Internet Addiction, Emotional Intelligence and Social Adjustment among Adolescents

• **Yousra Iqbal**   • **Maryam Iqbal**   • **Shambhavi**
• **Sister M. Reema A.C.**

Abstract: The present study was conducted to measure the extent to which emotional intelligence and social adjustment are related to internet use among adolescents. In this study six hypotheses were formulated: 1) Internet addiction and emotional intelligence of adolescents would be negatively correlated. 2) There would be significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social adjustment of adolescents. 3) Internet addiction and social adjustment of adolescents would be negatively correlated. 4) There would be significant gender difference in internet addiction of adolescents. 5) There would be significant gender difference in emotional intelligence of adolescents. 6) There would be significant gender difference in social adjustment of adolescents. A sample of 150 students from St. Xavier's High School, Patna was selected through incidental-cum-purposive sampling method. Internet Addiction Test by Young (1998), Emotional Intelligence Scale by Singh & Narain (2014) and Deva's Social Adjustment Inventory by Deva (2004) were taken as research tools. Mean, median, standard deviation, t-ratio and coefficient of correlation were chosen as statistical tools. The obtained result revealed that internet addiction and emotional intelligence are negatively correlated, no significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social adjustment, and internet addiction and social adjustment of adolescents are negatively correlated. There is no significant gender difference in internet addiction and social adjustment of adolescents but there is significant gender difference in emotional intelligence of adolescents.

Keywords: Internet Addiction, Emotional Intelligence, Social Adjustment, Adolescents.

Yousra Iqbal
B.A. III year, Psychology (Hons.), Session: 2015-2018, Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna, Bihar, India

Maryam Iqbal
B.A. III year, Psychology (Hons.), Session: 2015-2018, Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna, Bihar, India

Shambhavi
B.A. III year, Psychology (Hons.), Session: 2015-2018, Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna, Bihar, India

Sister M. Reema A.C.
Assistant Professor, Deptt. of Psychology, Patna Women's College, Bailey Road, Patna–800 001, Bihar, India
E-mail : reemarosyprecilla@yahoo.com

Introduction:

Internet is a global computer network providing a variety of information and communication facilities, consisting of inter connected networks using standardized communication protocols. The use of the internet among individuals has considerably increased over the last few years. The compulsive use of internet which is internet addiction was taken into consideration in the present study. Internet addiction may interfere with the ability of the user to function normally, it may turn into abuse and can be emotionally damaging for the individuals. In a study conducted by Chang & Law (2008), Chou & Hsiao (2000), Scherer & Bost (1997),Yen et. al (2009), it has been observed that internet addiction has been reported to be negatively correlated with academic performance including poor grades, tardiness and procrastination. Emotional intelligence is the ability of the individual to know their own emotion, the ability to manage and motivate oneself, the ability to recognise the emotions of others and handling relationships. The individuals with high emotional intelligence are able to read others' emotions accurately and are also able to develop good social relationship with others. Some recent empirical studies by Mayer, Caruso & Salovey (1999), Rice (1999), Salovey, Mayer, Caruso & Lopes (2001) have found emotional intelligence as an important tool related to positive criterion such as prosocial behaviour, parental warmth, and positive family and peer relations. The most important matter is the desire of the individual to make adjustment with the environment and to live a meaningful life. Kulshrestha (1979) explained that the adjustment process is the way in which the individual attempts to deal with stress, tensions, conflicts, etc., and meet his or her needs. In this process, the individual also makes efforts to maintain harmonious relationships with the environment. The three variables seemed inter-related with each other, therefore, this study has been undertaken.

Purpose:

The purpose of the present study was:-

1. To see the relationship between emotional intelligence and social adjustment among adolescents.

2. To find out the relationship between internet addiction and emotional intelligence of adolescents.

3. To examine the relationship of internet addiction with social adjustment of adolescents.

Hypotheses:

The hypotheses formulated were:-

1. Internet addiction and emotional intelligence of adolescents would be negatively correlated.

2. There would be significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social adjustment of adolescents.

3. Internet addiction and social adjustment of adolescents would be negatively correlated.

4. There would be significant gender difference in internet addiction of adolescents.

5. There would be significant gender difference in emotional intelligence of adolescents.

6. There would be significant gender difference in social adjustment of adolescents.

Method :

Sample: The study was conducted on 150 higher secondary students (male and female) from Patna, the capital of Bihar. The sample consisted of students studying in XI and XII standards having an age range of 16 - 18 years.

Research tools: The following tools were used for the measurement of variables for the study:

• Internet Addiction Test by Young (1998).

• Emotional Intelligence Scale by Singh & Narain (2014).

• Deva's Social Adjustment Inventory by Deva (2004).

Procedure of Data Collection: The data was collected from St. Xavier's High School, Patna on 150 students (male and female) during the school hours in one week.

Results and Discussion: The mean, median, standard deviation, *t-ratio* and coefficient of correlation were computed for the quantitative analysis of data. The obtained data is presented in a tabular form.

Hypothesis 1. Internet addiction and emotional intelligence of adolescents would be negatively correlated.

Table 1.

Variables	N	r	Level of Significance
Internet Addiction	77	-0.004	Not Significant
Emotional Intelligence			

N=77; df=75; 0.05=0.217; 0.01=0.283

The scores were divided on the basis of median value to categorize the sample into internet addicted and non-addicted adolescents. The score on or above the median was taken as Internet addicted (N=77). Table No. 1 depicts the co-efficient of correlation between the scores of internet addiction and emotional intelligence. The 'r' value is **-0.004**. The obtained result shows that there is a negative correlation between internet addiction and emotional intelligence. Hence, the hypothesis has been proved but the obtained 'r' value - 0.004 is not significant even at 0.05 level. In support with the finding, a study conducted by Kraut et. al., (1998) revealed that internet is negatively influencing our real life strong ties and is displacing our social activity.

Hypothesis 2. There would be significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social adjustment of adolescents.

Table 2.

Variables	N	r	Level of Significance
Emotional Intelligence	150	0.096	Not Significant
Social Adjustment			

N=150; df=148; 0.05=0.159; 0.01=0.208

Table No. 2 shows the co-efficient of correlation between the scores of emotional intelligence and social adjustment. The obtained 'r' value is **0.096**, which shows that there is a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social adjustment. The obtained 'r' value is 0.096 (df = 148) which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence. The table value at 0.05 level is 0.159 and at 0.01 level is 0.208. Hence, the hypothesis has not been proved. Sharma (2013) carried out a study on school students to find out the correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment. Results show that the students who had high emotional intelligence had low degree of stress and better adjustment in their lives which is very useful in achieving success in life.

Hypothesis 3. Internet addiction and social adjustment of adolescents would be negatively correlated.

Table 3.

Variables	N	r	Level of Significance
Internet Addiction	77	-0.224	P<.05
Social Adjustment			

N=77; df=75; 0.05=0.217; 0.01=0.283

Table No.3 shows the obtained correlation coefficient is **-0.224**, which clearly indicates negative correlation between internet addiction and social adjustment. The obtained 'r' value is -0.224 (df = 75) which is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. Hence, the hypothesis has been proved. In the study of Chou and Hsiao (2000), Kim, Ryu et. al., (2006), Li and Chung (2006), Yen, Ko et. al., (2007), compared students with high use of internet against students with normal use of internet. The study showed that the students with excessive use of internet showed increased depression, thoughts of suicide, hyperactivity, anxiety, social anxiety, aggression, violence and anti-social behavior. This study supports the present hypothesis and also goes in line with the present research finding.

Hypothesis 4. There would be significant gender difference in internet addiction of adolescents.

Table 4.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of Significance
Male	35	23.65	20.078	1.269	Not significant
Female	42	31.78	21.029		

N=77; df=75; 0.05=1.99; 0.01=2.64

From the Table No. 4 given above, it can be seen that the mean value of the scores obtained for males is **23.65** and for females is **31.78**, which is greater in comparison to males. On the basis of this it can be said that females are addicted to internet more than males. The standard deviation is **20.078** and **21.029** respectively, which shows that there is variation in the responses of the respondents. The obtained **t-ratio** is **1.269** (df =75) which is not significant even at 0.05 level. The table value at 0.05 level is 1.99 and at 0.01 level is 2.64. The **t-value** indicates that there is no significant gender difference in internet addiction among adolescents. Hence the hypothesis has not been proved. In contrast with this finding, a study by Dufour et. al., (2016), showed that boys spend significantly more time on the internet than girls.

Hypothesis 5. There would be significant gender difference in emotional intelligence of adolescents.

Table 5.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of Significance
Male	75	22.02	3.862	3.79	P<.01
Female	75	20.28	4.096		

N=150; df=148; 0.05=1.98; 0.01=2.61

Table No.5 shows mean, standard deviation and *t-ratio* of emotional intelligence scores of male and female adolescents. The mean of emotional intelligence of male and female adolescents is **22.02** and **20.28** respectively. There is a difference of **2.26**. On the basis of the obtained mean value, it can be said that female adolescents are lower in emotional intelligence in comparison to male adolescents. The standard deviation for males is **3.862** and for females is **4.096**. Both are lower than their mean, which shows that there is less variation in the response of the respondents. The obtained critical ratio is **3.79** (df =148) which is significant at 0.01 level. The obtained results confirm the hypothesis that there is a significant gender difference in emotional intelligence. Hence the hypothesis has been proved. In support of this finding, study done by Mishra and Ranjan (2008) shows that adolescent boys and girls differ significantly on emotional intelligence and boys were found to be significantly higher on emotional intelligence than girls. The high scores of adolescent boys indicate that they are better on interpersonal adaptability and stress management skills. This study supports the view of the present hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6. "There would be significant gender difference in social adjustment of adolescents."

Table 6.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	*t-ratio*	Level of Significance
Male	75	93.01	32.275	0.093	**Not Significant**
Female	75	93.5	32.227		

N=150; df=148; 0.05=1.98; 0.01=2.61

It can be seen from table No. 6, that the mean value of the obtained scores for males is **93.01** and for females is **93.5**. There is a difference of 0.49 which is negligible. The standard deviation of the scores obtained for males is **32.275** and for females is **32.227**. Both are lower to their mean, which shows that there is less variation in the response of the respondents. The obtained ***t-ratio*** is **0.093** (df =148) which is not significant even at 0.05 level. As the table value at 0.05 level is 1.98 and at 0.01 level is 2.61. The ***t-value*** indicates that there is no significant gender difference on social adjustment among adolescents. Hence, the hypothesis has not been proved. Shukla et al. (2015) have shown in their studies that males have low level of adjustment as compared to females. So this study doesn't support the present research finding.

Conclusion:

On the basis of the present study, it can be concluded that:

- Internet addiction and emotional intelligence are negatively correlated.
- There is no significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and social adjustment.
- Internet addiction and social adjustment of adolescents are negatively correlated.
- There is no significant gender difference in internet addiction of adolescents.
- There is significant gender difference in emotional intelligence of adolescents.
- There is no significant gender difference in social adjustment of adolescents.

Suggestions:

The following suggestions have been offered:

- Educate school administrators and teachers on the dynamic internet abuse in order to raise awareness and prevention throughout the school system.
- Encourage pupils to seek counseling when internet - triggered problems arise.
- Emphasize the importance of pupils' participation in the social activities that the school offers.
- The students should try to develop the ability to perceive the feelings correctly, both in oneself and others.
- Try to be a good listener for better understanding of others' feelings and to have empathy.
- One should not suppress one's emotions and try to have a balance between rational thoughts and emotions.
- Social skill development classes should be arranged for better interpersonal skills.
- Social interaction should be encouraged by the guardians and teachers.
- There should be more of such activities in schools and place of study where children get the opportunity of interaction with individuals of both sexes.
- Socialization should also be the primary concern in the life of the adolescents.

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