



---

## A Study Of Internet Addiction And Its Effects On Mental Health Among College Students

---

Samiksha Sanjay Powar

Research Student

Corresponding Author - Samiksha Sanjay Powar

DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.10958110

---

### Abstract:

The present study is undertaken to assess Internet Addiction and Mental Health among College Students. A total number of 60 students were the sample of the present study (30 Males, and 30 Females) selected randomly from one district of Maharashtra. “Internet Addiction Test” and “Mithila Mental Health Status Inventory” were used in the present study. Data was analyzed by using Pearson product moment correlation ( $r$ ), Mean, Standard Deviation and, ‘ $t$ ’ test on SPSS. Result shows that there is significant correlation between internet addiction and mental health among college students. The results also revealed that there is significant difference among male and female college students in internet addiction. Result shows that there is significant difference between male and female college students in mental health. Results are justified in the paper.

**Keywords:** Internet Addiction, Mental Health, College Students.

---

### Introduction:

#### Internet Addiction:

Internet addiction, also known as problematic internet use or compulsive internet use, refers to excessive and uncontrollable use of the internet, leading to negative consequences in various aspects of life. It involves an individual's inability to control their online behavior, resulting in disruptions to daily activities, relationships, and overall well-being. Common manifestations include excessive gaming, social media use, or constant browsing, often to the detriment of real-world responsibilities.

It's recognized as a behavioral addiction and can impact mental health, productivity, and social connections.

Impact of Internet addiction on mental health among college students creates psychosocial disorders among the students. The psychosocial disorder has various characteristics including withdrawal symptoms, tolerance, problems in social relations, and affective disorder. According to Anand et al. (2018), psychological difficulties are also faced by the person who is addicted to the Internet. Pathological Internet users cause social, academic, and interpersonal problems.

The heightened level of psychological arousal is created by the excessive usage of the Internet. This psychological arousal results in little sleep, limited physical activity, failure to eat for a long time as well as resulting in depression, anxiety, and low family relationships.

### **Effects of Internet Addiction:**

1. **Academic Implications:** Internet addiction can negatively affect academic performance, leading to procrastination, decreased productivity, and difficulty focusing on studies.
2. **Social Isolation:** Excessive internet use can lead to isolation from real-world social interactions, contributing to feelings of loneliness and a decline in mental well-being.
3. **Stress and Anxiety:** Constant online engagement may result in heightened stress and anxiety levels as individuals deal with the pressure of keeping up with online activities and maintaining a digital presence.
4. **Depression:** Internet addiction has been linked to an increased risk of depression, often stemming from factors such as social comparison, cyberbullying, or negative online experiences.
5. **Sleep Disturbances:** The overuse of the internet, especially before bedtime, can disrupt sleep patterns, leading to insomnia or other sleep-related issues, further impacting mental health.
6. **Neglect of Responsibilities:** Excessive time spent online may lead to neglect

of real-life responsibilities, such as work, academics, or relationships, resulting in additional stress and negative consequences for mental health.

Understanding these diverse facets of the relationship between internet addiction and mental health is crucial for developing effective strategies to address and mitigate these challenges, particularly among college students.

### **Mental Health:**

Maintaining good mental health is essential for overall well-being and a fulfilling life. In a fast-paced and often demanding world, it's crucial to prioritize mental well-being to navigate the challenges of daily life effectively. Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being, influencing how we think, feel, and act. A positive mental state allows individuals to cope with stress, form meaningful relationships, and make informed decisions. However, factors such as life events, genetics, and brain chemistry can contribute to mental health challenges. Understanding the importance of mental health and recognizing the signs of distress are the first steps towards fostering a resilient and balanced mind.

### **Key Points:**

1. **Stigma and Awareness:** Despite increasing awareness, there is still a stigma associated with mental health issues. Breaking down these barriers is crucial for fostering open conversations and seeking timely support.

2. **Peer Support:** Peer support programs and networks provide individuals with shared experiences an avenue for understanding, empathy, and encouragement, fostering a sense of community and belonging.
3. **Impact on Daily Life:** A healthy mental state positively influences how individuals handle stress, relate to others, and make decisions. It contributes significantly to the overall quality of life.
4. **Educational Empowerment:** Promoting mental health literacy empowers individuals to understand, discuss, and address mental health issues. Education contributes to reducing stigma and fostering a more compassionate and informed society.
5. **Technology and Mental Health:** The role of technology in mental health is evolving, with digital tools offering resources for support, therapy, and mental health tracking. Balancing the benefits and challenges of technology is crucial for a healthy relationship with these tools.

#### **Problem Statement:**

To study about internet addiction and mental health among college students.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To study the correlation between internet addiction and mental health among college students.
2. To study the gender difference in internet addiction among college students.

3. To study the gender difference in mental health among college students.

#### **Hypotheses:**

1. There will be significant correlation between internet addiction and mental health among college students.
2. There will be significant difference in internet addiction of male and female college students.
3. There will be significant difference in mental health of male and female college students.

#### **Methodology:**

##### **Participants:**

60 participants were divided into two groups namely males (30) and females (30) selected randomly from one district of Maharashtra. The age range of the students was 18 to 25 years.

##### **Variables of the Study:**

**A. Independent Variable - Gender**

**B. Dependent Variables -** 1. Internet addiction 2. Mental health

##### **Operational definitions:**

The operational definition of internet addiction and mental health among college students would involve specifying measurable criteria or indicators. For internet addiction, this could include factors like time spent online, impact on daily functioning, or dependence. For mental health might be operationalized through standardized scales assessing factors such as anxiety, depression, and overall well-being. Defining specific

parameters helps researchers objectively assess and quantify these variables in a study involving college students.

### Tools used in the study:

The following standardized tests were used to collect the data.

#### 1. Internet Addiction Test (IAT 1998):

The test is developed by Dr. Kimberly Young in 1998. It consists of 20 statements with 5 Alternatives each namely not applicable, rarely, occasionally, frequently, often, and always.

#### 2. Mithila Mental Health Status Inventory (1986):

This scale was developed by Kumar, A., and Thakur, G.P. In this test there are 50 statements. With 5 alternatives each as “strongly agree”, “agree”, “Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)”, “Disagree”, “strongly disagree”. Split Half Method reliability of this test is 0.81.

### Procedures:

### Result:

**Table no.1, Correlation between internet addiction and mental health among college students.**

Factor	N	Mean	SD	df	'r'
IAT	60	54.8	14.75	118	0.30*
MHSI	60	127.28	23.13		

**\*\*Significant at 0.01 level, \*Significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not Significant**

Firstly, consent was taken from the principle of 2 colleges in Ichalkaranji city from Kolhapur district of Maharashtra for data collection from the students. The sample was selected by Quota sampling (convenience sampling) and they were instructed regarding the scale and explaining the study's purpose and asked to solve 2 scales stated in tools. After that scoring was done manually according to guidelines of all 2 scales. Input collected data into an Excel spreadsheet. Data was statistically analyzed on SPSS (Statistical Package of Social Sciences version 25) by using independent sample t-test for measuring difference, and correlation for examining the relationship between variables. Then paper typing was done. Results are justified in the paper.

### Statistical Data Analysis:

The data was statistically analyzed by using Mean, SD, 't' value, and Pearson product moment correlation, on SPSS.

**Table no. 2, Mean, SD & 't' value for type of gender difference of internet addiction among college students.**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value
Male	30	62.6	12.40	58	4.81**
Female	30	47	12.77		

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level, \*Significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not Significant

**Table no. 3, Mean, SD & 't' value for type of gender difference of mental health among college students.**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value
Male	30	134.5	22	58	2.53*
Female	30	120.03	22.28		

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level, \*Significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not Significant

### Discussion and Interpretation:

Table no. 1 shows the correlation between internet addiction and mental health among college students. The mean value for Internet Addiction Test is 54.8 with 14.75 standard- deviation. For Mental Health Status Inventory, mean is 127.28 with 23.13 SD. The respected 'r' value is 0.30 which is statistically significant at 0.05 level. Hence, there is significant correlation between internet addiction and mental health among college students. This shows low positive correlation.

Table no. 2 shows the gender difference between males and females on internet addiction among college students. The mean score of male students is 62.6 (SD= 12.40) and the female mean score is 47 (SD= 12.77) on internet addiction. The obtained 't' value is 4.81 which is statistically significant at

0.01 level. The results make it clear that internet addiction in males is higher as compared to females among college students. Which is significantly differ.

Table no. 3 shows the gender difference between males and females on mental health among college students. The mean score of male students is 134.5 (SD= 22) and female mean score is 120.03 (SD= 22.28) on mental health. The obtained 't' value is 2.53 which is statistically significant at 0.05 level. The results make it clear that in college students males having poorer mental health as compared to females. Which is differ in mental health.

### Conclusion

1. There is a significant correlation between internet addiction and mental health among college students. It means internet addiction

affects mental health among college students.

2. There is significant difference found between male and female college students on internet addiction.
3. There is significant difference found between male and female college students on mental health.

#### **Limitations and Suggestions**

1. In the present study only two psychological tests were used.
2. The area of data collection is the same for all participants.
3. More variables and tools could be added for a deeper study.
4. The number of participants could be increased with various areas of data collection.

#### **Research Application:**

##### **1. Educational Initiatives**

Findings can be used to create awareness and educational programs about healthy internet usage and mental health on college campuses.

##### **2. Policy Development**

Governments and educational institutions can use the research to develop policies promoting a balanced and healthy approach to technology use among students.

##### **3. Counseling Services Enhancement**

Colleges can enhance their counseling services based on insights into prevalent mental health issues associated with internet addiction.

#### **4. Workshop Arrangement**

It should be conducted for better mental health of college students. And ways to reduce Internet addiction among them.

#### **References:**

1. Barmola, K. C., Singh, Nayanika, (2015). Internet Addiction, Mental Health and Academic Performance of School Students Adolescents. The International Journal of Indian Psychology 4(3), 98-108.
2. Gupta, A., Khan, A.M., Rajoura, O.P., & Srivastava, S. (2018). Internet addiction and its mental health correlates among undergraduates college students of a university in North India. Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care;7(4):
3. Menon, S., Narayanan, L., Kahwaji, A.T,(2018). Internet addiction: A research study of college students in India. Asian institute of research
4. Rajeswari, C., Ramachandra., Joseph, N., George, N., Pavithra., K., Syhly, P., Jose, P.(2017). Internet addiction among the undergraduate students. Nitte University Journal of Health science
5. Srivastava, Dr-Neharshi & Gupta, N & Surana, Pranjal. (2021). MENTAL HEALTH IN RELATION TO INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG INDIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.