

# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNET ADDICTION AND DEPRESSION

Research  
Paper

## ABSTRACT

*In the present study the investigators attempt to find out the significant relationship if any, between Internet addiction and depression among the students of Arts and Science and Engineering colleges. The investigators have used Young's Internet Addiction questionnaire and Zung Depression Inventory to get the data from the students. The sample consists of 200 college students from two Arts and Science and two Engineering colleges in Coimbatore District. Stratified random sampling technique has been used for collecting data. The major finding of the study reveals that there is a significant relationship between Internet addiction and depression among college students.*

## INTRODUCTION

Internet addiction is a latest technological problem throughout the world. Most people use the Internet as a way to escape from the reality because they are attracted by the virtual environment. Internet addiction can change the nature and behaviour of the people. Internet addicted people do not think about real situations and want to enjoy their lives using Internet without knowing the future consequences. They easily become a prey to Internet addiction as a result of using Internet in an unlimited way. Persons addicted to the Internet face many psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, loneliness and frustration. Internet addiction can be observed in all the ages particularly in college students. Hence, the investigators felt it is necessary to study the relationship between Internet addiction and depression among the college students.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The use of Internet is increasing in every field day by day with the advancement in technology. It gives a lot of useful information to all, but college students use the Internet in a vulnerable way. Excessive use of Internet causes Internet addiction among the students. Internet addiction has the capability of reaching everyone who claims to be an Internet user. At the global level it causes severe negative impacts among the college students. Some students who have free online access may be severely addicted to Internet. Moreover internet addicted students

start to skip their classes, spend less time with their family and avoid friends. It causes psychological, academic and family problems among the students. Among these, depression is a serious problem in Internet addicted students. Depression causes conflicts and frustrations which affect the mental health of students. They also get confused in their mind and cannot take right decision in their life. Hence, research in this area is very much needed to identify the depression level of Internet addicted students. This study is to find out the relationship between Internet addiction and depression in college students and to help them become aware of the problems of Internet addiction.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the significant relationship between Internet addiction and depression among the Internet addicted students with reference to
  - a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college.
2. To find out the significant difference if any, between the mean scores of the Internet addicted students based on
  - a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college with respect to Internet addiction.

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3. To find out the significant difference if any, between the mean scores of the Internet addicted students based on a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college with respect to depression.

### HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant relationship between Internet addiction and depression among the Internet addicted students with reference to
  - a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the Internet addicted students based on a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college with respect to Internet addiction.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the Internet addicted students based on a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college with respect to depression.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has the following limitations.

1. The investigators selected only 200 college students in Coimbatore District in Tamil Nadu, for their present study.
2. The investigators selected only 4 colleges in Coimbatore District.

### METHODOLOGY

The investigators have adopted the normative survey method to study the relationship between Internet addiction and depression among college students.

**Sample:** The population of the study consists of two Arts and Science colleges and two Engineering colleges in Coimbatore District. A total of 200 college students were selected as sample by stratified random sampling. Fifty respondents were selected randomly from each college. Accordingly 200 questionnaires were distributed among the students.

**Tools:** The investigators have used the following tools for the study :

1. 'Young's Internet addiction Questionnaire' to find out the Internet addiction level among college students.
2. 'Zung Depression Inventory' to find out the depression level among college students.

The above tools are standardized tools.

**Statistical Analysis:** The collected data were analysed by using descriptive, differential and correlation analysis. The following statistical techniques were employed for the analysis and interpretation of the data.

1. Correlation analysis
2. 't' test

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

**Table-1**

#### PERCENTAGE SCORE OF INTERNET ADDICTION AND DEPRESSION OF THE INTERNET ADDICTED COLLEGE STUDENTS

Variables	N	Mean	In Percentage
Internet Addiction	57	5.58	69.75
Depression	57	50.21	62.76

The researchers have identified only 57 Internet addicted students among 200 students and their percentage score of Internet addiction is high (69.75%). From the above table it is clear that the percentage score of depression among the Internet addicted students is moderate (62.76%).

### TESTING HYPOTHESES

**Hypothesis – 1 :** There is no significant relationship between Internet addiction and depression among the Internet addicted students with reference to a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college.

**Table-2**  
**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNET ADDICTION AND DEPRESSION AMONG THE INTERNET ADDICTED STUDENTS WITH REFERENCE TO A) GENDER B) LOCALITY C) TYPE OF COLLEGE**

Sex	N	Variables	$\gamma$ -value	Nature of relation	*Significance
Male	34	Internet Addiction x Depression	0.536	Moderate	S
Female	23	Internet Addiction x Depression	0.400	Low	S
Locality	N	Variables	$\gamma$ -value	Nature of relation	*Significance
Rural	25	Internet Addiction x Depression	0.502	Moderate	S
Urban	32	Internet Addiction x Depression	0.527	Moderate	S
Type of College	N	Variables	$\gamma$ -value	Nature of relation	*Significance
Arts & Science	19	Internet Addiction x Depression	0.469	Moderate	S
Engineering	38	Internet Addiction x Depression	0.523	Moderate	S

\*Significance at 0.05 level is 0.253

The relationship between Internet addiction and depression among Internet addicted college students is analysed using correlation analysis. The obtained  $\gamma$ -value (0.40) for the female students indicate that there is a low relationship between Internet addiction and depression and the obtained  $\gamma$ -value, for male, rural, urban, Arts and Science and Engineering students indicate that there is a moderate relationship between Internet addiction and depression. The calculated values are greater than the table value. Hence the null hypotheses-1(a), 1(b) and 1(c) are rejected.

**Hypothesis - 2 :** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the Internet addicted students based on a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college with respect to Internet addiction.

**Table-3**  
**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE INTERNET ADDICTED STUDENTS BASED ON A) GENDER B) LOCALITY C) TYPE OF COLLEGE WITH RESPECT TO INTERNET ADDICTION.**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	*Significance
Male	34	5.59	0.74	0.14	N.S
Female	23	5.56	0.79		
Rural	25	5.44	0.71	0.31	N.S
Urban	32	5.50	0.72		
Arts & Science	19	5.26	0.56	2.39	S
Engineering	38	5.68	0.74		

\* Significance at 0.05 level is 2.01

Table- 3 reveals that there is no significant difference between male and female students and rural and urban students in their mean scores for Internet addiction. The calculated 't' values (0.14, 0.31) are less than the table value. Hence the null hypotheses – 2(a) and 2(b) are accepted at 0.05 level.

It also reveals that there is a significant difference between Arts and Science and Engineering college students in their mean scores of Internet addiction. The calculated value of 't' (2.39) is greater than the table value (2.01). Hence the null hypotheses 2(c) is rejected.

**Hypothesis- 3:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the Internet addicted students based on a) Gender b) Locality c) Type of college with respect to depression.

Table-4 reveals that there is no significant difference between male and female students, rural and urban college students and Arts and Science and Engineering college students in their mean scores for depression. The calculated t- values (0.07, 0.13, and 0.72) are less than the table value (2.01). Hence the null hypotheses- 3(a), 3(b) and 3(c) are accepted at 0.05 level.

Table-4

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE  
INTERNET ADDICTED STUDENTS BASED  
(ON A) GENDER B) LOCALITY C) TYPE OF  
COLLEGE WITH RESPECT TO DEPRESSION**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-value	*Significance
Male	34	50.32	6.58	0.07	N.S
Female	23	50.43	5.23		
Rural	25	50.28	5.35	0.13	N.S
Urban	32	50.47	5.57		
Arts & Science	19	50.42	6.73	0.72	N.S
Engineering	38	51.82	7.26		

\*Significance at 0.05 level is 2.01

### FINDINGS

Among the 200 college students 43.5% are male and 56.5% are female. The Internet addiction scale identified 57 students (28.5%) as Internet addicts and the remaining 143 (71%) as non-addicts.

The major findings are :

1. The Internet Addicted college students have moderate depression.
2. There is significant relationship between Internet addiction and depression among male and female students. Male students are more addicted than female students.
3. There is significant relationship between Internet addiction and depression among rural and urban college students. Urban college students are more addicted than rural college students.
4. There is significant relationship between Internet addiction and depression among the Arts and Science and the Engineering college students. Engineering college students are more addicted than Arts and Science college students.
5. There is no significant difference between male and female students in their mean scores for Internet addiction.

6. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students in their mean scores for Internet addiction.
7. There is no significant difference between Arts and Science and Engineering college students in their mean scores for Internet addiction Engineering College students are more addicted than Arts and Science college students.
8. There is no significant difference between male and female students in their mean scores for depression.
9. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students in their mean scores for depression.
10. There is no significant difference between Arts and Science and Engineering college students in their mean scores for depression.

### DISCUSSION

This study reveals that male students are more addicted to the Internet than female students. This may be due to greater exposure on the part of male students such as browsing, Internet games and chatting with their friends. The present study also shows that urban students are more addicted to the Internet than rural students. Urban students are more privileged to use the Internet than rural students. Moreover browsing centres may be located near their houses and it may be very easy for them to go to the browsing centre every now and then. The present study also shows that Engineering College students are more addicted than Arts and Science college students. For engineering students computer science is one of the subjects for study and most of them have their own PC with Internet facility at home. They are free to use the Internet at any time for any length of time. Hence students.

Engineering students are more addicted to the Internet than Arts and Science students. Hence, it is time that we gave awareness to the students about the problems of Internet addiction. Teachers and parents can do a lot in this matter. Teachers should advice the students on the proper use of Internet and they should have an eye on students, when students use Internet because they may use Internet for some other purpose than academic. If some students are found as addicted, proper counselling should be provided to them. Parents have a great role in taking care of their children from getting addicted to Internet.

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