

# Internet Addiction

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**Abstract-** *The Internet is one of the most widely used media in modern society. However, it has great potential to affect the emotions of humans and anxiety levels. Internet addicts suffer from emotional problems such as depression and anxiety-related disorders. Some of them are also addicted to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or sex. Young adults between the ages of 18-29 are considered as the most preoccupied population with Internet. Internet addiction is a medically recognized disorder. This paper provides a brief introduction to Internet addiction.*

**Keywords:** Internet addiction, problematic Internet use, Internet addiction disorder, Internet dependence

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Internet is currently available worldwide and is used for sharing information, communication, education, research, entertainment, banking, e-commerce, retail sales, socialization, gamification, and government. Internet use is becoming widespread in each age group all over the world today. Although the Internet has made life a lot easier by making information more accessible to everyone, it has caused people to spend too much time in front of the computer. Excessive Internet use may be determined by losing track of time, neglecting basic drives such as hunger and sleep, withdrawal systems, and negative behaviors including anger, fatigue, depression, and social isolation. The misuse and abuse of the Internet can potentially lead to Internet addiction (IA). Internet addiction is known by several other names such as Problematic Internet Use (PIU), Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD), Internet Dependency (ID), Internet Behavior Dependence (IBD), and Online Addiction (OA).

Internet addiction is a subset of a broader problem known "technology addiction". It refers to the inability to maintain balance or control of Internet use in relation to everyday life. Online habits such as reading, playing digital games, cyber sex, online gambling, online bidding, or watching Internet videos are problematic only to the extent that these activities interfere with normal life. Internet users can become addicted to these online activities, rather than the Internet itself.

Addiction is characterized by the misuse or mismanagement of time. A major reason the Internet is so appealing and addicting is the lack of limits and the absence of accountability.

There is a lack of representative data on its prevalence in the general population. Gender and age are important predictors of IA. Men are usually more addicted to the Internet than women. Teenagers are more addicted to the Internet than adults [1].

Research results indicate that Internet addiction exists among college students, who have easy access to laptops and computer labs. It is also being seen in high school and middle school students. Adolescents who are Internet addicts perform low in school work.

## II. SOURCES OF ADDICTION

Addictive use of the Internet may be a way to escape from real problems. Online relationship through social networks, gaming chats, online gambling, and pornography were preferentially used by Internet addicts [2,3].

- *Cyber-relationship:* This source of addiction is the addiction to social networking such as Facebook and MySpace, and online dating services. Internet users may enjoy aspects of the Internet that allow them to meet and socialize through the use of chat rooms and social networking websites. Internet addicts use the virtual fantasy world to connect with people through the Internet, as a substitution for real-life human connection. They can even fall into the temptation of cyber adultery.

- *Online gaming:* This involves spending extreme amounts of time on playing web games, gambling, shopping or e-trading. The Internet provides an almost limitless source of entertainment. Playing online games can be psychologically addictive.

- *Online Gambling:* Since gambling is available online, it increases the opportunity for problem gamblers to indulge in gambling and become addictive. Online gambling is regarded as serious as pathological gambling.

- *Cyber sex:* Internet sex addiction usually involves viewing, downloading, and trading online pornography or engagement in adult fantasy role-play rooms. The Internet user typically searches for pornography or to engage in casual cybersex with other users. Addiction to online pornography has become the crack cocaine of the Internet [4].

Other sources of Internet addiction include online or mobile gaming, stock trading, virtual reality, information searching, information overload, and excessive surfing.

## III. ADDICTION TREATMENTS

Attempts to quit Internet overuse may result in anger, depression, relief, mood swings, anxiety, fear, irritability, helplessness, guilt, anxiety, sadness, loneliness, boredom, restlessness, procrastination, and sleep disorder. Biomedical research on the effects of computer use has shown that the

degree of pain is proportional to the time of computer use. If your internet addiction is interfering with your quality of life, you should seek professional help or IA therapist. There are rehabilitation centers where trained professionals can guide you toward a healthier lifestyle. If a professional therapists and rehabilitation centers are too expensive, you may be able to find a support group you can join for free.

Internet addiction is considered a brain disease that needs treatment, but its treatment has not been standardized. Since IA is a disorder emanating from disturbed life style, treatments based on altering lifestyle can be helpful. Building skills that are necessary for a healthy interaction on the Internet is especially important at an early age. Group-based positive psychology interventions (PIs) approach has been proposed to increase social adjustment, improve the quality of relationships and reduce the severity of Internet use for individuals with Internet addiction. This focuses on the enhancement of social adjustment [5].

The US could learn from countries like Korea (one of the most wired countries in the world) and provide national screening days to identify children at young ages with IA, provide school-based prevention programs, and provide more Internet addiction inpatient programs giving parents and families options for treatment [6]. School teachers and administrators in junior or senior high schools should pay a closer attention to students who show IA. There is a need for preventive measures including counseling and education to increase students' awareness about IA.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Internet addiction is a disorder related to excessive preoccupations regarding computer use and Internet access. It is destructive. It is both a personal and a social problem in modern life. It is a growing social issue which is being debated worldwide, driven by increased preoccupation with the amount of time being spent online by children, young people and adults. The problem of IA has attracted great attention from psychiatrists, doctors, educators, governments, parents, and the

public. It has become a public health issue that cannot be neglected.

Online resources for Internet addiction can be found in [7]. More research work is needed on IA treatment.

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