

A Study Regarding Psychological Dependency Caused by Chat on Internet Among Young People in Tehran city

Tayebeh Zandipour, Tayebeh Orang, and Kianoosh Hashemian

Abstract---This study attempted to investigate psychological reasons of Tehran Youths dependency on chatting with internet. The sample of study included 208 volunteers of internet users. Instruments used were: Young's scale for internet addiction, Dellas's vocational identity questionnaire, Rother's locus of control questionnaire, Roger's self-concept questionnaire, Demographic questions to obtain biography and attitudes of users. **Results:** Hypotheses indicate that there is no significant relationship between chat dependency and having an achievement identity. There is no significant relationship between chat dependency on internet and having foreclosure identity. There is significant relationship between chat dependency on internet and moratorium identity. **Conclusion:** People inter addiction world via pain and suffering or hedonism; and those who seek joys or origin of pains and sufferings out of themselves are doomed to dependency; since they are always looking for something or somebody to bring them peace and satisfaction. They should know that we are creator of our own worlds.

Keywords---Internet, Psychological dependency, Tehran, young people

I. INTRODUCTION

TODAY, information and different cultural historical, scientific, knowledge are gathered together, no matter from what era or which land and made accessible through numerous information webs. Now internet is not only a communication media for researchers and intellectuals, but also in service of almost all human activities including relating to friends and colleagues, database, gambling, etc. Most people use it on regular basis without becoming dependent on it. Yet, it might be abused and have its own harms and pitfalls for dependents.

Internet dependency is a term for excessive use of the internet to the detriment of one's physical, psychological, social, or vocational wellbeing. Excessive internet use may revolve around chat rooms, blogging, gambling, gaming, pornography and other online activities. As of 2005, it is estimated that 6% of users are internet dependent. Greenfield(1999), on a study with 18,000 internet users diagnosed 6% of them as psychologically addicted. Most of them were dependent on sexual sites or spent hours in chat rooms to find friends, affection or love. Many researchers indicate that establishing personal relationship through chat rooms, and e-mailing were the most use of internet at homes and coffee-nets (Kraut, et al., 1998).

Tayebeh Zandipour, Professor of Azzahra University, Tehran-Iran.
tayebeh_zandipour@hotmail.com

Kraut, et al. (1998) in a longitudinal study from March 1995 to March 1996 on 93 families from 8 different area found that the hours people are online has a relationship with the degree of stress they experience in their daily life. Also it relates to the degree of their depression. Those who had social relationship were less abusing the internet.

Young (1996) found two-third of 600 respondents could be categorized as "dependent". He concludes that virtual world of the internet especially for those with boredom, lack of self-confidence, lack of social support or significant relationship is attractive and addicting.

Young (1997) found that people often abuse internet for friend hunting and sexual stimulation.

Scherer (1997), noticed dependent in comparison to independent mostly spend time in chat rooms and game sites for fun and leisure and are less able to cut their relationship with the net.

Kubey, Lewin and Barrows (1998) on a study with 542 university students found 9% of them are dependents. Dependents believed that they use internet very much, cannot control it and because of that feel guilty and incompetent. Also, they said if they had more friends at the university or their work place they would have used less time with internet.

Young (2000), on a study with 1302 university students found that students in computer field are more dependent (54%).

Del, Peter (2001) also found that internet overuse, like other technologies, reinforce laziness and less movement and decreases the effort to make relationship with others and may lead to social isolation. Parks & Floyed(1996) found that 83.6% of relationships in chat rooms were with opposite sex, from Debra Willer, 2000).

Most studies, such as Greenfield, indicate that men are more addicts to internet than women. Anderson (1998) on study regarding 1300 university students found from 103 dependent students 9/1% were men.

Mc Kenna, green & Gleason (2002) by reviewing the studies regarding intimate relationships found that self-disclosure and spouse's disclosure increases the intimacy in relationship. That is, self-disclosure with online people is like the phenomenon of stranger on a train in which sometimes people share their secret information with their unknown company. In a sense, internet anonymity decreases such risks.

Bargh, et al. (2002) in an experimental study found that real self-characteristics (real self-concept) are more

accessible in internet confrontation than in face to face confrontation.

In sum, most studies show that establishing personal relationship via chat rooms, and e-mails are the most use of internet at homes and in coffee nets.

Internet overuse is not only to the benefits of one's wellbeing or social interactions, but also decreases the degree of family relationships and the user's different aspects of his/her real social life with friends, colleagues, peers, etc.

II. METHOD

This is a post-facto study with the goal of finding the reason for internet dependency among Iranian young people. The researchers are going to find any relationship between internet dependency, vocational identity, self-concept and locus of control of dependent users and compare it with independent users.

Population includes Tehrani young people, 17-28 years old boys and girls who spends some of their times in chat rooms every day and are psychologically dependent on chat in the internet. The compared group is their peers who use internet normally and are not psychologically dependent to chatting.

Sample includes 208 volunteers; 114 individuals with psychological dependency on chat and a comparative group of 94 (individuals without any psychological dependency while using the internet.

III. MEASURES

Dellas's vocational identity questionnaire (DISI-O, 1978), with 35 choice in 5 different identity status: Identity achieved, moratorium, foreclosure, confusion- confusion, confusion-chance. Each identity has 7 choices among all questions. . Gaining 4 scores out of 7 in each identity is a sign of having that identity.

Rotter's locus of control questionnaire (1972) which was includes 29 two choices items.

Rogers's self-concept scale that was included 25 contradictory traits regarding real and ideal self.

Young's questionnaire with 8 items was for screening dependent people and researcher's self-made demographic questionnaire with 10 yes-no items.

IV. PROCEDURE

First researchers made weblog: WWW.chaaaaat.persianblog.com

Then a brief description of the purpose of research and its questionnaires were offered and then interested people were invited to cooperate with the researchers.

Next, we entered the chat rooms of yahoo messenger's site and invited people who were chatting to cooperate. The researcher talk to them either by writing or voice and when they become ready to cooperate, they were listed as sample for further contacts. Respondents first answered young's screening scale and by answering 5 out of its 8 questions were listed as dependent users and then answered the rest of the questionnaire. Also for a lot of people who came to chat rooms questionnaires were sent by e-mail or via offline.

Also, some people who were chatting in Tehran coffee-nets answered the questionnaires.

Independent group, were selected from Tehran high school students, pre college students, university sites, computer classes and university entrance exams classes by matching the age, sex, education and vocation.

To analyze the data, descriptive statistics and inferential independent t-test and chi- square were used.

V. RESULTS

Among dependents 33 (29%) had a job, 35 (30/7%) were out of job and 46 (40/4) were students.

Among independents 27 (28/71%) had a job, 22 (23/40%) were jobless and 45 (47/87%) were students.

Among dependents 73% used internet between 4-6 hours a day whereas 80% of independent group used internet 1-2 hours daily and no more than 4 hours a day.

All dependent users 114 (100%) used chat whereas 37% of independent said they use chat sometimes and mostly with their friends who are in foreign countries.

(81/6%) dependent users rather to chat with opposite sex, yet 75/4% said they do not chat to find an ideal spouse. 72/7 said they chat about issues which is impossible to talk about them in society and 57/9 stated they do not tell a lie in chat rooms. 90.4% of dependent think the most benefit of chatting is finding friends.

Table (1) shows the frequency and percentage of physical problems those dependents, after some hour claim of:

TABLE I
PHYSICAL PROBLEM THAT INTERNET DEPENDENT SUFFER FROM

Physical problems	frequency	percentage
Eye ache	57	50%
Sleep disorders	54	54%
Head ache	44	38/5%
Wrist ache	31	27/1%
Neck ache	25	21/9%
dizziness	24	21%
Waist ache	9	7/8%

TABLE II
REPLACING FACTORS FOR CHATTING IN INTERNET FOR DEPENDENTS

Replacing factor	Frequency	Percentage
A university field of study which I like	51	44/73%
A good , intimate friend from the opposite sex	50	43/85%
A job which I like	46	40/35%
A good, intimate spouse	24	21/05%
others	21	18/42%
Nothing	15	13/15%
A good intimate friend from the same sex	13	11/40%

According to table 2, the most important issues for Iranian youths are: a good higher education, a good spouse and a good job.

VI. HYPOTHESES

- 1). There is a significant relationship between chat dependency and having an achievement identity.

- 2). There is a significant relationship between chat dependency on the internet and having a foreclosure identity.
- 3). There is a significant relationship between chat dependency on the internet and a moratorium identity.
- 4). There is a significant relationship between chat dependency on the internet and diffusion identity.
- 5). There is a significant relationship between chat dependency on the internet and locus of control.
- 6). There is a significant relationship between chat dependency on the internet and self-concept.

TABLE III
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT T- TEST BETWEEN DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP ON ACHIEVEMENT IDENTITY

index Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	Standard error
Dependent on chat	114	1/28	2/11	0/19
Independent on chat	94	1/86	2/35	0/24

t=1/85 vs. (Table (T=1/96) df =206 p < 0/06

As table 3 shows, there is no significant difference between dependent and independent people as to chat in the internet. Studies of Hosainny (1997) and Hosainny Tabatabaei (1998) in Iran also support this finding. Since achievement identity is gained through time and growth we can conclude that younger age (17-24) of participants, lesser education among them (mostly at high school and pre college level, could be the reason for this result.

TABLE IV
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT T- TEST BETWEEN DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP ON FORECLOSURE IDENTITY

Index Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	Standard error
Dependent on chat	114	0/69	1/38	0/13
Independent on chat	94	0/86	1/58	0/16

t=0/82 vs. (table, t =1/96) df = 206 p <0/41

According to table 2, there is no significant difference between 2 groups in terms of foreclosure identity either. Out of 114 dependent only 7 individual (6%) had foreclosure identity and from 94 independent only 10 people (10/6%) were same identity. We could say because of this limited number no difference between 2 groups was found. On the other hand young people with foreclosure identity and set goals are less likely to be attracted to internet or other new technological advices.

TABLE V
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT T- TEST BETWEEN DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP ON MORATORIUM IDENTITY

Index Groups	Frequency	SD	Mean	Standard error
Dependent on chat	114	1/35	1/08	0/12
Independent on chat	94	2/18	2/27	0/22

t = 4/80 vs. (table, t =1/96)df = 206 p < 0

According to the table 5 there is a significant difference between two groups as to the moratorium identity. People with moratorium identity struggle to get a deep knowledge of them and experience different ways of identity formation. This effort is less observed among those who spend hours without any special goal in chat rooms.

TABLE VI
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT T- TEST BETWEEN DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP ON CONFUSION IDENTITY

index Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	Standard error
Dependent on chat	114	3/84	2/56	0/24
Independent on chat	94	2/00	2/08	0/21

t = 5/60 vs. (Table, t =1/96)df = 206 p < 0

As to the table 6, the difference between two groups in terms of confusion identity is also significant. People with confusion identity escape their aimlessness toward internet or other addiction and try to forget their problems and gain some relative peace. According to Marcia (1987, quoted from ahmadi.1990) youths with confusion identity avoid commitment. Are lonely and sad, lack intimate relationships, live in moment and think less of future; think time is not important and they have lots of time for everything. Anderson (1998) and pratarelli,et al. (1999) also indicate that addiction to internet is a sign of stress, anxiety, loneliness, depression, social or vocational problems, psychological unrest.

TABLE VII
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT T- TEST BETWEEN DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP ON LOCUS OF CONTROL

index Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	Standard error
Dependent on chat	114	11/05	2/40	0/22
Independent on chat	94	7/68	3/15	0/32

t = 8/74 vs.(Table, t =1/96) df = 206 p < 0

As table 7 indicate there is a significant difference between two groups regarding locus of control. According to Rotter people with external locus of control consider external factor such as chance, fate, and other people's power as responsible for their failures; use a limited number of defense mechanism such as Denial, escape, and catharsis and use internet as a escape from their real life situations (Khazame, 1997).

They are anxious, lack self-confidence and are self-destructive (Aghajani, 2002). Whereas, there is a negative relationship between internal lotuses of control, stress, anxiety, and depression (Bastani, 2002). Kraut,et al.(1998), found people dependent on internet experience a lot of daily stress and feel depressed when they are off line.

TABLE 8
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT T-TEST BETWEEN DEPENDENT AND
INDEPENDENT GROUP ON SELF-CONCEPT

Index Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	Standard error
Dependent on chat	114	11/75	3/70	0/34
Independent on chat	94	7/31	2/56	0/26

t= 9/83 vs. (Table, t=1/96) df =206 p < 0

As table 8 indicates, dependents on internet have lower self-concepts. Self-concepts include a person's all feelings and thoughts about his/her physical and psychological aspects. This factor is the most important predictor of Youth being a victim of drug addiction or any other dependency (quoted from Khazame, 1997). Some researchers states that drug addiction and internet dependency are somewhat similar. Young (1996) believes that those vulnerable to internet are lonely, depressed, and introvert people who lack self-confidence and probably have an addiction background. Davis (1999), concludes that internet dependents suffer from a sense of guilt and often tell a lie to their friends regarding the time they spend online and chatting and keep it as a secret for themselves.

VII. CONCLUSION

In summary, we should say there is a positive relationship between chat on internet and confusion identity, external locus of control and low self-concept. Marcia states people with confusion identity suffer from low self-esteem. Wales (1994, quoted from Khazame, 1997), conclude that there is a relationship between negative self-concept, inferiority feelings, external locus of control and drug addiction.

People enter the addiction world via pain and suffering or hedonism; and those who seek joys or the origin of pains and sufferings out of themselves are doomed to dependency; since they are always looking for something or somebody to bring them peace and satisfaction. Yet, after a while that they did not find what they were looking for out of themselves, they harbor to drugs, internet, alcohol and different destructive peels. They should know that we are the creator of our own worlds. There is no joy or sorrow out of us. We cannot control or change what is out of us; we can only change ourselves, that is our mind and attitude, and seek peace, joy and satisfaction inside us.

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