Center for Management Science Research
ISSN: 3006-5291 3006-5283 Volume 4, Issue 1, 2026

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION: EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON INTERNET ADDICTION

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DOI:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19661280

Keywords
Emotional Intelligence, Internet Addiction, Attachment Styles

Article History
Received: 20 November 2025
Accepted: 01 January 2026
Published: 18 January 2026

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Abstract
Present research conducted to examine the existence of relationship between emotional intelligence and internet addiction. Precise objective of the study was to explore if emotional intelligence explains internet addiction significantly, and to compare gender differences for internet addiction. Proposed sample size for the study was 300 adolescents and young adults, equally divided into male and female groups, belonging to different schools, colleges and universities of Karachi, who were approached through convenient sampling procedure. Research questionnaires were comprised of; Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test –SSEIT (1998) and Internet Addiction Test –IAT (1998). Formulated hypotheses were statistically analysed through applying T-test, linear Regression, Bivariate Correlation by using SPSS-V22. Obtained results confirmed the presence of significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and internet addiction. Regression analysis revealed significant predictive role of emotional intelligence to internet addiction. Moreover, no significant gender differences found for internet addiction.

INTRODUCTION

Emotions seem to govern our everyday life. We make choices based on our emotional states, let it be happiness, anger, sadness, or frustration. Emotions play a major role in how we think and act. In order to apprehend emotions three critical components of it must be taken into consideration. Our emotions consist of a subjective component i.e. how we experience an emotion; a physiological component i.e. how our bodies respond to emotion and an expressive component i.e. how we respond to the emotion (Cherry, 2015). We spend considerable time in interpreting feelings of people around us. Our ability to correctly understand these expressions is linked to *Emotional Intelligence*, precisely it is our capacity to express and regulate own feelings and to apprehend, interpret and respond to others' feelings or it may be defined as our ability to perceive, assess and control emotions. When it comes to relationship building, personal goals development, career settlement, sense of prosperity and other pivotal aspects of life, Emotional Intelligence stands just in parallel to Intellectual ability or IQ. It is now considered one of the substantial components of intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning.

The notion of EI is not new, the concept of emotional intelligence can be unearthed in the work of Thorndike (1920), where the impression

of social intelligence was first given, which is defined as "the ability to understand and manage people and to act wisely in human relations" (Punia, Dutta, & Sharma, 2015). Later Howard Gardner referred it as interpersonal intelligence, the concept was thought to be emerged from his theory of multiple intelligence presented in his book frames of mind (1983). Sternberg (1997) also developed a multi-style model known as the "Triarchic" theory of "successful" intelligence. However, the first formal model and definition was given by Peter Salovey and Jack Mayar in 1990, they defined EI a blend of abilities and traits and explain it in terms of "appraisal of emotion, regulation of emotions in self and others, expression of emotion, and utilization of emotion in problem solving" (Schutte, Malouff, & Bhullar, 2009).Where as in 1997 they posited EI a cognitive ability, their model proposed four dimensions of EI i.e. ability to perceive emotion, propensity to reason by utilizing emotions, capacity to comprehend emotion and the skill to organize emotions. Given model arranges these dimensions from basic to higher order abilities (Salovey and Mayer, 1997). Additionally, it is described as "our ability to process emotional information as it involves the faculties of perception, assimilation, understanding, and management of emotions." (Mayer & Cobb, 2000).

Another important milestone in this field has been achieved by Golman for bringing the concept to general public by introducing it in his influential book "Emotional Intelligence" (Golman, 1995). Based on nature of assessment emotional intelligence defined in two broad categories, i.e. the "ability emotional intelligence" or cognitive emotional ability that measures through performance tests and "trait emotional intelligence" or emotional self-efficacy assesses through self-report inventories. Salovey and friends in 2004 advanced their model keeping the same basic aspects of EI (Schutte et al., 2009).

The usage of social networking sites has been escalated dramatically for about one and half decade (Olufadi, 2015). Recently, the incidence of internet use has risen significantly throughout the world, with the present estimated number of consumers exceeding 500 million (NUA, 2002). Moreover, the proportion is expected to excel in years to come. According to a report by mobile survey company Ansr.io, cited online by express tribute in 2013, presently the expected number of internet users is 30 million in Pakistan (The Express Tribune, 2013). Surprisingly, which identifies growth ratio of internet users in Pakistan in last five years that has gone double to its actual consumption in 2007 i.e. 10% to 16% at present" ("Pakistan has highest growth rate of internet users in region | Aboard The Democracy Train," n.d.) Undeniably, social media is not only being used for communication purposes but for entertainment, learning, socializing, shopping, marketing and for various other tenacities of life, it has now occupied central place in our lives, therefore its significance became unquestionable. However, many researchers have notified the prevalence of social networking sites beneficial as well as harmful due to their extreme use (Kuss and Griffiths, 2011; Ryan and Xenos, 2011; Olufadi, 2015). Consequences like negligence from domestic responsibilities, academic deterioration, social isolation, and disruption in relationships (Young, 1998a) are suspected as contributing risk factors for newly emerging phenomenon of "internet addiction", the concepts lie in excessive dependence over some activity (Widyanto, & McMurran, 2004). Whereas dependence is characterized as craving, overindulgence, withdrawal and loss of control (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

Internet addiction is a relatively new concept compared to other forms of behavioural addictions and many researchers have tried to define it in context of dependence. Shaw and Black (2008) defined IA as an impaired state due to poorly controlled and excessive urges or preoccupations towards internet access. Kandell (1998) relates internet addiction to psychological dependence. Goldberg (1996) defines the term "internet addiction" as internet related dependency. Young and Rodgers (1998) list common indicators of internet addiction such as irritability or distress in case of unavailability of internet. Griffiths (2000) explains dependence with reference to pathological gambling. Davis

(2001) identifies an etiological model for pathological internet use, which assumes pathological internet use as combination of problematic behaviours and cognitions that work together and intensifies maladaptive behaviours. However, he reports scepticism over the validly and clinical usage of the model due to lacking in theoretical basis. (Davis, 2001).

For many researchers IA has become a topic of concern for which construction of a valid diagnostic criteria is in discussion, one of the worth knowing issue in measuring internet addiction is the availability of instrument with suitable psychometric properties (Widyanto, & Brunsden, 2011). Yet in order to distinguish between normal and compulsive internet use, Young (1996) created a scale, concerning preoccupation with internet, increased internet use time, efforts to regulate internet use, emotions during attempts to resist internet use, relationship of internet use with occupational and social life and the aim of internet use (Oktug1, n.d). Dr. Young is one of the pioneers who conceptualized the idea of internet addiction and developed a tool for assessing it centring on DSM-IV criteria of pathological gambling (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition). IAT built by Dr. Kimberly Young (1998b) is recognized as one of the most valid and reliable tools among multiple constructs measuring internet addiction (Widyanto, & McMurran, 2004).

Young (1996) defined IA as an impulse-control disorder, characterized as uncontrollable, excessive and compulsive use of internet, which may cause significant impairment in daily life functioning and noticeable distress (Young, 1998a). The latest version of the scale comprises of 20 items based on 5-point Likert scale, in contrary to first version the latest version measures tendencies towards internet addiction; to the extent individual faces problems due to the Internet use in daily routine, sleeping patterns, and social life productivity. On the basis of scores obtained a person is placed into one the three categories, average online user, excessive online user and problematic online user, higher scoring on scale depicts higher tendencies for internet addiction (Faraci, Craparo, & Saverino, 2013). According to Olfaudi (2015) IA is emerging as a rapidly growing problem in young people. In research reported by Tsai & Lin (2003), Adolescents and young adults have been found at higher risk of internet addiction (Tsai & Lin, 2003).

Emotional Intelligence is becoming one of the prime focuses for researchers in the discipline of social sciences and its role is being investigated in clinical, educational and industrial settings. An emotionally intelligent individual demonstrates self-awareness and knows how to regulate emotions to control impulses. However, individuals lacking ability to identify impulses inducing them to commit behaviours deviating from social norms may lack Emotional Intelligence, consequently proves a risk factor for addictive behaviours.

An article, by Vesile Oktan (2011), confirms predictive connection between abilities to emotion management and IA. Researchers reflect that the IA development is linked to the capacity to regulate feelings and emotional responses. This research is targeted to explore prevalence of "Internet addiction", though this term is still under decision making process for its inclusion in DSM-V (Pies, 2009) but due to its' penetrating prevalence in various cultures, this phenomenon is being widely studied and frequently reported in international and local literature. In Pakistan only few studies have been conducted so far, addressing internet addiction therefore current study is an effort to contribute significantly in existing literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The phenomenon of emotional intelligence gained its' significance swiftly. As the most functional words of late 1990s. The American dialect society opted for emotional intelligence. It gained research grounds in both; basic and applied psychology (Cecen, 2002). Petrides & Furnham (2000) defined EI in terms of "appraisal of emotion, expression of emotion, regulation of emotion in daily life and utilization of emotion." Moreover, as an ability to manage emotions (Casper, 2003) individuals put efforts at utilizing and regulating their emotions to obtain positive

results for their daily livings (Cecen & İnanc, 2005). It also deals with satisfaction with one's life, quality of interpersonal relationship and success in life (Palmer, Donaldson, & Stough, 2002).

Goleman (2000) conceptualized five aspects of the construction of emotional intelligence. First three dimensions address self-management, empathy, self-awareness, social awareness and social skills, identified by Boyatzis et al. (2000). While the last two dimensions are about interpersonal-management. These five dimensions were initially consisted of twenty-five competencies, which later on, reduced to four dimensions with nineteen competencies (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000). Self-awareness is defined as; one knowing inner states, intuitions, inclinations, means to survive. This dimension comprises of self-confidence, self-awareness with respect to emotions and self-assessment accurately. Self-management explains ability to manage one's internal states, regulate impulses and manage resources to accomplish established goals. Social awareness involves knowing others' needs, concerns and feelings. Empathy is an ability to understand and share feelings while placing oneself at other's place (Goleman, 2000; Dokmen, 1998). Social skills comprise of teamwork, communication, leadership and collaboration like competencies, which brings about desirable behaviours in others (Shapiro, 2002).

Bar-On (2006) instead of dealing with EI as a separate paradigm, proposed the phenomenon of emotional-social intelligence, it includes competencies related to both; emotional and social intelligence, which expresses itself in our understanding of self and others and dealing of day-to-day demands. A sub-dimension of emotional-social intelligence includes "intrapersonal intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, adaptability, stress management, and general mood emotional intelligence". (*Baron_model_of_emotional_social_intelligence.pdf*, n.d.).

Despite the long run debate of "whether all emotion-related higher order functions are included in intelligence"? Or theoretical controversies, concept of emotional intelligence touched the heights of popularity, when the idea newly emerged in 1990s and it remained a workable notion despite lack of valid measurement and empirical evidences. The reason for this may be, giving emotions a newer yet broader dimension by Mayer, Salovy and Golemon, which was in contrast with the Freudian or Behaviourist view of emotion, who defined it as an expression of lack of control, or even hysteria (Samad, 2014). Research conducted in Pakistan depicts significant contribution of emotional intelligence in enhancing mental wellbeing of university going students and reducing distress. Study found religious orientation as a supporting component in emotional intelligence as it shown positive relation with positive affect and psychological wellbeing whereas negative association with depression (Butt, n.d.).

Study concerning association between EI and AS in delinquent teenagers stipulated that attachment styles could predict emotional intelligence in delinquent adolescents. Individuals having close attachment style, rated higher on emotional intelligence compared to ones having anxious attachment style, who scored lower on emotional intelligence. (Bonab & Koohsar, 2011). Another study conducted by Hamarta and her colleagues in 2009 indicated significant positive correlation between secure attachment style and all subscales of emotional intelligence, moreover outcomes revealed reliable predictive relationship between both variables (Erdal, Neslihan, & M., 2009).

Social networking participation has now become one of the top-rated domains to stay connected with friends or closer ones. Digital ties have become one of the ways for self-regulation among adolescents. The point of concern now is to check; if this source itself is not becoming the cause of distress. An individual feel cut-down when he is forced to avoid online connectedness due to cyber-bulling or exclusion, which results in lost feeling of belongingness from his friends, indicating a negative aspect of this mode of connectedness (Floros & Siomos, 2013).

Addiction defined as a compound disorder in which a person experiences urges for recurring behaviour despite its harmful consequences (Hollen, 2009). It may also define as repetitive

patterns of behaviour, which escalates the risk of personal and social problems. Whereas Addictive behaviour is defined as experienced loss of control despite efforts of abstinence, this behaviour pattern is characterized by instant satisfaction (short-term goals) and delayed negative effects(long-term costs) which is accompanied by high degree of relapse in case of attempts to control behaviour through treatment or self-help (Marlatt et al., 1988).It may also be defined as overuse of the Internet leading to impairment of an individual's psychological state (both mental and emotional), as well as his scholastic, occupational, and social interactions (Beard & Wolf, 2001).

According to Kimberly Young (1998b) Internet addiction is an online activity characterized by compulsive behaviour, tends to interfere with normal living and impairs relationship with family, loved ones and one's work environment. Some of the most prevalent activities associated with internet addiction include cybersex, excessive online communication that includes E-mail, using chatrooms, social networking sites, online gambling and gaming (Šmahel et al., 2009; Subrahmanyam & Šmahel, 2010).

Experts distinguish two forms of addiction viz. Physical addiction, in which a person uses psychoactive substances and compelled to use it due to the changes caused by the substances in the body and psychological addiction, where a people display addictive behaviour patterns through certain activities. This group of disorder also termed in literature as non-substance addiction (Frascella et al., 2010), non-chemical addiction (Marks, 1990) and process addiction (Hollen, 2009). The concept of non-substance or behavioural addiction has started to emerge in psychiatric literature since 1980 (Lobo & Kennedy, 2006). Mental health practitioners talked about addiction to food addiction (Gearhardt et al., 2012) gambling (Potenza, 2006) and Internet addiction (Young & de Abreu, 2010). Behaviour addiction further divides into classified and non-classified disorders; prior one includes group of disorders characterized by pathological habits or impulse disorder. Later one is associated with behaviours that bring satisfaction. Sources may include internet, games, mobile phones and computers (Marks, 1990).

Since late eighties, the phenomenon of problematic internet use is in lime light. Margaret A. Shotton first published the concept in 1989 in her book "Computer Addiction? A study of computer dependency", yet it was not included in clinical pathology. The concept of Internet addiction first introduced in 1995 by an American psychiatrist Ivan Goldberg. In 1996 Kimberley Young, an American Psychologist defined the phenomenon of internet addiction in clinical context (Reed, 2002). She invented the first significant diagnostic criteria of Internet addiction based on DSM-IV diagnostic criteria of pathological gambling, consisting of twenty-item questionnaire that gauges slight, moderate and acute levels of IA (Young, 1998).

Internet addiction is a psychological dependence on internet regardless of nature of activity, once logged on (Kandell, 1998). It is characterized by imperfectly controlled or excessive urges or preoccupations regarding internet access that leads to distress or social impairment (Shaw and Black, 2008). Many researchers, however do not show agreement with using the term "internet addiction" rather use several other terms, likewise, Goldberg termed addiction as internet related tendency (Goldberg, 1996), "compulsive Internet use" (Black et al., 1999), "Internet dependency" (Chen et al., 2001; Wang, 2001 ; Chou & Hsiao, 2000; Scherer & Bost, 1997; Young, 1998a), Internet pathological use (Davis, 2001; Morahan-Martin & Schumacher, 2000) Problematic internet use (Davis, Flett, & Besser, 2002; Odacı & Kalkan, 2010)and "Internet addiction" (Chou & Hsiao, 2000; Scherer & Bost, 1997; Young, 1998a).Despite several controversies on single terminology, most occurring indicators in literature for defining addiction are; excessive time consumption on internet, urges to spend more time, irritability or distress when internet access is not available (Young & Rodgers, 1998). Despite scepticism regarding the notion of 'Internet Addiction', Griffiths (2000) indicates acceptance of pathological gambling as a precedent for the present construct. Widyanto and Griffiths (2006) conceptualized internet addiction a behavioural

addiction; furthermore, they reported lack of theoretical base for the construct. A model of etiology proposed by Davis (2001) for pathological internet use assumes it a set of behaviours coupled with problematic cognitions which contributes in maladaptive responses" (cited in Widyanto & Griffiths, 2006, p.45). Prevalence estimates of internet addiction ranges from 0.3% to 5.7% in general population, and from 1.6% to 38% in population aged 16-24 years (Aboujaoude et al, 2006). Prevalence rates found especially high in Asian countries (Fackler, 2007). Internet addiction disorder has become a serious concern round the world, particularly for young adults and adolescents, for which diagnostic criteria is still a matter of controversy (Hsu, Lin, Chang, Tseng, & Chiu, 2015).Demographic statistics found internet addiction tendencies more in men than women have (Niemz et al., 2005; Johansson & Gotestam, 2004).While it is more prevalent in younger population in ages ranging between 16 to 29 years (Bakken et al., 2009; Šmahel et al., 2009b).

Negative emotions contribute significantly in acquiring internet addiction related tendencies; therefore, more attention should be given towards strengthening coping skills at managing and organizing negative emotions in young adults. Adolescents with insecure attachment style found at much higher risk of internet addiction, depicting significance of attachment patterns in later life. In this scenario, adolescents should be encouraged to strengthen ties with real life relations instead of relying too much on social media associations, which may contribute significantly in experiencing negative emotions due to its virtual nature (Savcı & Aysan, 2017).

Individuals who are more consistent and construct self-integrated personal goal system scored higher on trait emotional intelligence. However general linear model found global emotional well-being poorly predicted by trait emotional intelligence and goal self-integration. Ability to regulate emotions and setting up personal strivings consistent with one's core values, moderately influence emotional regulation. Hence, it was concluded that, trait emotional intelligence and goal self-integration tentatively explains emotional wellbeing (Spence, Oades, & Caputi, 2004).

Stressful life events can be classified into five sub-categories, which are; social-communication, academic stress, daily hassles, job related stress and major life events. Amongst, prior four are the frequently occurring stresses, therefore characterized as minor stressors and are difficult to detect. On the other hand, loss of loved ones and diseases are characterized as major life events, this makes them placed on low frequency edge due to rare rate of occurrence. College students found vulnerable for depressed moods due to elevated reactivity towards minor life stressors, which exposes them towards pre-existing mechanisms for GPIU. Research found positive correlation between minor stressors and tendency toward Generalized Problematic Internet Use (GPIU). While no significant relationship found between major life stressors and GPIU (Li, Wang, & Wang, 2009).

Impact of internet addiction on anxiety and personality traits of adolescents studied by Oskenbay et al. in 2015, study found individuals involved in internet addiction depicts difference in levels of emotional intelligence, concludes; low emotional intelligence is related to addiction. Moreover, internet addiction found to be negatively associated with impulsivity, emotional instability and anxious state of adolescents. Continuous need for virtual relationship is one of the examined factors, which supports internet addiction (Oskenbay et al., 2015).

Higher emotional intelligence levels are related to reduce internet addiction rate. Study discovered important negative relationships between facets of EI which are use of emotion, assessment of emotion, and general score of constructs with IA (Khatiri Yanesari, Homayouni, & Gharib, 2010). Pathological Internet use was a function of insecure attachment and limited interpersonal relationships (Eichenberg, Schott, Decker, & Sindelar, 2017).

Studies show people addicted to internet manifests high levels of anxiety and stress indicating a significant relationship between the said variables (Sanghvi & Rai, n.d). However, no predictive relationship found between age, gender,

academic performance and internet addiction. In another study conducted by Yadav et.al found strong positive correlation between stress, anxiety, depression and internet addiction, showing probability for internet addiction as a clinical construct (Yadav, Banwari, Parmar, & Maniar, 2013).

Adolescents are reported as the most vulnerable age group for studying this new emerging phenomenon (Ferraro, Caci, D'Amico, & Di Blasi, 2007; Johansson & Götestam, 2004). This vulnerability is based on their neurobiological and social factors (Jang, Hwang, & Choi, 2008; Lam-Figueroa et al., 2011; Pallanti, Bernardi, & Quercioli, 2006). Amongst many contributing factors, one is their flexible time tables and easy access to internet (Moore, cited in Widyanto & Griffiths, 2006). Lack of self-regulation (Fu, Chan, Wong, & Yip, 2010) and less self-control (Yen, Ko, Yen, Chang & Cheng, 2009). Other studies linked poor sleep habits (Choi et al. 2009 & Kesici & Sahin, 2010).

Studies exploring gender differences for internet addiction, found men more involved in this activity compared to women. Same was the case when this phenomenon was studied among university students. men seek for activities, which require dominance, e.g. games involving power, control, violence etc. women in contrast, look for close ties or bonding where she could share her emotions and feelings in private ways, keeping her identity confidential (Goswami & Singh, n.d.).

Prevalence rate of internet addiction found higher in males compared to females, whereas family economic disadvantage found a risk factor. In contrast, positive qualities of youth development found negatively relating to internet addiction, suggesting implications for positive youth development trainings as a prevention for addiction related tendencies (Shek & Yu, 2016).

Intermittent addiction found in junior high school students, who reported longer hours of internet usage. Other variables showing significant associations with addiction were; chatting, male gender and prolonged internet use per day. Upon controlling the demographic variables and internet-related factors, symptoms related to depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder showed independent associations between internet addiction and depression while intermittent addiction with obsessive-compulsive disorder (Jang, Hwang, & Choi, 2008).

Relationship between lost interests in interacting with people in surrounding and symptoms like depression and anxiety could provide important criteria for diagnosing IAD. Moreover, internet misuse in form of spending several hours online avoiding interpersonal contact with real people, may also add positively into identifying people with internet addiction disorder (Tonioni et al., 2012).

A raising public health problem is obsessive mobile and internet usage. Adolescents and young adults are at increased risk of internet addiction disorder. Moreover, men and women falling in age ranges of 30 to 40 are also included in this vulnerable group. Although communication gaps have reduced markedly by technological advancements on one hand, seemingly addiction to online pornography and interpersonal cybersex have taken heights on the other hand which is a rarely addressed issue (Niaz, n.d.).Amongst several internet related issues, trafficking, searching for pornographic material and harassment are getting widespread for which preventive measures such as public awareness programs and active involvement of addiction experts have become necessary, provided that expected psychological, occupational and social dysfunction may be controlled (Siomos, Dafouli, Braimiotis, Mouzas, & Angelopoulos, 2008).

Emotional intelligence manifested a proven role in developing adaptive behaviour patterns; thorough study of above literature signifies the role of child attachment patterns in shaping one's personality with relevance to emotional intelligence. A good number of researches consider relationship between attachment style and emotional intelligence while others have examined associations between emotional intelligence and internet addiction. The present research included all three variables within a study. It intended not only to study associations among all mentioned variables but to examine predictive relationship as well.

In light of the above preface, this study aims to examine the impact of emotional intelligence on internet addiction. To guide this investigation, the following research questions and hypotheses have been developed.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To study Emotional Intelligence and its relation to Internet Addiction.
2. To investigate predictive role of Emotional Intelligence to Internet Addiction.
3. To compare gender difference for Internet Addiction.

Hypotheses:

1. *Emotional intelligence will be significantly related to internet addiction.*
2. *Lack of Emotional intelligence will predict presence of Internet Addiction.*
3. *Males and Females will differ significantly in terms of internet addiction*

METHODOLOGY

Sample:

300 participants, primarily internet users belonging to lower, middle and upper socioeconomic classes were approached in different academic institutions of Karachi from representing population, characteristically laying between 18 to 30 years of age, having matriculation as minimum education level.

Inclusion Criteria:

In this study, participants were included only having pre-defined age bracket i.e. 18 to 30 years of age, having matriculation as minimum educational level. Participants owing personal internet devises were allowed to participate only.

Measures:

Demographic Sheet: The Demographic questionnaire was comprised of questions related to age, gender, no. of siblings, birth order, qualification, current-status (student/professional, both), family system (neutral/joint), marital status, socio-economic-status, residential locality, purpose of internet usage, current institution, and hours of internet usage per day.

1. ***Schutte Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT- 1998):*** Schutte emotional intelligence scale is conceptualized on Salovey and Mayer's original model (1990) of emotional intelligence. The scale was first developed and validated as an English language scale.

It is a self-report inventory comprised of 33 items, which focuses on trait emotional intelligence. Participants rate items on five point likert scale, where "1" represents "Strongly disagree" and "5" is "Strongly agree". Final scores obtained through summing up all the scores, however, item number 5, 28 and 33 are reverse coded. Total scores may range from 33 to 165, higher the scores depict higher emotional intelligence.

Sub-Scales: SSEIT is based on four sub scales, which are (i). Perception of Emotion (items include 5, 9, 15, 18, 19, 22, 25, 29, 32, 33), (ii). Managing Own Emotions (items include 2, 3, 10, 12, 14, 21, 23, 28, 31), (iii). Managing Others Emotions (items include 1, 4, 11, 13, 16, 24, 26, 30), and (iv). Utilization of Emotion (items include 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 27).

Cronbach's alpha coefficient measured on 346 participants found to be .90. The mean alpha across sample is 0.87. Internal consistency of sub scales drawn from responses of adolescents and university students were respectively: Perception of Emotion, .76, .80; Managing Own Emotions, .63, .78; Managing Others Emotions, .66, .66 and Utilization of Emotion, .55 (the alpha for this scale was not reported in Ciarrochi et al., 2002). Test retest reliability for total scale scores was reported 0.78. The scale measure Trait Emotional Intelligence (Schutte et al., 2009).

2. ***Internet Addiction Test (IAT -1998):*** The internet Addiction test is a widely used self-reporting scale, developed by Dr. Kimberly Young in 1990; it is a 20-item scale, which measures the presence and severity of internet dependency among adolescence and adults. This scale was developed by adopting DSM-IV criteria for pathological gambling and is a modification of the earlier 8-item scale; Young's Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ). The Internet addiction test views internet addiction as an

impulse control disorder where the term internet refers to all types of online activity.

Various studies found internet addiction test a reliable measure, which covers key characteristics of problematic internet use. The test measures and classifies the addictive behaviour in terms of mild, moderate and severe impairment.

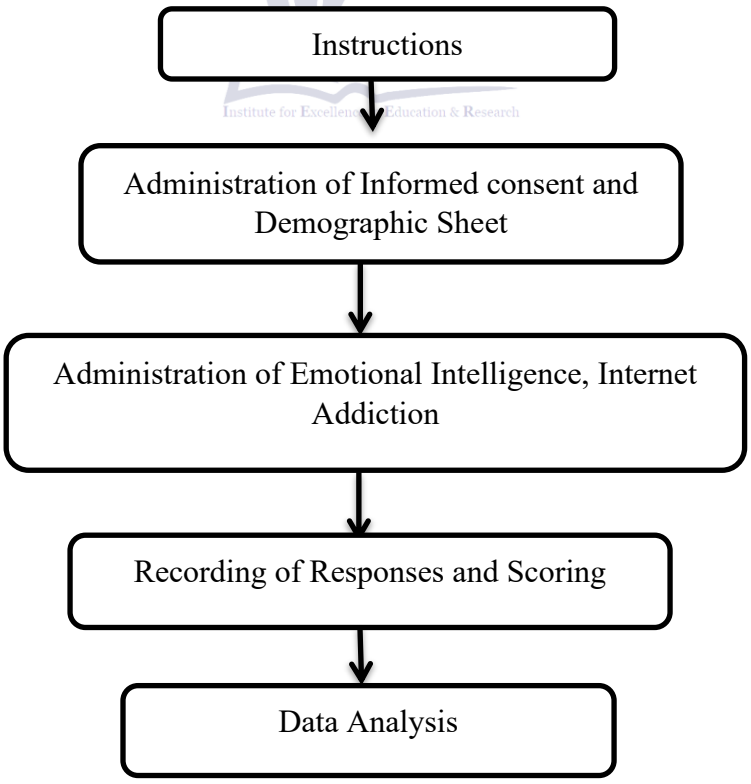
This scale is designed for frequent internet users based on 20 items, each of which is to be rated on 5-point Likert-scale, ranges from "0" to "5" representing less extreme behaviour to most extreme behaviour for each item respectively. The scale measures behaviours associated with compulsive use of internet that includes escapism, dependency and compulsivity. Questions also assess problems related to addictive use in personal, occupational, and social functioning.

Total scores obtained by sum of 20 item responses. Higher scores on IAT yields higher level of severity of internet compulsivity and addiction. Scores ranging from 0 to 30 depicts normal level of internet usage, 31 to 49 shows presence of mild level of internet addiction; 50 to 79 indicates moderate level of addiction while scores 80 to 100 reflects severe dependency on internet.

Sub-Scales: IAT scale is based on 7 sub-scales, comprised of Salience (items 10, 12, 13, 15, and 19), Excessive Use (1,2,14,18,20), Neglect Work (6,8,9), Anticipation (7,11), Lack of Control (5,16,17), Neglect Social Life (3,4).

Samaha and her colleagues found IAT is a proper tool for evaluating internet addiction on Lebanese college students, they obtained psychometric properties on Two hundred and fifty-six undergraduate medical students from a university in Beirut, Lebanon, where Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the internal reliability of the scale was 0.91 (Samaha et al., 2018b). IAT has shown strong internal consistency (α = 0.90–0.93) and good test-retest reliability (r = 0.85) values. (Samaha et al., 2018a).

Research Design:



Procedure:

Prior to data collection permissions were obtained from all selected academic institutions through providing them set of questionnaires along with cover letter addressing the nature of research briefly, issued by concerned supervisor. Moreover, questionnaires were included in the study after ascertaining the right-of-use form test developers. The research does not include any kind of invasive procedures, therapeutic interventions and medical testing. Participants were not misinformed or misled at any stage. Ethical measures of privacy/confidentiality, informed consent, right to withdraw from study were taken into view prior to study compilation.

Consent was obtained prior to administration of self-report questionnaires through provision of informed consent form, which was comprised of topic and nature of the study, brief introduction including study purpose, risks and benefits, estimated time required and voluntary status of the study as there were no monetary compensation or incentives for participation were provided. Moreover, Participants were ensured the right to withdraw from the study at any stage whenever they feel uncomfortable or no more interested to participate in research. Privacy was maintained through not asking for names or other personal information despite E-mail addresses, which was also kept optional and was applicable only in cases where participant shows interest for acquiring results. Confidentiality upheld by ensuring participants that their given information will only be used for academic purposes not otherwise.

The data have been collected through convenient sampling procedure by approaching participants in different academic set ups including schools, colleges and universities belonging to lower, middle and upper socio-economic classes. Before the administration of the questionnaire, it was confirmed that all participants possess personal internet devises, prospects of using internet were inquired in demographics. At first consent was taken from each participant; Participants wiling to continue further, were given demographic sheet and set of questionnaires with proper instructions on how to fill given research tool.

Statistical Analysis:

After data collection was completed, each individual item scores from all three scales and demographics inserted and coded into Spssv22 for further data analysis. Descriptive statistics applied to analysed Mean and measurement of variability i.e. variance and standard deviations for rational/continuous variables and frequency distribution for categorical/ordinal variables (demographic variables). Moreover, in order to seek generalizability, Bivariate Pearson Correlation applied to analyse relationships, T-Test to see the differences and Linear Regression analysis to obtain predictive relationships.

RESULTS

Table no. I

Reliability statistics for Schutte Emotional Intelligence scale (SSEIT):

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
111.19	794.511	28.187	33	.815

Table-I illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for Schutte emotional Intelligence scale i.e. 0.815.

Table no. II

Reliability statistics for 1st sub-scale of (SSEIT):

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
32.87	77.086	8.780	10	.825

Table-II illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Perception of Emotion" i.e. 0.825.

Table no. III
Reliability statistics for 2nd sub-scale of (SSEIT):

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
30.82	68.957	8.304	9	.832

Table-III illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Managing own Emotion" i.e. 0.832.

Table no. IV
Reliability statistics for 3rd sub-scale of (SSEIT):

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
26.83	50.536	7.109	8	.839

Table-IV illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Managing others Emotion" i.e. 0.839.

Table no. V
Reliability statistics for 4th sub-scale of (SSEIT):

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
20.68	33.711	5.806	6	.840

Table-V illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Utilization of Emotion" i.e. 0.840.

Table no. VI
Reliability statistics for Young's Internet Addiction Test:

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
52.87	428.745	20.706	20	.835

Table-VI illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for Young's Internet Addiction Test i.e. 0.835.

Table no. VII

Reliability statistics for first sub-scale of Young's Internet Addiction Test:

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
13.30	32.296	5.683	5	.766

Table -VII illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Salience" i.e. 0.766.

Table no. VIII
Reliability statistics for second sub-scale of Young's Internet Addiction Test:

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
13.59	30.691	5.540	5	.729

Table-VIII illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Excessive Use" i.e. 0.729.

Table no. IX
Reliability statistics for third sub-scale of Young's Internet Addiction Test:

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
7.39	15.376	3.921	3	.695

Table -IX illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Neglect Work" i.e. 0.695.

Table no. X
Reliability statistics for forth sub-scale of Young's Internet Addiction Test:

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
5.21	7.359	2.713	2	.665

Table –X illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Anticipation" i.e. 0.665.

Table no. XI
Reliability statistics for fifth sub-scale of Young's Internet Addiction Test:

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
8.77	13.373	3.657	3	.662

Table -XI illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Lack of Control" i.e. 0.662.

Table no. XII
Reliability statistics for sixth sub-scale of Young's Internet Addiction Test:

Mean	Variance	SD	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
4.61	8.527	2.920	2	.618

Table -XII illustrates significantly consistent internal consistency for "Neglect Social Life" i.e. 0.618.

Table no. XIII
Descriptive statistics for Schutte Emotional scale, Young's Internet Addiction Test:

Measures	Mean	SD	N	Minimum	Maximum
EI	111.19	28.187	300	48	154
IAT	53.01	20.775	300	20	92
Age	20.20	2.815	300	18	30

Table -XIII showing Mean, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum values for Age and measure of Emotional Intelligence, Internet Addiction Test.

Table no. XIV
Frequencies for different demographic variables:

	Gender	
	Frequency	Percent
Male	150	50.0
Female	150	50.0
	Birth order	
First Born	96	32.0
Middle Born	101	33.7
Last Born	76	25.3
Others	27	9.0
	Qualification	
Matric	66	22.0
Intermediate	174	58.0
Graduation	47	15.7
Masters	12	4.0
	Current Status	
Student	264	88.0
Professional	25	8.3
Both	11	3.7
	Marital Status:	
Married	24	8.0
Unmarried	249	83.0
Widowed	5	1.7

Separated	1	.3
Committed	21	7.0
	Socio-economic Status	
Lower Class	26	8.7
Middle Class	249	83.0
Upper Class	25	8.3
	PIOU	
Social Media	128	42.7
Studies	62	20.7
Job/Business	12	4.0
Social Media & Studies	72	24.0
Social Media/Job/Business	7	2.3
All	19	6.3
	IUPD	
Below 6 hours	76	25.3
Approx. 6 hours	85	28.3
Approx. 12 hours	60	20.0
Approx. 18 hours	34	11.3
Approx. 24 hours	45	15.0
	Family System	
Nuclear	189	63.0
Joint	111	37.0

Table-XIV showing frequencies and percentages for Gender, Birth order, Qualification, Current-status, Marital status, Socio-economic status, Purpose of internet usage, Internet usage per day and Family system.

Table no. XV
Frequencies for different categories of Inter Addiction Test:

	Frequency	**Percent**
Mild	121	40.3
Moderate	80	26.7
Normal	40	13.3
Severe	59	19.7
Total	300	100.0

Table-XV showing no. of participants falling in Mild, Moderate, Normal and Severe categories of IAT.

Table no. XVI
Correlation between Internet addiction and Emotional Intelligence:

		IA	EI
Internet Addiction	Pearson correlation	1	-.787**
	Significance level		.000
	n	300	300
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson correlation	-.787**	1
	Significance level	.000	
	n	300	300

Table -XVI illustrates significant strong negative correlation i.e. r = - 0.787, p < 0.01 between IAT and EI.

Table no. XVII
Gender difference between males and females for Internet Addiction:

Factor	Group	N	X	SD	t	df	Significance (p)
IAT	Male	150	53.58	20.933	0.475	298	0.63
	Female	150	52.44	20.669			

T-test analysis shows comparison of IAT scores for both genders. No significant difference found between males i.e. M=53.58, SD=20.933 and females i.e. M =52.44, SD = 20.669; t= 0.475, p= 0.63, with very small mean difference (eta square = .0008).

Table no. XVIII
Regression Analysis between IUPD and Internet Addiction:

Variable	*Internet Addiction*		
	B	**SE**	**β**
IUPD	13.607	0.389	.897
r^2		0.804	
F		1223.529	

Table (XVIII) showing, Internet usage per day is significantly predicting (r^2=0.804, p< 0.05) Internet Addiction, which means that given model accounts for 80% variance in internet addiction.

Table no. XIX
Regression Analysis between Emotional Intelligence and Internet Addiction:

Variable	*Internet Addiction*		
	B	**SE**	**β**

EI	-.580	0.026	-.787
r^2		0.619	
F		484.252	

Table -XIX showing, Emotional Intelligence is significantly predicting (r^2=0.619, p< 0.05) Internet Addiction, which means that given model accounts for 61.9% variance in internet addiction.

DISCUSSION

The world is undergoing a rapid shift toward a more virtualized existence. From a nonprofessional to business tycoons, from private personnel to government bodies all have now become dependent to devices with connectivity. We all have been knitted together globally through fast-track communication systems that has become possible only through internet, life would start appearing paralysed if we lost access to internet. In order to meet global standards, developing countries like us have also initiated efforts to switch from manual to online manoeuvres. In this orthodox, on one hand, when we ascertain numerous advantages of internet utilization in our daily lives, on the other hand considerable hidden shortcomings are evolving steadily due to its' excessive-cum-compulsive use unknowingly. Addiction to communication and information technology has been markedly increased from last few years (Beranuy, Oberst, Carbonell, & Chamarro, 2009). Mental health professionals have now joined their heads together to figure out the pros and cons of excessive internet usage, not only this, some have confirmed disastrous impacts of using internet excessively and termed it "addiction" (Young, 1998b, 2007). In said context, it becomes undoubtedly crucial to explore and figure out such practices in ones' culture, so that preventive measure could be taken on time. Current study, therefore, was set out not to explore prevalence of internet addiction only but to examine what role emotional intelligence does play in hampering it, as emotional stability may considered one of the hallmark factors that contributes in impulse control. Another core concern of this research was to understand the role of attachment patterns in shaping one's emotional framework.

This non-experimental quantitative survey research conducted; first to study the nature of association between Emotional Intelligence and Internet Addiction. Secondly to explore, what predictive role does emotional intelligence (predictive variables) play to Internet addiction (criterion variable), and thirdly to examine if there exist gender differences for internet addiction. For this purpose, 300 young males and females from various academic institutions belonging lower, middle and upper socio-economic classes participated in this study. Research questionnaires were comprised of consent form, demographic sheet and measures based on Emotional Intelligence and Internet Addiction.

Total number of participants selected in this study were 300, 150 males and females, age ranging from 18 to 30 years with mean age of 20.2 years. Amongst, 24 or 8.0% participants were married, 249 (83%) single, 5 (1.7%) widowed, 1 (0.3%) separated and 21 (7 %) were having status of "committed", indicating unmarried individuals' major population of the study.

Sample included 96 or (32%) first born, 101 (33%) middle born, 76 (25.3%) last born and 27 (9.0%) having birth order other than first, second or third.

As per education levels 22 % or 66 participants were matriculated, 175 or (58%) were intermediates, 47 (15.7%) graduates and 12 (4.0%) have done their masters. Percentage wise mostly participants were matriculated or intermediates.

Amongst 300 participants, 26 or 8.7% were representing lower class, 249 (83%) middle class and 25 (8.3%) upper class, presenting middle class as the most representative sample for this research.

When inquired purpose of internet usage, 128 or 42.7 % participants reported sole social media interests, 62 (20.7%) use it for studies, 12 (4%) for

business or job matters, 72 (24%) use internet for both social media and studies, 7 (2.3%) for studies and job, while 19 (6.3%) participants use internet for all mentioned purposes. This shows social media as the biggest concern for internet usage. Social networking found amongst prominent predictors of internet addiction (Yadav, Banwari, Parmar, & Maniar, 2013b).

Determining prevalence of internet addiction was one of the main concerns of the study, obtained results shows 121 (40.3%) individuals with mild addiction, 80(26.7) moderately addicted and 59(19.7) severely addicted, indicating considerable prevalence of addiction in mild category.

Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was calculated (N=300) for each research tool and its' sub-scales. Obtained reliability index for ***Schutte Emotional Intelligence*** scale is 0.815 (table I) which is significantly high, similarly Cronbach alpha values for all subscales for ***Schutte Emotional Intelligence*** scale is 0.8 indicating satisfactory reliability (table II-V).

Reliability index for ***Young's Internet Addiction Test*** is 0.835 (table-VI), whereas Alpha values for sub scales (table- VI-XII) are above 0.6.

In conclusion, calculated Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for all selected research tools and their sub-scales shows satisfactory reliability thus suitable for usage in selected culture.

Hypothesis of this research concerns with exploring the contribution of EI in explaining IA, obtained results show significant strong negative association of EI ($r = -.787$, $p < 0.01$) with IA, depicting that the higher a person is emotionally intelligent, the lower he will be likely to addict. Moreover, emotional intelligence accounts for 61.9% variance in internet addiction. This depicts dealing with emotions intelligently may progress efficiently in hindering one from dependability on irresistible impulses particularly addictive ones. A person with high emotional intelligence is capable to control fluctuations in emotional stimulations and act appropriately according to emotional situations (Yousefi, 2008). Mukti Shah et al., (2008) findings suggest that emotional management skills have impact on problem solving and problem facing abilities (Hamissi, Babaie, Hosseini, & Babaie, 2013). Individual scoring higher on emotional intelligence are capable to control their internet dependency (Hamissi et al., 2013). Study conducted by Engel berg E. and Sjoberg L. (2004) found individuals addicted to internet showed low emotional intelligence, he proposed that ability to regulate emotions is one of the prime characteristics of emotionally intelligent individuals (Sanghvi & Rai, n.d.-b).

Students of other professions are also confirming problems of excessive internet use; study conducted by Ibrahim et al., (2006) established statistically significant negative correlation between internet addiction and emotional intelligence among nursing interns. He further discusses, individuals with deprived affect encounter difficulty in regulating distressing emotions and lack an ability to communicate about their internal states, which makes them socially un-adjustable and consequences in more addictive behavioural patterns. On the other hand, people with high emotional intelligence depict capability of controlling their urges for excessive internet use, maintains better interpersonal relationships (Ibrahim et al., 2016).

Low emotional intelligence, on the other hand, hinders one to deal efficiently with daily life stressors therefore, engaging in online activities excessively works as a medium of escape. Kuss and Griffiths (2011) suggested that the necessity for socialization in extroverts and social reimbursement in introverts may support the reason behind usage of online networking sites overwhelmingly. As validated by researches, loneliness, shyness and social anxiety have been found to be positively related to internet addiction (Yadav et al., 2013b). A person tends to be isolated, impulsive and aggressive while lacking emotional skills which otherwise compliments emotional intelligence (Far et al., 2014).

Internet addiction correlates to poor self-esteem and deprived Interpersonal relationship, similar results reached, when current study measured internet addiction in relation to anxious dimension i.e. ($r = 0.6$, $p < 0.01$), moreover anxious attachment pattern explains 36% variance in internet addiction. This shows considerable association of attachment pattern with internet

addiction. Study by Savcı & Aysan (2017) suggests that individuals with anxious attachment patterns adapt risky behaviours in critical situations instead of working with coping strategies (Cooper et al., 1998). Child exposed to affectionless control in early years appears to predispose to maladaptive relationships with others later in life which leads towards internet addiction (Kalaitzaki & Birtchnell, 2014). They tend to experience fragmented social relationships and depict low-level social skills (Laible, 2007), demonstrate less perceived self-control (Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone, 2004). On contrary securely attached individuals inversely relate to addiction ($r= -0.3$, $p< 0.01$) and secure AS significantly explains 15% variance in internet addiction. Securely attached individuals are equipped with functional social skills as discussed earlier due to which, they prefer more on real connectivity, enjoy interpersonal bounding and act with functional coping strategies (Morsünbül & Amp, 2011). Amongst various predictors of internet addiction, low self-esteem (Wartberg et al., 2011), mood disorders i.e. depression and anxiety are considered significant predictors of addiction (Savcı & Aysan, 2017b).

Current study additionally attempted to examine, if number of hours internet usage per day explains internet addiction, IUPD found predictive magnitude of ((r^2 =0.804, $p< 0.05$) to internet addiction, which explains that time consumed each day in using internet accounts for 80% variance to internet addiction. This finding confirms with the study of Young Kimberly (1998a), who measured length of time using internet and hours per week and found out length of time using internet differs substantially for dependents and non-dependents (Young, 1998).He discovered that dependents use internet eight time greater than that of non-dependents. Longer hours' use of internet relates to greater dependence towards addiction or compulsive feelings for internet use (Waldo, 2003). Several researches have shown that students with internet addiction observed to spent longer time online than non addicts with an average about eighteen hours/week (Yadav et al., 2013b).

Present study included participants from age groups of late adolescent and early adulthood; this is primarily a period of transition from physical maturity towards cognitive maturity. Adolescence is an age of occurrence of significant changes. An individual is likely to suffer from biological, psychological and social challenges; these socio-emotional challenges may prove a source of burden for a young growing individual; thus, he paves a way of escape through engaging himself in excessive internet-oriented activities, which then become problematic at later stages (Li et al., 2010). In other words, individuals use internet as an antidepressant and meet new people to gain emotional support (Savcı & Aysan, 2017b). Internet addiction related tendencies have mostly observed in young individuals (Tsai et al., 2009). Young age groups are considered at high risk for Internet addiction (Shek & Yu, 2016b). In an online survey, young individuals manifested significantly higher symptoms of addiction than older ones (Morrison and Gore, 2010).

Gender does not contribute for preferences in internet addiction (Waldo, 2003). We have stepped in an era where males and females are serving almost on equal ends. Access to internet would have limited to females when it was to use in net cafes only, since smart phones are equally available for males and females nowadays and it poses no discrimination in usage for either gender. It has been suggested that modifications in the nature and availability of internet services likewise at homes instead of cafes have reduced the gender gap in compulsive internet users (Hall and Parsons, 2001). Present study found no significant gender differences for internet addiction neither gender was found to be a significant predictor of internet addiction. Many other studies did not find any gender differences in adolescents meeting the threshold of internet addiction (Yadav et al.,2013).

Conclusion:

Present study was set to study the predictive role of emotional intelligence to internet addiction. Study results confirmed significant associations between said variables based on formulated hypotheses. Any significant difference failed to establish between males and females pertaining to the internet addiction. Additional findings yielded

hours of internet usage per day links significantly to internet addiction.

Limitations:

The nature of assessment may have imposed limitations on this study, as all the scales were self-report questionnaires, most of the participants were assessed in institutional set ups so they were approached in groups or clusters sitting around so Hawthrone effect may influence for the reason, participants were filling the questionnaires in close sittings. Moreover, not a single assessment item was measuring social desirability, inconsistency or honesty. Even if the participants had intended to fill the form with all honesty and dedication but language comprehension may have served as a barrier in cases where the data were collected from lower class. Furthermore, institutional set ups may have served as an uncontrolled factor for lack of introspection. Somehow, participants had to fill the entire form within the given time which was approximately 30 minutes that may have produced time pressure and a barrier in producing thoughtful responses; furthermore, the questionnaires were comprised with additional consent and demographic forms that may also have posed fatigue effects due to the length of questionnaire.

Implications:

As a developing nation, greater emphasis on the use of translated and culturally adapted screening tools would have improved data collection across diverse socio-economic groups. Furthermore, in light of existing literature, individuals experiencing depression, anxiety, stress, and low self-esteem should also be screened for internet addiction. There is a pressing need for awareness campaigns targeting parents, teachers, and students to highlight the prevalence, symptoms, and preventive measures associated with this often overlooked form of addiction, in order to safeguard future generations.

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