

*Review Article*

# Internet Addiction and its Effects on Life Style of the Adolescents

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## Abstract

Internet is an ocean of information. Internet is a universal system of computer networks that are interconnected to serve millions of people around the world. The term “addiction” use in many contexts to describe an obsession, compulsion or excessive psychological dependency. It is also called as “Impulse Control disorder”. The aspects of lifestyle are physical health, mental health, academic performance, social health and spiritual health. Around 1,40,00,000 school children have access to PC in home (Madhya Pradesh). India is leading country in using Internet. The internet addiction effects on physical health, mental health, academic performance, social life, spiritual / moral values and behavior. The signs of internet addiction are mood swings, depression, anxiety and feeling of loneliness. The internet addiction can be prevented. We can treat the internet addiction through family counseling , support groups and educational workshops.

**Keywords:-** *Internet addiction, Impulse Control Disorder, lifestyle, physical health, mental health, academic performance, social health, spiritual health, mood swings, depression, anxiety & feeling of loneliness.*

## Introduction

The population of India is around 1.2 billion as of 2012, Out of which the number of internet users (both urban and rural) is around 205 million. It is estimated to increase to 243 million by June 2014. India will be the second-leading country after china, which currently has the highest Internet user base of 300 million. There were about 42 million active internet users in urban India in 2008 as compared to 5 million in 2000. In India 300 million internet users are adolescents (June 2015) during past 5 years, the number of internet users in the world is increasing from 16% to 40% from 2005 to 2014 respectively. Around 1,40,00,000 school children have access to PC in home (M.P.). Total use by adolescents on

average of 27 hours per week & over 14% of children with home computers used them for educational purposes (2015). Internet is a universal system of computer networks that are interconnected to serve millions or even billions of people around the world.<sup>1</sup>

“Internet addiction is defined as the compulsive urge to continually use the Net, whether it is to spend hours surfing the Web, hang around in IRC chat rooms, or play on-line games”.<sup>2</sup>

The term «addiction» use in many contextes to describe an obsession, compulsion, or excessive psychological dependence, such as: drug addiction (eg. alcoholism, nicotine addiction), problem gambling, crime, money, Works addiction, compulsive overeating, Oniomania (compulsive shopping), computer addiction, vidéo game addiction, pornographie addiction, télévision addiction, etc. Internet Addiction, also known as computer addiction, online addiction, or Internet addiction disorder (IAD) covers a variety of impulse-control problems including: **Cybersex Addiction:** Compulsive use of Internet pornography, adult chat

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rooms, or adult fantasy role-play sites impacts negatively on real-life intimate relationships.<sup>3</sup>

**Cyber-Relationship Addiction:-** Addiction to social networking, chat rooms, texting, and messaging to the points were virtual, online friends become more important than real-life relationships with family and friends.

**Net Compulsions:** -Such as compulsive online gaming, gambling, stock trading, or compulsive use of online auction sites such as eBay, often resulting in financial and job-related problems.

**Information Overload:** - Compulsive web surfing or database searching, leading to lower work productivity and less social interaction with family and friends.

**Computer Addiction** – obsessive playing of off-line computer games, such as Solitaire or Minesweeper, or obsessive computer programming.

The most common of these Internet addictions are cybersex, online gambling, and cyber-relationship addiction. These concerns about excessive Internet use have been raised not only in affluent developed countries, but in developing nations such as India. It is noteworthy that India ranks third largest internet users nearly of 74 million. In fact, during the past five years, the number of internet users in world level is increasing from 16% to 40% of 2005 to 2014 respectively. In India these cross 300 million (June 2015). In particular, Internet is the representative term of adolescents. This could be natural since this group of teenagers is easily attracted to this medium. According to a recent study, Internet use among teenagers has reached 94%, which was much higher (51%) than among people in their 30s. The study also suggested that as school children are becoming more avid users of the Internet.<sup>4</sup>

Public school children who had access to home computers are around 14,96,75,97 in Madhya Pradesh & 1.5 million students is using Smartphone & it is 5% of total users of all over the world. Total use by teenagers on average of 27 hours per week & over 14% of children with home computers used them for educational purposes (2015).<sup>5</sup>

**Sawwy Kaleyvani Geeseeny (2018)** Illustrated that adolescents mostly use internet for entertainment and relaxation. Further it is observed that boys use internet mainly to play games and see vedios whereas

the girls use internet for seeking information and social interaction. The researcher identified that excessive exposure to internet may lead to violence, addiction, failed social relation, eating disorders, sleep deprivation, neglected family, friends and work.<sup>6</sup>

Internet is an ocean of information “. Internet is a universal system of computer networks that are inter connected to serve millions of people around the world. The internet provides a constant ever-changing source of information, entertainment and most of the time accessed through smartphones, tablets , laptops and desktop computers or PC. Through emails, blogs , social networks, instant messaging and message boards allow for both personal and public communication about any topic .<sup>7</sup>

Internet addiction disorder (IAD), also known as problematic Internet use or pathological Internet use, is excessive Internet use that interferes with daily life. Addiction, defined as a” compulsive need for and use of a habit-forming substance characterized by tolerance and by well defined physiological symptoms upon withdrawal”.<sup>8</sup>

### Definition

It is the global system of interconnected computer networks that use the internet protocol suite link the devices world wide. It is a network of networks.<sup>9</sup>

### Meaning of Internet addiction

Internet addiction is defined as any online-related, compulsive behavior which interferes with normal living and causes severe stress on family, friends, loved ones and one’s work environment.<sup>10</sup>

### Meaning of life style

It is the habits, attitudes, taste, moral standards, economic level etc, that together constitute the mode of living of an individual or group.<sup>11</sup>

### Aspects of lifestyle

There are following aspects of lifestyle:

- 1) Physical health
- 2) Mental health
- 3) Academic performance

- 4) Social health
- 5) Spiritual health. 12

### **Incidence**

The population of India is around 1.35 billion as of 2018, Out of which the number of internet users (both urban and rural) is around 500 million by June 2018 (A report by IAMAI and Kantar IMRB). At the end of December 2017, India had 481 million users, growing 11.34% from 2016. Around 1,40,00,000 school children have access to PC in home (Madhya Pradesh). India is India leading country in using Internet. 13

### Types of Internet addiction

These are the following types of Internet addiction:

1. Cyber sex addiction / Internet pornography
2. Computer addiction
3. Addiction to cyber relationships
4. Information Addiction
5. Online Compulsion
6. Internet gaming. 14

### Causes of internet addiction

There are following causes of internet addiction:

1. To get relief from stress
2. To increase pleasure
3. To get comfort. 15

### Effects of Internet addiction

These are the following effects of Internet addiction:

1. Physical Health : Back pain, Headache, Eye strain, Insomnia
2. Mental Health : Anxiety, Depression, Feeling of anger, Feeling of loneliness
3. Academic performance : Poor grades, Low attendance, Poor personal health
4. Social life: Broken relationship, Isolation from society, Relationship gap
5. Spiritual / Moral values : Lying, Stealing,

Cheating

6. Behaviour : Violent behaviour, Irritable behaviour, Non-socializing behaviour. 16

### **Signs and symptoms of internet addiction**

#### **Signs**

- a) Mood swings
- b) Depression
- c) Anxiety
- d) Feeling of loneliness

#### **Symptoms**

- a) Compulsive use of the internet
- b) Preoccupation with being Online
- c) Inability to control excessive use of internet
- d) Interfere with daily activity
- e) Inability to prioritize the tasks. 17

#### **Preventive measures**

These are the following preventive measures

- a) Gradually disconnect the internet
- b) Prepare a study plan
- c) Prioritize the work
- d) Hangout with friends
- e) Help in household activities
- f) Don't eat meals while at your computer
- g) Use an alarm clock or timer while being computer. 18

#### **Treatment options**

- a) Family counseling
- b) Support groups
- c) Educational workshops. 19

### **Summary**

We have discussed about introduction, term internet

and internet addiction, meaning of lifestyle, aspects of lifestyle, incidence of internet addiction, types ,causes, effects, signs and symptoms, preventive measures to deal with the internet addiction and treatment options available for internet addiction among adolescents.

### Conclusion

In India, a wide range of studies conducted on Internet addiction, these studies focused on the status of the addiction in middle & higher secondary school students Who are highest Internet users. Recently, the studies on the factors related to Internet addiction are actively being carried out.

As India around 500 million people are using internet, which is drastically increasing every day. Now-a-days individuals are getting hooked on the Internet such as on pornography, Internet gambling, online shopping, searching for non important information or chatting for a very long time. Adolescents are indiscriminately exposed to the Internet although they do not have the ability to judge its positive and negative aspects. 20

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