Original Research Article

Cross-Sectional Study of Pattern of Internet Use in College Going Students in Nanded City

Kishor Surwase[1*], Prashant Bagdey[2**], Hemant Adikane[3**]

[1]Assistant Professor, [2]Professor, [3]Post Graduate Student,
[*]Department of Community Medicine, MNR Medical College, Sangareddy-502294.
[**]Department of Community Medicine, Government Medical College, Nagpur-440003.

Corresponding Author: Kishor Surwase

ABSTRACT

Background: Most of the youth particularly college students use the internet for social interaction and communication as well as for their education. But, just as they use the internet to take help in their education, they use social sites to enrich their social lives.
Objective: To evaluate pattern of internet use in college going students of Nanded Waghala City.
Methods: cross sectional study was conducted in the first, second, third Year College going students in Nanded Waghala city.
Result: A total of 320 students were administered the questionnaire which includes information about Socio demographic characteristic of the study population and pattern of internet use. Table no 3 showing preferred use of internet by college students, multiple choice options were provided most preferred use of internet was for chatting.
Conclusion: In a highly digital era, students can hardly live without computers and the Internet. There has been an increasing trend of use of mobile phones and internet among students especially in developing countries.

Key words: Pattern, Internet use, college students, chatting, internet.

INTRODUCTION

The Internet today connects more than two billion people worldwide. The use of the Internet in India is set to grow rapidly. India currently has about 120 million Internet users, making it the third-largest user base in the world; the number of users is set to increase threefold by 2015, and this will make India the second-largest national group, behind only China. The population's median age is 25.1 years, which is among the lowest in the world, and 58 percent of the population is under 30 years of age. The urban population is already sizable, at 377 million in 2011, or 31 percent of India's total population. [1]

The use of the Internet on 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. [2] Most of the youth particularly college students use the internet for social interaction and communication as well as for their education. But, just as they use the internet to take help in their education, they use social sites to enrich their social lives. [3]

It is known that the prevalence of internet use is higher among adolescents and the young adults worldwide. It was reported that the age group which uses internet most

commonly is 16-24 age group. [4] The youth spending more time on internet is certainly not a disorder, but for some it may be slippery slope when combined with psychological and environmental variables leading to signs of behavioural addiction. [5]

Adolescents, in particular, are observed to be at enhanced risk for developing such behavioural patterns since they are ever-increasingly exposed to the Internet without having fully developed their critical thinking skills and/or senses of boundaries. [6] College students are especially vulnerable to developing dependence on the Internet, more than most other segments of the society. [7]

Internet has been an effective tool in eliminating human geographical limitations and it is globally applied by all lifestyles because of its attractive and unique characteristics in interpersonal communications and everyday life. However, excessive use of the internet has resulted in negative consequences. [8]

Internet is frequently used for on-line purchasing, data collection, chatting, communicating with others and so on. Internet use has increased enormously in the last 50 years and now it seems that every aspect of people's lives has been affected by the "Global Village". Although the Internet offers many advantages in the era of global communication, its improper or excessive use can produce many negative consequences. [9]

Several contributing factors as faster acquaintance with changing technology, ease of use, availability of time blocks, access to the Internet, the psychological and developmental characteristics of young adulthood, feeling of independence, relatively limited or no parental supervision, and as some courses are Internet dependent, from assignments and projects to communication with peers and mentors. [10]

At present, the rapid emergence of online interactions provides new possibilities to exchange information, to provide support or to have conversations between people who otherwise could not be interconnected. However, the Internet has its own advantages and disadvantages. [11] Various Reports indicated that some on-line users were becoming addicted to the Internet in much that same way that others became addicted to drugs or alcohol which resulted in academic, social, and occupational impairment. [12]

The frequent appearance of internet addiction in the context of numerous comorbid conditions raises complex questions of causality. In order to make nosological decisions regarding internet addiction, we require a more general model of what counts as "disease," and as a specific disease. [13] There were few studies which was examining pattern if internet use among students, [7] with this background, present study was planned with aim to evaluate pattern of internet use in college going students of NandedWaghala City.

METHODOLOGY

This cross sectional study was conducted after obtaining institutional ethics committee approval and permission of College principal in the NandedWaghala City. This study was carried out in Yashwant Mahavidyalayain the NandedWaghala City during the period Jan 2016.

The study participants were 309 college going students studying in the first, second, third year who were explained the purpose of the study and were administered the questionnaire in the classroom. Only students who had access to the internet and smart phone for at least a year were included in the study. They were given 30 minutes to fill the questionnaire.

They were emphasized to mark their true responses. Confidentiality was assured, and informed consent was taken. To avoid any hesitancy to record responses, anonymity of the participants was assured. The questionnaires used to collect data was a pretested, semi-structured, self-administered questionnaire, which was used to collect details like age, gender, number of siblings, occupation & education of mother

and father, monthly family income.

The pattern of internet use was assessed by questions pertaining to internet use such as years of computer use, daily computer use, years of internet use, daily internet use, expenditure on internet per month, most commonly used gadget for accessing internet, login status, most common mode of internet access, most common location of internet access, time spent by father, mother, sibling on internet outside work hours, parents know about my internet activities, preferred use of internet. A pilot study was done on 30 students; subsequent suggestions were incorporated before the start of the study.

Statistical Analysis

Data were entered and tabulated using Epi Info Ver 7.0. Descriptive statistics (percentage, mean, standard deviation) were calculated to summarize baseline characteristics of the study subjects.

RESULTS

Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics of study participants (n = 309)

Characteristics	No. of study subjects n = 309	Percentage
Age		
17-18 years	52	16.83
19-20 years	135	43.69
21-22 years	79	25.57
> 23 years	43	13.92
Gender		
Male	197	63.75
Female	112	36.25
Year of study		
First	111	35.92
Second	149	48.22
Third	49	15.86
Place of stay		
Own house	211	68.28
Hostel	40	12.94
Rent	58	18.77
Father's education status *		
Professional Degree / PhD	2	0.66
Graduate or Postgraduate	81	26.64
Intermediate or Post High School Diploma	101	33.22
High School Completion	59	19.41
Middle School Completion	14	4.61
Primary School Completion	12	3.95
Illiterate	35	11.51
Mother's educational status**		
Professional Degree / PhD		
Graduate or Postgraduate	31	10.26
Intermediate or Post High School Diploma	61	20.20
High School Completion	76	25.17
Middle School Completion	40	13.25
Primary School Completion	39	12.91
Illiterate	55	18.21
Father's occupation status*		
Profession	15	4.93
Semi Profession	15	4.93
Clerk, Shop Owner, Farm Owner	146	48.03
Skilled Worker	92	30.26
Semi Skilled Worker	10	3.29
Unskilled Worker	21	6.91
Unemployed / Retired	5	1.64
Mother's occupational status**		
Profession	6	1.99
Semi Profession	2	0.66
Clerk, Shop Owner, Farm Owner	2	0.66
Skilled Worker	5	1.66
Semi Skilled Worker	0	0.00
Unskilled Worker	7	2.32
Homemaker	280	92.72
Siblings		
Have	301	97.41
No	8	2.59
* n = 304, * n = 302		

Table 2: Patterns of internet use

Characteristics	No. of study subjects n = 309	Percentage
Years of computer use		
1-4 years	212	68.31
5-8 years	52	16.83
> 8 years	45	14.56
Daily Computer use		
0-2 hrs.	168	54.37
2-4 hrs.	108	34.95
4-6 hrs.	19	6.15
> 6 hrs.	14	4.53
Years of Internet use		
1-4 years	230	74.43
5-8 years	47	15.21
> 8 years	32	10.36
Daily Internet use		
0-2 hrs.	97	31.39
2-4 hrs.	180	58.25
4-6 hrs.	16	5.18
> 6 hrs.	16	5.18
Expenditure on Internet per month		
< 200 Rs	197	63.75
200-400 Rs	74	23.95
400-600 Rs	21	6.80
> 600 Rs	17	5.50
Most commonly used gadget for accessing Internet		
Desktop	25	8.09
Laptop	25	8.09
Tablet	7	2.27
Mobile phone	252	81.55
Login status		
Log in and off occasionally	119	38.51
At end of work log off	102	33.01
permanently online	88	28.48
Most common mode of Internet access		
Wi-Fi	28	9.06
Broadband	15	4.85
Data card	29	9.39
Mobile Internet	237	76.70
Most common location of Internet access		
Residence	145	47.08
Cybercafé	38	12.34
Library	9	2.92
Classroom	7	2.27
Computer lab	44	14.29
Hostel	21	6.82
Other public places	44	14.29
Parents know about my internet activities		
Never	45	14.66
Rarely	37	12.05
Sometime	90	29.32
Most of the times	50	16.29
Always	85	27.69
Time spent by father on Internet outside work hours		
0-2hrs	71	22.98
2-4hrs	47	15.21
4-8hrs	8	2.59
> 8hrs	0	0.00
Not applicable	183	59.22
Time spent by Mother on Internet outside work hours		
0-2hrs	25	8.09
2-4hrs	11	3.56
4-8hrs	3	0.97
> 8hrs	0	0.00
Not applicable	270	87.38
Time spent by sibling on Internet outside work hours		
0-2hrs	67	22.26
2-4hrs	106	35.22
4-8hrs	48	15.95
> 8hrs	8	2.66
Not applicable	72	23.92

A total of 320 students were administered the questionnaire of which 11 left the questionnaire blank or incomplete and these were not included in the final analysis. A total of 309 questionnaires were included in the final analysis, which accounts for 96.56%.

Socio demographic characteristic of the study population and pattern of internet use are depicted in Tables 1 and 2.

Table no 3 showing preferred use of internet by college students, multiple choice options were provided most preferred use of internet was for chatting.

Table 3 Preferred Use of Internet

Use of internet for	n = 309	Percentage
E – mail	145	46.93
Chatting	185	59.87
General websites	165	53.40
Games	136	44.01
Shopping	167	54.05
Online friendships	164	53.07
Online relationships	42	13.59
Using internet for coursework	210	67.96

DISCUSSION

Observing the explosive growth in internet use among the professional course students, it is important to study pattern of internet use in this subset of population. Professional course students are a particularly vulnerable group on account of the time they spend on the internet. This study is an initial step toward understanding the extent of internet addiction among professional course students in India. [14]

The pattern of internet use was seen in our study, majority of students were in age group of 19 to 20 years that were similar to study conducted by authors. [2,7,14] Also majority students were using computer since last 4 years this also similar to study conducted by Krishnamurthy et al [7] but lower than study conducted by Dhok et al. [10]

Very soon interacting with other people using online chat became an epidemic like phenomenon world over. It became fairly common to find people interacting more in the cyber space rather than real world. [15]

Majority of students were using internet for last 4 years, this was also found in study conducted by other authors. [3,11-15] Average use of internet per day was up to 3 hrs. in our study, this finding also similar to study conducted by Krishnamurthy et al and Srijampana et al. [7,16]

After reviewing of several studies it is concluded that the internet affects students' life both positively and negatively. The use of internet among students in India has been bringing a fundamental change in their life styles and their study habits since its inception. The students spend 2-3 hours on the Internet daily to satisfy their various needs mostly for chatting, connecting with friends, making new friends, telling about their plans and performances, social relations, and other education objectives. [4]

Expenditure done Internet per month which was of 248(65.09%) was similar to the study conducted by Krishnamurthy et al, Dhok et al. [3,11] Most commonly used gadget for accessing Internet in our study was mobile phone this also similar to study conducted by Krishnamurthy et al, Dhok et al, Paul et al. [3,11,13]

The study depicted some alarming state of affairs pertaining to urban teenagers' life-style. Soon after the advent of internet in a common person's life, social experts, behaviorologists and mental health professionals started alarming the internet users about the impending detrimental effects of internet. [15]

Most commonly used gadget for accessing Internet in our study was mobile phone in 81.55% of students which was similar to the findings of Krishnamurthy et al, Dhok et al but contrasting with findings of Vijay et. al. [5,7,10] Time spent by Father, Mother & siblings on Internet outside work hours were similar to Krishnamurthy et al. [7] Preferred Use of Internet on was similar to study conducted by authors. [7,10]

College students, probably due to the psychological and developmental characteristics of young adulthood and limited or no parental supervision, are more susceptible to getting into online

friendships, which eventually most often turns into online relationships. [7]

A greater danger is that college students may become targets of sexual harassment online. False, illicit, demeaning and vulgar comments and information about teenagers, especially, girls can be posted online by miscreant and mischievous persons. They may even become victim of paedophiles; the anonymity of some social networking sites makes it easy for unscrupulous people to target young teens and engage them in harmful conversations. It's easy for predators to pose as teens and lure children into harmful real world contact as well. [15]

Limitation

One of the limitations of this study is that data collection was based on self-reported questionnaires which are prone to recall bias. Participants were college going students and replication of this study for targeting other student populations should be made in order to generate a more solid relationship among constructs examined in this study, because generalization of the results is somewhat limited.

CONCLUSION

In a highly digital era, students can hardly live without computers and the Internet. There has been an increasing trend of use of mobile phones and internet among students especially in developing countries. There is need to sensitize Students about Internet addiction. Awareness should be created regarding developing a healthy and safe Internet culture. Further prospective study in this regards is recommended. Also interventional study recommended for examining effect of different interventional methods for prevention and treatment of high internet and mobile phone usage among students.

REFERENCES

1. Gnanasambandam C, Gomes M. Online and upcoming : The Internet's impact on India. 2012.
2. Marahatta S, Adhikari B, Aryal N, Regmi R. Internet Addiction and Associated Factors among Health Sciences Students in Nepal. J Community Med Health Educ. 2015; 5(4):6–10.
3. Singh D. A Systematic Review of Literature on effect of Internet Use on Students in India. Online Int Interdiscip Res J. 2014;4(10):180–93.
4. Alpaslan AH, Avci K, Soylu N, Guzel HI. The Association between Problematic Internet Use, Suicide Probability, Alexithymia and Loneliness among Turkish Medical Students. J Psychiatry. 2015; 18(1):1–8.
5. Arun Vijay Paul.R Chellavel Ganapthi.K Duraimurugan .M, Abirami. V ER. Internet Addiction And Associated Factors: A Study Among College Students In South India. Innov J Med Heal Sci. 2015; 5(3):121–5.
6. Tsitsika A, Critselis E, Louizou A, Janikian M, Freskou A, Marangou E, et al. Determinants of Internet Addiction among Adolescents: A Case-Control Study. Sci World J. 2011; 11:866–74.
7. Krishnamurthy S, Chetlapalli SK. Internet addiction: Prevalence and risk factors: A cross-sectional study among college students in Bengaluru, the Silicon Valley of India. Indian J Public Health. 2015; 59(2):115–21.
8. Razieh J. the Relationship Between Internet Addiction and Anxiety in the Universities Students. Interdiscip J Contemp Res Bus. 2012;4(1):942–8.
9. Şenormanci Ö, Saraçli Ö, Atasoy N, Şenormanci G, Koktürk F, Atik L. Relationship of internet addiction with cognitive style, personality, and depression in university students. Compr Psychiatry. 2014; 55(6):1385–90.
10. Dhok RS, Kadarkar KS, Doibale MK. Exploring levels of Internet addiction among medical interns : a cross-sectional study. Int J Med Sci Public Heal. 2016; 5(11):1–5.
11. Fontalba-navas A, Marin-olalla M, Gil-aguilar V, Rodriguez-hurtado J, Ríos-garcía G, Pena-andreu JM. Mental Health Promotion : Prevention of Problematic Internet Use among Adolescents. J Psychiatry. 2015; 18(1):14–6.

12. Young KS. Internet addiction : the emergence of a new clinical disorder. Cyber Psychology Behav. 1996; 1(3):237–44.
13. Pies R. Should DSM-V Designate "Internet Addiction" a Mental Disorder ? Psychiatry. 2009;6(2):31–7.
14. Sharma A, Sahu R, Kasar P, Sharma R. Internet addiction among professional courses students: A study from central India. Int J Med Sci Public Heal. 2014; 3(8):1.
15. Meena P, Mittal P, Solanki R. Problematic use of social networking sites among urban school going teenagers. Ind Psychiatry J. 2012; 21(2):94.
16. Venu V, Raju G, Endreddy AR, Prabhath K, Rajana B. Prevalence and patterns of internet addiction among medical students. 2014; 7(6):709–13.

How to cite this article: Surwase K, Bagdey P, Adikane H. Cross-sectional study of pattern of internet use in college going students innandedcity. Int J Health Sci Res. 2016; 6(11):17-23.

****