

The Relationship between Internet Addiction and Adolescents' Demographic Characteristics in Salah Aldeen Governorate

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ABSTRACT

A descriptive correlational design is used to the relationship between internet addiction and adolescents' demographic characteristics in Salah Aldeen governorate in Iraq, during the period of (October 10th, 2020 to March 20th, 2021). A convenient sample of 520 students' non- probability is taken for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the study. Data was collected through the use of a self-report questionnaire.

Results of the study show that the highest percentage of students is between (16-18) years old. Most of them are male. The highest percentage of participants for the sixth classes, 99% use the internet. Using the internet for socializing, entertainment and study, the family's income was average. Most of them live in the city, most of their parents are employed, and one third of their fathers hold a bachelor's degree or university degree, and they use cell phones in the internet.

The study **concluded** that most students have an average level of internet addiction, and males are more affected than females. The study **recommends** that more studies be conducted to measure the rate of internet addiction among adolescent students, increasing culture and awareness in the use of the internet by parents and educational staff through educational lessons about the dangers of using the internet inappropriately and developing special curricula for this purpose.

Keywords: Internet addiction, Adolescents, Secondary school students.

INTRODUCTION

The internet has brought a variety of conveniences to our daily lives in terms of academic and professional achievement, family life, social relationships, physical health, and psychological well-being. (Chi. et al., 2020). Internet use is very widespread all over the world, especially among students for academic and recreational purposes. The description of internet addiction (IA) was calculated from the characteristics of both substance addictions. (Faghani, et al., 2020).

The internet represents the largest repository of human knowledge and has enabled many communities around the world to manage communications and solve problems faster than other communities. Internet access in education has spread a wide range of ideas, teaching and learning resources, techniques and innovations. The internet is currently used as a source for teaching and learning materials. They also found that most private high schools and some public high schools have computer rooms that are used for teaching and learning. (Almasi et al., 2017).

The growth of the internet in the world offers many opportunities in different ways to many people around the world. For students, the use of the internet is primarily for social and entertainment purposes. However, it is very evident that the internet not only offers social connectivity and entertainment, but also academic and scientific information. In addition, the internet can be used as a tool to get the latest news from around the world, as well as to get information of any kind for various purposes, such as getting more information about a hobby or health.

(Antonijevic, 2018). With the growing popularity of smartphones among teenagers, there are concerns that their habitual and excessive use could lead to smartphone addiction that causes mental and physical problems. Since then, along with the rapid technological developments during the last decade, the use of the internet has become a big behavioral health issue. as massive advances in techno-logy have transformed the method of people communication and changing the face of healthcare, the technology and the internet have become increasingly important for people, internet addicts feel neglected on the internet and can no longer manage essential aspects of their lives due to growing concerns about internet use (Haug et al., 2015; Choi et al. 2018).

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive correlational design was conducted on measurement of the internet addiction in Salah Aldeen governorate for the period of (October 1st, 2020 to June 20th, 2021). The study was carried to assess the relationship between internet addiction and adolescents' demographic characteristics in Salah Aldeen governorate in Iraq. A simple random sample of (520) adolescents were collected from secondary schools according to the inclusion criteria, where the Al-Sharqat region was chosen to collect samples from the cities of Salah Al-Deen Governorate, 8 schools were selected of a total of 80 schools, 4 boys schools and 4 girls' schools were approved. Convenient sample of (40) students were selected from adolescent with internet addiction. A pilot study was carried out from the period of Januy 14th, 2021 to February 10th, 2021; the sample was selected from in secondary school in Salah Aldeen governorate.

The data was gathered throughout utilization of self-report questionnaire 'Arabic version' and as a mean for data collection (February 11th, 2021 to April 16th, 2021) and through the structure of interview with students. They have been selected from adolescent with internet addiction adolescent, the questionnaire by structured interview. The use of the questionnaire takes about (20-40) minutes.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Table (1): Distribution of Students According to Their Sociodemographic Characteristics

List	Characteristics	f	%	
1	Age M±SD= 17±2	13 – 15 years	81	15.5
		16 – 18 year	279	53.7
		19 – 21 year	157	30.2
		22 –24 year	3	0.6
		Total	520	100
2	Gender	Male	276	53.1
		Female	244	46.9
		Total	520	100
3	Scholastic stage	First	15	2.9
		Third	91	17.5
		Fourth	175	33.7
		Fifth	46	8.8
		Sixth	193	37.1
		Total	520	100
4	Using internet	No	3	0.6
		Yes	517	99.4
		Total	520	100
5	Purpose of internet use	Studying	113	21.7

		Communication	28	5.4
		Entertainment	15	2.9
		All of them	364	70
		Total	520	100
6	Family monthly income	< 300000 IqD	99	19
		300000 – 600000 IqD	115	22.2
		601000 – 900000 IqD	99	19
		901000 – 1000000 IqD	86	16.5
		1001000 – 1500000 IqD	77	14.8
		1501000 and more IqD	44	8.5
		Total	520	100
7	Residency	Rural	204	39.2
		Urban	316	60.8
		Total	520	100

f: Frequency, %: Percentage, M: Mean, SD: Standard deviation, IqD: Iraqi dinar

This table shows that students are with age 17 ± 2 years in which more than half of them are with age group 16-18 years (53.7%) who were males (53.1%). The scholastic stage show that the highest percentage among students is refers to sixth class which recorded 37.1% and fourth stage 33.7%. A sample was not collected for the second grade for both sexes because they were not in schools because their studies were done electronically due to the Corona-19 pandemic and considered them a transit stage between two stages.

Regarding using internet, most of the students are reported they are using internet (99.4%) for multi-purpose in which 70% using internet for studying, communication, and entertainment. The family monthly income refers to 300000-600000 Iraqi dinars per month as seen with highest percentage (22.2%). The residency refers to urban area among 60.8% and 39.2% from rural area.

Table (2): Distribution of Students According to Their Parents' level of Education

Level of education	Father		Mother	
	f	%	f	%
Doesn't read & write	9	1.7	22	4.2
Read & write	42	8.1	136	26.2
Primary school	88	16.9	211	40.6
Intermediate school	74	14.2	70	13.5
Secondary school	71	13.7	40	7.7
Diploma	70	13.5	21	4
Bachelor/ higher	166	31.9	20	3.8
Total	520	100	520	100

f: Frequency, %: Percentage

This table indicates that 31.9% of students' fathers are with bachelor degree or higher while 40.6% of students' mothers are graduated from primary school.

Table (3): Distribution of Students According to Their Parents' Occupational Status

Occupation	Father		Mother	
	f	%	f	%
Governmental employee	313	60.2	35	6.7
Free works	131	25.2	4	0.8
Retired	63	12.1	1	0.2

Jobless/housewife	13	2.5	480	92.3
Total	520	100	520	100

f: Frequency, %: Percentage

This table reveals that 60.2% of the students' fathers are working as governmental employee while most of the students' mothers are housewives (92.3) and only 6.8% are working as employee.

Table (4): Distribution of Students According to Their Internet Usage Pattern

List	Mean used for internet		f	%
1	Smart phone (mobile)	Never	15	2.9
		Sometime	93	17.9
		Always	412	79.2
		Total	520	100
2	Use iPad	Never	406	78.0
		Sometime	96	18.5
		Always	18	3.5
		Total	520	100
3	Use computer	Never	425	8.0
		Sometime	79	15.2
		Always	16	3.1
		Total	520	100
4	Time used /day	1 – 3 hours	227	43.7
		4 – 6 hours	134	25.8
		7 – 9 hours	78	15
		10 – 12 hours	42	8.1
		More than 12 hours	39	7.5
		Total	520	100
5	Usage environment	At home	475	91.4
		Internet café	10	1.9
		With friends	23	4.4
		Others	12	2.3
		Total	520	100
6	Internet usage time	< 1 year	100	19.2
		1 year ago	81	15.6
		2 years ago	68	13.1
		3 years ago	89	17.1
		More than 3 years	182	35
		Total	520	100

f: Frequency, %: Percentage

This table displays the variables related to internet usage patterns among the students; the table shows that students always use smartphone as mean for internet (79.2%); sometimes use iPad (18.5%); and sometimes use computer (15.2%). 43.7% of the students are reported that they use internet for 1 – 3 hours per day. Most of the students are using internet at home (91.4%). Regarding internet usage time, the highest percentage of students refers that they using internet for more than 3 years (35%).

Table (5): Assessment the Level of Internet Addiction among Secondary School Students

Internet addiction	F	%	M	SD
Low	196	37.7	54.89	11.114
Moderate	278	53.5		
High	46	8.8		
Total	520	100		

f: Frequency, %: Percentage, M: Mean for total score, SD: Standard Deviation Low= 30 – 50, Moderate= 51 – 70, High= 71 – 90

This table indicates that 53.5% of the students are moderately addicted and 8.8% are highly addicted.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that the majority of students who participated in the study are between the ages (16-18) years old which is 53.7% the age of the students. The ages of the students in the current study range from 13 to 24 years old, due to the closure of schools and education from 2014-2017 in Salah al-Deen Governorate. The convergence of these results with the results of a study Karacic&Oreskovic (2017). This created 53 % of (15-16) year olds in schools. Regarding the of adolescent in table (1), the current study indicates that most adolescents who use the internet were males 53.1%, This study is similar to the study (Ferreira et al., 2017), which showed the male over female rate of internet addiction.

The school stage indicates that the highest percentage of students is the sixth grade 37.1% where more than a third of the students are enrolled. We notice this stage more frequently because it is the most attended in schools because of the baccalaureate exam. A sample was not collected for the second grade for both sexes because they were not in schools because their studies were done electronically due to the Corona-19 pandemic and considered them a transit stage between two stages. The study showed that the highest percentages of them use the internet 99.4%, and they use the internet for different purposes 70%, as three quarters of them use the internet for study, communication and entertainment. And where the world now lives, those who have come to wander and study online have led to more internet use than usual.

The study showed that the monthly income of the family, which was more than one-fifth of the sample whose monthly income ranges between (300,000- 600,000) is moderate 22.2%, because the monthly income of most families is thus. This study is similar to the study (Al-Hillaly, 2021), which emphasize the moderation of the monthly income of the family with an average result (78.7%). This percentage confirms the possibility and ability of the student to subscribe to the Internet service due to its availability and ease of subscription. The study shows that more than half of them account for a high proportion of urban dwellings 60.8%. Higher than in the country side.

It agrees with a study by Taha. et. al., (2016) that internet addiction is common among Duhok university students, especially males and urban residents. The high rate of housing in urban areas is higher than in the country-side. Migration returns from the countryside to the city to provide livelihoods.

Distribution of Students According to Their Parents' Level of Education, Table (2):

The reason for the emergence of these percentages is due to our society, which allows young people to complete their studies otherwise with girls, as well as the availability of schools and literacy. Most women are housewives. The study showed that more than a third of students had the highest percentage of fathers of students with a bachelor's degree and more than (31.9), while more than forty percent had the highest percentage of mothers of students graduating from elementary school (40.6).

This study is close to the study of Al-Hillaly (2021), who had the highest percentage of college graduates for fathers 26%, And Ferreira et al (2017) the study, which showed the highest percentage of mothers who graduated from primary school 28% The study showed that students whose parents had higher levels of education were more likely to be addicted to the Internet than students whose parents had lower levels of education.

Distribution of Students According to Their Parents' Occupational Status, Table (4-3):

This study shows that more than sixty percent of students' fathers work as government employees 60.2%, while more than ninety percent of students' mothers is housewives 92.3, and only 6.7% work as employees. This study is similar to the study (Al-Hillaly, 2021), which confirmed the moderation of the monthly income of the family with an average result of (78.7%). The study showed that more than sixty percent of students' parents are employed, which helped the internet addicted become more easily.

Distribution of Students According to Their Internet Usage Pattern, Table (4-4):

The results of the current study show that internet usage patterns among students always use smartphone as a medium for internet fore 79.2 %; iPad sometimes used for 18.5%; Sometimes using a computer fore 15.2%. It was reported that more than forty percent of students use the Internet for one to three hours a day 43.7%. Most students use the internet at home for 91.4%. The highest percentage of students indicates that they have used the internet for more than three years 35%. The result of the study is similar to this study (Ali. et al., 2017) that the highest percentage of young people (mobile) access the internet constantly, and that an average percentage of young people are those who constantly use the computer to access it access the internet and connect to the internet. And 41% do this three or more hours a day, mostly at home. Telephone and laptop were the most important devices. This result of the study is also similar to the study (Ahmed et al., 2020) that the highest rate for three or more hours/day. a similar study by Ferreira (2017), (30.7%) that the highest rate of 1-3 hours.

The Level of Internet Addiction among Secondary School Students, Table (5):

The study showed that the majority of the study sample had a moderate level of internet addiction 53.5%, and less than ten percent are severely addicted 8.8%. These results are consistent with the study conducted in al-hillaly (2021). It was found that the students had a moderate degree of internet addiction. This finding from the study is also similar to Fayeze's study (2020). The study indicated that approximately 36.6% of adolescents suffer from mild internet addiction, 39.3% suffer from moderate addiction, and more than half of the sample have mild and moderate addiction, and 2.6% of adolescents suffer from severe internet addiction.

CONCLUSION

The highest percentage of students were between 16 and 18 years old. The highest participation rate among young students was male. 99% of the students have used the internet. The purpose of using the internet is social communication, entertainment, and study. A third of the pupils' parents had a high school diploma or a higher degree and the majority were employees. The majority

of students used cell phones on the internet for three hours a day. The percentage of internet use by students was moderately addicting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommend further studies to measure the rate of internet addiction among teenagers and the importance of getting adequate sleep to the mind and body of adolescents. Emphasizing the role of education and family in raising awareness and promoting safe and healthy internet use by young people.

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