

Investigating of the Relationship among Identity Styles and Attachment Styles in Online Addictions

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Abstract

Objective: The purpose of this study was to study the predictive role of attachment styles and identity styles in technological addictions between students of Islamic Azad University, Borujerd Branch, Iran.

Methods: The present study is a cross-sectional and descriptive-correlational study conducted by survey method. 200 students were selected by random sampling were studied.

Results: among the three Internet addicts surveyed, mobile virtual internet networks had the highest average and standard deviation (23.25 ± 62.31). Findings also show that among the identity styles and attachment styles, the informational style (7.42 ± 7.38) and the avoidance style (0.66 ± 1.22) have a mean and standard deviation higher than the other style They were.

Conclusions: The results confirmed the predictive role of attachment and identity styles in Internet addiction.

Key Word: Technological addiction, identity styles, attachment styles

Introduction

From the beginning of the 21st century and the third millennium, connections, Technology and the Internet have been an integral part of human life¹ and the development of digital technologies and the compression of time and space are features of this era².

Over the past two decades, Internet addiction is considered to be a term that covers a wide range of online problematic activities for individuals (including online gambling, online gambling, online sexual activity, social networking, etc.)³. Although modern online technologies have a positive impacts on different aspects of life Like its roundabout availability, Easy and quick search of subjects, Speedy and anonymity, But, as numerous studies have shown, overuse of these technologies can be problematic, and today there are growing concerns

about the effects of this technology on various aspects of human life, including the Change in lifestyle, the existence of suicidal thoughts, hyperactivity, social phobia, aggression, violence and anti-social behaviors, lack of attention to their health, social isolation and educational problems⁴, and therefore researchers are interested in examining factors Individual and / or social enhancement of Internet addiction.⁵

The American Psychiatric Association regards internet addiction as a pattern of Internet usage that causes functional disorders and is associated with unpleasant internal states over a two-month period and offers seven criteria (at least three in two months) for its diagnosis: Tolerance; withdrawal symptoms; the use of the Internet is longer than the one initially intended; Continuous tendency to control behavior; significant time spent on the Internet; reduction of social, occupational and recreational activities due to the use of the Internet and continued use of it, given the awareness of its negative effects⁶.

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Due to the increasing use of the Internet, the addiction statistics are on an upward trend and among young people it is more than any other age group. The results of studies in Iran indicate that the prevalence of Internet addiction among Iranian students ranged from 5.7 to 67.1%¹.

According to the report of the World Internet Statistics Web site, Iran ranked thirteenth in the world in terms of number of Internet users, and ranked first in the Middle East and it's one of the twenty countries that have many Internet users (2017).

Computer games have gained so much development over the past several decades, which has become a major commercial, artistic, and cultural Fields. Despite the benefits of computer games, like all other phenomena in human civilization, this technology can be dangerous and even deadly due to improper, inaccurate, and excessive use, and it has a great deal of psychological, educational, physical, and social damages in a way that Many researchers consider the effects of physical, psychological, and social injuries on these games to be far greater than their benefits. Internet gaming disorder (IGD) has recently been included in the Section III ("Emerging measures and models") of the latest (fifth) edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association [APA] 2013)⁷.

Empirical studies indicate the interactions of individual components with personality and demographic characteristics; Among these factors, identity features can play a role as a protective or risk factor⁸. People vary in how to evaluate, use, and modify their identity. In Berzonsky's style identity models, there are three distinct identity styles, which are: informational; normative and avoidant confusion styles, which these styles result from problem solving strategies or coping mechanisms⁹. Findings of the research show that normative and avoidant confusion styles accordingly, they have protective and adaptive effects in relation to Internet addiction and social networks While the informational style has ambiguous effects, it can have both roles^{10,11,7}.

Another important factor in predicting Internet addiction is attachment styles, studies show that anxious and avoidant insecure attachment styles can be prone to online addiction. Learned attachment style can affect the behavior of individuals in adulthood¹². This pattern

can be safe, insecure, ambivalent and avoidant. In this context, some researchers have widely considered the relationship between online addiction and attachment style^{9,10}.

With regard to the content on internet addiction, On the other hand, the abundance and complications of it in different fields in Iran, also, the importance of having enough knowledge about its predisposing factors to prevent and reduce this dependence, research in this regard is a necessity in our present society; Therefore, the present study was conducted to study the relationship between identity styles and attachment styles with online addiction, internet games and use of virtual social networks among students of Islamic Azad University, Boroujerd Branch.

The present study investigates the variables of attachment styles and identity styles as a predictor variable and the variable of technological addiction consists of internet addiction, internet games and virtual social networks as a criterion variable. the research hypotheses are:

- Attachment styles predict the online Internet addictions.
- Identity styles predict the online Internet addictions.

Research methodology

The present study is a cross-sectional and descriptive-correlational study conducted by survey method. The statistical population of the study was all students of Borujerd Islamic Azad University in the academic year of 2017- 2018. The sampling method was multi-stage cluster sampling and 200 people were willing to participate in the study. After the sampling, incomplete questionnaires were excluded from the study. Finally, 191 questionnaires were collected. The data were analyzed using SPSS software version 22 and descriptive and inferential statistics indexes including:

Mean, standard deviation, independent t-test, to examine the effects of age and sex variables on dependent variables (Internet addiction, social networks and Internet games), Pearson correlation coefficient to examine the communication pattern between variables, bivariate correlation coefficient to investigate the relationship between gender and dependent variables and multivariate hierarchical regression for prediction

Beams depends on the independent variables were used. In the first stage, age and gender variables were considered as independent variables. In the second stage, three identity styles were added and in the third stage, three attachment styles were enveloped.

The criteria for entering the study were:

A) complete satisfaction of the student to enter the study and complete the questionnaire

B) Student being educated at Borujerd Islamic Azad University in different educational levels

C) lack of clear mental illness

Demographic information included age, gender, field, grade, and study group. The study method

was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration and the licenses for the study were obtained by the university respective assistants. In order to do sampling, firstly, the students were given explanations regarding the research goals, their rights and responsibilities, with emphasis on the confidentiality of information and how to complete the questionnaires. After obtaining oral satisfaction, tools used in the research were presented to them:

1. Yang Internet addiction inventory

2. The Berzonsky Identity Style Questionnaire

3. Hazan and Shaver style attachment style questionnaire

4. Mobile Social Networking Questionnaire, designed by Polladi et al. (1395)¹³.

5. Questionnaire for short form of Internet Game Disorder Question 9 (IGDS-SF9)¹⁴

Findings

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the research variables. According to the findings of Table (1), the mean age of subjects was 24/60 with a standard deviation of 6/34.

Independent t-test was used to compare the mean of technological addiction in both male and female students. As the results of Table 2 show, there is no significant difference between the girls and boys in terms of the score of using the Internet and social networks. In the game component, there was a significant difference between the two groups ($p < 0.05$)

Table (3) represents the relationship between different variables with types of online addictions. The findings indicated a positive relationship between the three types of addiction. Among the identity styles, informational style with Internet addiction and normative style had a negative relationship with all three types of addiction and the confused / avoidant style had a positive relationship with all three types of addiction. Also, among attachment styles, safe style with all three types of addiction has a negative relationship with anxious / social and ambivalent styles of the positive relationship with the types of addictions studied.

Table (1). Mean and standard deviations of study variables (technological addiction scores, identity styles, and attachment styles)

Total sample (N =191)	Mean (SD)
Technological addictions	
IAT	49.49 ± 18.83
IGD9-SF	14.64 ± 7.32
SNA	62.40 ± 23.25
Identity styles	
Informational	38.35 ± 7.42
Normative	30.62 ± 7.15
Diffuse / avoidant	29.83 ± 7.30
Attachment styles	
secure	1.67 ± 0.75
Avoidance	2.12 ± 0.66
Ambivalent	1.62 ± 0.88
Age	24.60 ± 6.34

Table (2). Comparison of three types of technological addiction in male and female students

Variables	mean	value of t	F	average difference	meaningful
IAT	m: 49.25 f: 49.73	- 0.177	1.17	-0.48	0.86
IGD9-SF	m: 16.73 f: 12.49	4.198	61.77	4.23	0.00
SNA	m: 60.02 f: 64.84	-1.436	0.002	-4.82	0.15

Table (3). Pearson correlation coefficient between various variables and technological addictions

	IAT	IGD9-SF	SNA
Sociodemographic			
Age	0.09	0.085	0.008
Technological addictions			
IAT	-	0.328**	0.747**
IGD9-SF	0.328**	-	0.224**
SNA	0.747**	0.224**	-
Identity styles			
Informational	-0.315**	-0.54	-0.140
Normative	-0.517**	-0.149*	-0.313**
Diffuse / avoidant	0.179*	0.315**	0.260**
Attachment styles			
secure	-0.290**	-0.323**	-0.250**
Avoidance	0.528**	0.258**	0.437**
Ambivalent	0.300**	0.169*	0.195**

Table (4). Regression coefficients between addiction scores (internet use, internet gaming and social networking), identity styles and attachment styles

	IAT	IGD9-SF	SNA
	R R2 B SE β Sig	R R2 B SE β Sig	R R2 B SE β Sig
Identity styles			
Informational	0.73 0.53 0.48 0.19 0.19 0.012		
Normative	0.62 0.39 -1.41 0.19 -0.53 0.000	0.58 0.34 0.77 0.28 0.24 0.006	0.56 0.31 -1.24 0.28 -0.38 0.000
Diffuse/avoidant	0.72 0.52 0.43 1.46 0.16 0.003	0.46 0.21 0.24 0.007 0.21 0.001	0.52 0.27 0.67 0.21 0.20 0.002
Attachment styles			
secure	0.67 0.46 -4.75 0.1.31 -0.18 0.00	0.32 0.10 -3.07 0.65 -0.25 0.000	0.49 0.24 -5.30 1.91 -0.17 0.006
Avoidance	0.7 0.49 5.34 1.46 0.18 0.000		
Ambivalent	0.52 0.27 7.39 1.23 0.34 0.000	0.4 0.16 2.06 0.54 0.22 0.001	0.43 0.19 9.74 1.78 0.36 0.000

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between demographic characteristics, identity styles and attachment styles, with technological addictions (online addiction, online games, and the use of virtual social networks). In general, in our study, sex of students affected on internet addictions. but age did not have an effect, which could be due to the presence of all subjects in their young age and their dispersion. The findings show that there is a positive correlation between addiction to the Internet, addiction to internet games and social media addiction, and this correlation between the Internet addiction and the stronger social networks, which is consistent with the results of Monacis et al. (2017) and empirically confirms that Internet addiction includes a wide range of online activities, such as communicating through social networking sites and Internet games⁷.

Concerning the correlation between identity styles and Internet addiction, the results indicate that these styles play an important role in predicting these addictions, which are consistent with the findings of previous research^{3,7,11,15}. In the present study, among the identified identity styles, the informational style is only with addiction There is a negative correlation between the Internet and the normative style with all three types of addiction, while the diffuse style has positive and low correlations with the Internet addicts. normative style has a more significant reverse relationship with Internet addiction compared to other identity styles, while the information identity style was expected to have the most negative correlation with Internet addiction. According to the results of numerous researches, the informational identity style should have the most protective effect on the use of online addictions, but in some studies, we see an unexpected positive relationship between this style and online addictions, such as Monacis et al.'s research⁷.

One of the influential factors in Internet addiction is attachment styles. Research indicates that there is an insecure attachment style in people with the internet addiction^{9,16}. In this study, among attachment styles, secure style with three types of online addiction, negative and low relationship, and anxious and ambivalent / avoidant insecure styles have a positive and low correlation with Internet addictions, that of course this relationship between anxious insecure style and the Internet and social networks addictions are more than other attachment styles, which can be due to the feeling

of insecurity, anxiety and distrust that these people have towards themselves and others. and because of them failure in communicating with others, they are isolated more and more and they are more interested in Internet activities. In general, the results of this research section are in line with the findings of previous research and support the existence of a causal relationship between these structures. In particular, the role of predictor and negative correlation of secure attachment with three types of Internet addiction^{16,22}. The current study has some limitations that are: Low sample size in order to increase the generalizability of the features, it is suggested that the number of higher samples should be investigated in future studies. Using self-reporting questionnaires and considering their number of questions, they can be applied to their response and their accuracy, and therefore, it has negative effects on the ability to generalize the findings. for this reason, it is recommended that more effective methods of collecting information, such as face-to-face interviews, are recommended. Longitudinal plans can also be used to evaluate the causal relationships between the variables in question.

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Ethical Clearance: i) The study subjects provided a verbal consent. ii) The right was kept for respondents to refuse study participation in all of the research time, iii) Subject's identification was not revealed, iv) The data were kept strictly confidential, v) Acknowledgment of each participants and all of dears who helped us in this study.

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