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ABSTRACT

Background: Internet has become a commonly used means of executing our work; it has also become a widely used communication medium today. From young to the aged, internet has changed the way people interact and share. Internet was initially developed for educational and military purposes (Young, 1998), but today the internet has grown at such a rapid rate that it has moved beyond the boundary of its initial intentions uncontrollably and we don't know how far it would go. The internet as a new technology has brought change in the world providing many benefits to us and also at the same time numerous consequences as well such as internet addiction (Beard & Wolf, 2001). Many researchers have testified to it and researches are available on internet addiction (Young, 1996; Davis et.al., 2002; Soule, Sheel, & Kleen, 2003; Hur, 2006, etc.). Most of the available researches focused on internet addiction especially among the adolescents (King, Delfabbro, Griffiths, & Gradisar, 2012; Liu, Liao, & Smith, 2012). These studies indicate that internet addiction can be found to have mild to profound impairment in psychological and physiological functioning of such individuals. As we have popularly known youths are the pillars of the nation and human society. So when our 'future of the nation' are hooked onto the internet in most of their waking hours, ignoring their personal and societal responsibilities, they are in trouble and we have problems in our society. In view of these challenges, growing internet users and plans for expanding the internet coverage in India (Adityarani, 2011; Agrawal, 2013), this study was conceived to understand the subject matter. **Method:** Data was collected from 427 adolescents upon whom a scale on internet addiction i.e. Online Cognition Scale (OCS) was administered. On the basis of Median score (i.e. > 116), a sample of 218 respondents (94 Males and 124 Females) were chosen upon whom further analyses were undertaken using different scales. Their mean age was 19.55 years (age range = 17 to 25 years). **Design:** The study followed a correlational design. There are two phases: Phase 1 focused on the antecedents i.e. the factors

which might be responsible for internet addiction namely: Personality and Connectedness. Phase 2 focused on the consequences i.e. the factors which might be the consequences of internet addiction namely: General health, Family satisfaction, Peer satisfaction, and Academic performance. Data was analyzed using Correlation and Multiple Regression (Stepwise method). **Results:** In the antecedent section Personality and Connectedness were the predictors of internet addiction, out of which Neuroticism and Connectedness to Self emerged as the significant predictors of internet addiction. Neuroticism predicted negatively the two factors of internet addiction viz. OCS Diminished Impulse Control (beta= -.195, $p<.01$) and OCS Distraction (beta= -.191, $p<.01$). Out of the four factors of connectedness (i.e. Social, Self, Family, and Academic), Connectedness to Self emerged as the significant predictor of internet addiction. Connectedness to Self negatively predicted the OCS Distraction factor of the internet addiction (beta= .160, $p<.05$). In the consequences section, four consequences (namely, General Health, Family Satisfaction, Peer Satisfaction, and Academic Performance) were examined in the context of the four dimensions of internet addiction. Out of these consequences, OCS Diminished Impulse Control emerged as the negative and significant predictor of General health of the internet addicts (beta= -.152, $p<.05$). However, the remaining three variables namely, Family Satisfaction, Peer Satisfaction, and Academic Performance failed to be predicted by the internet addiction. **Conclusion:** From this research we can see that internet addiction exists and the issue cannot be ignored. This study found that, internet addiction has a significant consequence upon the health of the internet addicts which could be predicted by their neurotic personality and connectedness to Self. However, internet is not always bad for human consumption, it is a tool that has been invented to assist in our productivity. So we need to understand the healthy and unhealthy use of the internet. Healthy internet usage is the use of the medium for certain specific purpose of our lives without causing discomfort to our cognition or behavior. But since there is no such given threshold for how much of the usage or what manner to be considered as pathological is unclear (Davis, 2001). According to Davis (2001) it is for the individual to determine whether his/her usage of internet has been adaptive or maladaptive. Therefore, this finding put up a new dimension in our understanding of this new and emerging concept with respect to the lives of the adolescents who are the future for the nation.