The Relationship between Internet Addiction and Loneliness among Girls of Faculty of Physical Education\University of Baghdad

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study is examined the relationship between internet addiction and loneliness among girls of Faculty of Physical Education\ University of Babylon in Iraq. One hundred prospective students are participated from University of Baghdad. Generalized internet addiction scale and Amer of Loneliness Scale were used to collect data. Some of the major findings are as follows: a) Study sample did not show a strong loneliness; b) Girls of Faculty of Physical Education did not appear internet addiction; c) Positive correlation between addiction internet and loneliness levels of prospective girls; d) There is no significant difference between levels of study (first class, second class, third class, and fourth class).

*Keywords***:** Relationship study, Internet addiction, Loneliness, and Physical education.

1. Introduction

Internet is definitely resulting in the new industrial revolution with the entrance of hundreds of tenderfoots and about 200 million users from all over the world, today, it is forming a social, economic, and communicative revolution. It is essentially at the peak of the digital industrial revolution and every kind of new revolution subsequently gives rise to new problem. The unique characteristics of the Internet such as its simple working, low cost, 24- hour availability, global, interactive, and etc. have welcomed many people the world (Beard., 2005).

In addition, it also enables the student to improve his/her learning experience. However, Online users can easily access internet from a bunch of locations including their homes, workplaces, houses, school, internet cafes (Deniz and Coşkun., 2004) According to a research on Information Technologies Use employed by Iraq Institute of Statistics, the ratio of computer use and internet access in enterprises was 69,6% and 71,9% in January 2010 whereas in January 2011 these rates respectively increased to 80,6% and 85,2%. In January 2012, the ratio of internet access was 89,6% (Iraq Institute of Statistics, 2013). The reason accounting for this rapid rise in internet use is certainly related to the services it provides and its easy access.

Internet addiction is frequently defined together with common concept like loneliness which finds its roots in unreasonable and sick-like usage of the Internet in such a way that causes certain problems in the usual daily activities. Internet addiction can contain excessive involvement in pornography use, online gaming, and virtual communities which all will result in turn to unhealthy relationships and emotions (e.g fatigue, depression, and sleeplessness). Rejecting the seriousness of the problem, justifying their behavior on the basis of this pretext that what they learn from the Internet is more useful than what is provided in the class, and lying about the spent time on the Internet are common symptoms of this kind of addiction among university students. A comprehensive definition for Internet addiction can be proposed as the time during which emotional and psychological status and also educational, occupational, and social interactions are damaged due to the Internet overuse (Byun *et al*., 2009).

Research in the addictions field has shown that a psychiatric illness such as loneliness is regularly associated with alcoholism and drug addiction (Capuzzi and Lecoq., 1983; Cox., 1985). Further, research has shown that other addictive behaviors overlap with loneliness-for example, eating disorders and pathological gambling (Lacey., 1993; Mobilia., 1993). Even though the idea of internet addiction has gained credibility among mental health professionals both in academic and clinical realms, little research has been conducted to examine if internet addiction contribute to loneliness in Iraq girls of physical education.

The relationship between internet addiction and loneliness is an enduring question in computer mediated communication research. The question is how the Internet could lead to loneliness, has been provisionally answered by a preponderance of evidence suggesting that the Internet has an overall positive effect on well-being (Shaw and Grant., 2002). On the other hand, research on internet addiction has shown that uncontrolled or compulsive Internet use has been known to have negative effects on loneliness (Whang *et al*., 2003). Another study has turned the relationship around, arguing that psychosocial dysfunctions such as loneliness cause addictive, habitual, or problematic Internet use (Caplan., 2007). Recently, a longitudinal research showed that the relationship between Internet addiction and psychological well-being might be bidirectional (Van den *et al*., 2008). Depend on these findings, the present study aim to examine the relationship between internet addiction and loneliness in Iraq girls of physical education\ University of Baghdad.

2. Theoretical studies

2.1 *Internet addiction*

Internet addiction is a proposed but unproven disorder that involves excessive Internet use to the extent that it interferes with daily life. Excessive 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 and social isolation. Some opponents of classifying Internet addiction as a diagnosis in the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders" argue that so-called Internet addicts are already covered under other diagnoses, ranging from depression, anxiety, impulse control disorders, or pathological gambling. Other names for Internet addiction include Internet addiction disorder, problem Internet use, pathological computer use, heavy Internet use and pathological Internet use. It should be noted that the term addiction is considered distracting and divisive by some professionals (Site 1).

People who are addicted to the internet may experience some of the following effects:

-Poor impulse control: being unable to stop visiting websites, clicking links or checking emails.
-Procrastination: a person may regularly perform activities such as website browsing or online gaming to avoid doing important tasks such as starting an essay or making a difficult phone call.
-Avoiding family and friends (reduction in social life): people who become addicted to the internet often go out less frequently and interact with their friends and family less and less overtime.
-Lower productivity: this links with procrastination. People who are addicted to the internet are likely to have lower rates of productivity as they put off doing their work and are unable to focus on the work at hand, becoming easily distracted.
-Time distortion: aimless web surfing or play online games is common among internet addicts who may find that time passes rapidly whilst doing these activities. Internet addicts become so wrapped up in what they are doing online they fail to notice all the time that has gone by.
-Escapism and dissociation: becoming heavily involved in an online community or videogame may be used as a way to escape the problems that users are currently facing. For example, someone might become excessively involved in an internet community based around a videogame, or an online social network and they use this as a crutch to avoid having to deal with face to face interactions in the 'real world'.
-Depression and anxiety: this relates to escapism and dissociation. People who are depressed may use the internet as a type of 'self medication' allowing themselves to escape and ignore the problems they are currently facing by immersing themselves in the online world. This can lead to further depression or anxiety when they 'log off' as they still have yet to face their problems and putting off problems often only makes them worse.
Other effects of internet addiction include:

- a reduction in personal hygiene and caring for how one looks.

-feeling 'zoned out' after several hours of internet usage.

-back pain as users spend long periods of time hunched forward looking at a computer screen (Figure 1) shows a depression in internet addiction (Site 2).

Figure 1. Shows a depression in internet addiction

3. Methodology

The present study was conducted by using a descriptive research method due to it is suitable to the nature of study.

3.1 *Participants*:

Undergraduate students from physical education for girls\ Baghdad University were participated in the survey. 100 college students of the whole 578 female students were selected according to stratified random sampling on the basis of Morgan table (Krejcie and Morgan., 1970).

3.2 *Measurements*

3.2.1 *Internet Addiction Test (IAT)*:

Measuring the extent of Internet addiction Young's 20-itemed questionnaire was used. In this test all respondents were supposed to give answers to all questions on the Likert scale. The assignable scores in this test range from 0 to 100 and are interpreted in this way that the more score is admitted, the more dependency on the Internet and the more severity of the resultant problems for users is identified. Young's procedure was used for evaluation of the obtained

scores. Specifically, scores ranging from 0 to 39 indicate normal users, from 40 to 69 indicate vulnerable users, and finally from 70 to 100 indicate addicted users of the Internet (Morrison and Gore., 2010).

3.2.2 *Loneliness test*:

Loneliness Levels of loneliness were assessed by Loneliness Scale (Fahd and Shafiq., 2004), a 46-item one-dimensional measure of loneliness. For each statement respondents were asked to indicate how often they feel the way described on three-point scale (3,2,1). Items included: (often, sometimes, never).The high score is 138 and lowest score is 46.

3.3 *Statistical analysis*:

The data collected were analyzed by independent samples t-test in an effort to examine the internet addiction and loneliness. Means, standard deviations, and estimated marginal means of the samples were calculated.

4. Results and discussion:

Descriptive statistics related to loneliness is demonstrated for students by following table.

(Table 1)
Descriptive Statistics about Loneliness Separated by the Mean, Purpose Mean, Standard Deviation, and Independent Samples T-test

Samples	Mean	Hypothetical Mean	SD	Tabulated T-test	Calculated T-test	P	Differences
100	85.65	92	11.38	- 2.5	1.98	0.05	No

Based on the statistic parameters of T= -2.5 and calculated T= 1.98 and considering significance level of p=0.05 which are observable in Table 1, loneliness shows no significant differences. And table (2) shows descriptive statistics related to internet addiction.

(Table 2)
Mean score, standard deviation, and T-test results of Internet addiction in study group

Samples	Mean	Hypothetical Mean	SD	Tabulated T-test	Calculated T-test	P	Differences
100	30.35	60	17.48	- 7.58	1.98	0.05	No

Moreover, considering the statistic parameters of T= -7.58 and calculated T= 1.98 with a significance level of p=0.05, the observed no significant difference was for study group.

(Table 3)

Shows correlation between internet addiction and loneliness for study group

Variables	Mean	SD	R	P	Differences
internet addiction	85,65	11,38			
loneliness	30,35	17,48	0,632	0,05	S

Correlation value = 387.0 at the significant level 0.05.

According to the obtained results which are reported in Table 3, the resultant amounts of R= 0.632 and significance level of p= 0.05, a significant correlation was observed between internet addiction and loneliness for the group. And table (4) shows the significant differences of loneliness for samples depending on the stage of study.

(Table 4)
Shows variance analysis among groups of study in loneliness

Variance Source	Square set	Freedom degree	Squares Medium	F	Significant
Among groups	314,55	3	104,85		
Inside groups	2150	96	134,37	0,78	No

Tabulate F value= 42.3 at significant level 0.05.

Giving to results which are reported in table (4), the resultant amount of F= 0.78 and significant level of p= 0.05, no significant differences among stages of study in loneliness. Internet addiction has been recognized as a new disorder and many studies demonstrated and indicated its signs symptoms. Internet today is the most recent and important human technology which is widely used and its users are increasing. It is a phenomenon which still has its primary attractiveness. Thus, the present study is run to study the relationship between Internet addiction and loneliness.

Several approaches have been proposed to explain Internet addiction. For example, according to Grohol's opinion, we can say that most of the people who are extreme users, they reduce their use of Internet as a result of excessive use. The data collection tool in the present study was a questionnaire. As it was said earlier, questionnaire had been designed based on one of the most reliable measure of Internet Addiction test (IAT).

The obtained results of current study indicate that the differences were no significant in the variables of Internet addiction and loneliness. On the other hand, a significant difference was observed between Internet addiction and feeling of loneliness. According to these results, it seems that the variables of Internet addiction and feeling of loneliness are in low levels in students. However, no significant difference was identified among groups and inside groups in loneliness. The gained results in the present study goes on the same track with results of previous research conducted by Junghyun et al (2009) they noted that by excessive use of the internet lead to loneliness.

Physical education for girls\ University of Baghdad usually suffer from certain stresses due to their special situations including studying-related pressures, financial pressures, cultural differences, and establishing a balance between work and study and between personal and educational life as well. Studying in university is usually accompanied with anxiety and distress for most students. Unfamiliarity with educational environments and systems, staying away from family, insufficient facilities, and other difficulties like these interfere with their adaptation to this new situation. Adaptation is a process during which a person tries to balance what he/she does or want to do with what society and the environment demand. However, our study showed no internet addiction and loneliness in girls of physical education.

4. Conclusion

Study sample did not show a strong loneliness and Girls of Faculty of Physical Education did not demonstrate internet addiction. Furthermore, a significant correlation between addiction internet and loneliness levels of prospective girls was presented. In addition, there is no significant difference between levels of study (first class, second class, third class, and fourth class).

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