internet Addiction:

- Difficulty completing daily tasks: You find you have to stay later at work to finish everything because you were online most of the day. Perhaps you stay even longer at work to use the Internet freely after other employees have left for the day.
- Losing track of your online time: You find that you are staying on the Internet longer than you had intended. You may intend to get on the Internet for a few minutes and find that several hours have passed. You get angry or irritable if your Internet time is interrupted.
- Getting defensive about your Internet use: You’re tired of your parents or spouse telling you to get off the computer for a while. You attempt to hide your Internet use or lie to your family or supervisors about how much time you spend on the Internet and what you do while you are online.
- Feeling a sense of animation from using the Internet: The Internet becomes a feel-good activity for you, and you use it as an outlet for feelings of depression, stress, or excitement.
- Isolating yourself from family and friends: Your social life begins to suffer because you are always online. You get the feeling that your online friends are the only people who truly understand you.

Are you addicted to the Internet? Answer these five questions:
1. Does your online use causes significant problems in your relationships, at school, at work?
2. Do you often neglect or ignore important responsibilities in your life because of going online?
3. Have you tried to cut back on your Internet use with little or no success?
4. Are other people concerned about how much you use the Internet?
5. Do you often go online because it takes your mind off problems in your life?

Treatment: There are many addiction services and avenues of treatments available to help individuals back on the road to good health, one of which is counselling. The ultimate goal of counselling is to help individuals either reduce or stop their addiction altogether, depending on their specific needs and goals. Though each counsellor will have their own unique way of working, sessions may involve exploring different ways of dealing with certain urges and triggers and exploring the origins of the problem and the underlying reason for your addiction. A counsellor may also use a technique known as cognitive-behavioural therapy, which is a way of changing an individual’s thoughts and behaviours surrounding a certain act or issue. Counselling is a safe and confidential way of exploring your addiction and the affect it is having on your well-being and fulfilment. A counsellor will work with you to help you make sense of
your circumstances, to identify your choices for change and to offer support throughout the entire process.

Cognitive-behavioural therapy:

If you are thinking negatively about yourself or a situation, and that is causing you problems, in CBT, you work with a therapist to recognize the patterns of thinking that cause you problems. First you work out what are the most troubling problems for you. Then you work out what your thoughts, emotions and beliefs are about these situations. Then you identify which of these thoughts, emotions and beliefs are negative or inaccurate.

**What is CBT used for?**

Research shows CBT has helped children and adults with emotional, psychological and psychiatric issues such as anxiety and depression.

CBT has been shown to help people with:

- Anxiety issues like generalised anxiety disorder, panic, phobias and social anxiety
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Depression
- Eating disorders
- Relationship issues
- Anger and stress.

Internet addiction is believed to be a largely treatable condition. When the addiction is acknowledged, a therapist or other mental health professional can help an individual take steps to address the behaviour and regain the ability to use the Internet in a healthy way. Internet addiction differs from some other types of addiction in that some level of Internet use is generally necessary for function in society. Thus, the goal of treatment is usually not complete abstinence. Cognitive behavioural therapy, self-help treatment groups, group therapy, and family therapy have all been shown to be effective methods for the treatment of Internet addiction. Dr. Kimberly Young, who founded The Centre for Internet Addiction in 1995, developed a specialized form of cognitive behavioural therapy to treat Internet addiction. Twelve-step programs and social skills training may also be treatment options for some individuals. When a mental health concern such as stress, depression, or anxiety has led a person to turn to the Internet for support, a therapist may work to treat the addiction by first addressing this mental health condition. Similarly, any other underlying conditions are often exposed through work in therapy, and treating these concerns can often help facilitate recovery from the addiction.

In China, a number of “addiction boot camps” have been developed to treat Internet addiction in Chinese youth. However, some young people have died while in these camps, which operate under strict rules and military-style discipline, and a number of these camps have been featured in news stories that have exposed their harmful practices. In order to help reduce the high number of individuals experiencing Internet addiction, China has developed laws regulating adolescent use of Internet cafes, and the government has made attempts to regulate the number of hours that young people can use the Internet. An inpatient treatment centre has also recently been opened in Beijing.


**Internet Addiction During the year (2000-2011)**

![Internet Addiction Graph](Image)

- **IV. CONCLUSION**

Over the year, Internet used is increasing rapidly because of the technology development today. So, Internet Addiction may increase also. As Rudall (1996) remarks, most psychologists have told us that we should not be surprised at the evolution of new behavioral conditions when technological advances are changing our society so rapidly and in such revolutionary ways. Indeed, we should not be surprised, but we must be prepared to face the notion that the Internet is changing the way we live, and not always for the better. Young (1999b) notes that the study of Internet addiction is often complicated by the perceived value of technological growth, by the social promotion of Internet
use, and by the positive image of the Internet. However, as Kandell’s analogy (1998) suggests, although exercise is good and people require it, over exercise may have a destructive impact on human health. Internet use may be similar in the disparity of its impact, determined almost exclusively by the amount and type of use. As Stern (1999) states, technologies, by dentition, increase our capacities and abilities. However, at the same time, they may also lead to adaptive behaviour and expose both our frailties and in abilities. It is crucial for us to recognize that technologies Kandell (1998) stated that college students as a group appear more vulnerable in developing a dependence on the Internet than any other segment of society. Therefore, this article offers some implications for school psychologists and student affairs administrators. As Scherer (1997) suggests, administrators should play a primary role in promoting awareness of Internet abuse or addiction on campus. Chou (2001) suggests more effective management of students’ dormitory life to prevent excessive late-night Internet use. For student affairs administrators, Chou (2001) suggests they play a crucial role in informing other campus professionals (such as teachers, teaching-assistants, residence hall superintendents, school computer centre administrators, etc.) of the risks of Internet abuse or addiction. This stream of research in Internet addiction reveals a promising and productive avenue for several associated future research opportunities.

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