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To study the effects of demographic background and their interactions on the social competence of internet users in adolescence

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Abstract

According to a recent survey, about 6% of people worldwide have an Internet addiction. Internet addiction is a problem that can swiftly impair a person's capacity to carry out daily tasks when they feel they are unable to do so because they are unable to unplug from the Internet. Numerous issues related to this kind of Internet use have an effect on the person's quality of life and psychological health. The main objective of the study was to assess the correlation between Internet Addiction and Emotional Maturity among Young Adults. It is transforming life on our planet in a manner unparalleled by any other technology in human history. It has influenced the economy, communication, culture, educational systems, and social interactions across all nations, uniting them in a world reshaped into a global village and establishing the groundwork for a new civilization. India, being the birthplace of civilization, is set to emerge as a significant IT power in the forthcoming years, thereby fulfilling its numerous commitments for both national and global advancement. The Internet is pivotal to India's emerging identity as an IT powerhouse in various aspects.

Keywords: Internet Addiction, Civilization, Global Village, Emotional Maturity

1. Introduction

The Internet with a capital letter I represents one of the most remarkable accomplishments in the fields of computer science and networking technology. It offers a global framework for communication between users and computers that transcends corporate and national borders. A communication revolution is occurring globally, irrevocably altering the status quo. With an annual growth rate of 6000%, it undoubtedly represents, as Bill Gates states, "the road ahead".

The Internet constitutes the greatest computer network globally. It connects computer terminals through cables or telephone lines inside a network of interconnected systems and shared software. With the appropriate equipment, an individual can access extensive information and search databases on numerous computers connected to the Internet, or chat with anyone globally, provided they possess the necessary technology (Handy Science Answer Book, 2003). The Internet originated in America, however its power and impact have permeated the globe like a seismic wave. In Cambodia, wireless Internet is utilized to enhance healthcare and education in some of the most isolated rural

regions. In England, Christians have established a revolutionary online church utilizing the Internet. Governments from Mexico to Germany have initiated ambitious national projects to transition their schools to online platforms as swiftly as financially viable. The cyber-café culture in South Korea has generated some of the most demanding multiplayer online games. Certain governments perceive the Internet as a threat, and justifiably so: in Indonesia and Serbia, it contributed to the overthrow of despised regimes. In the United States, concerns have emerged regarding the peril of outsourcing employment to countries like India, a phenomenon facilitated by the Internet. Some perceive the Internet as a combination of peril and potential. France see the Internet as a threat to the integrity of its language and as a crucial means of safeguarding its culture. The Chinese government acknowledges the significant economic potential of the Internet as well as its inherent threat to authoritarian rule; consequently, it deploys tens of thousands of police to suppress those attempting to access websites deemed criminal by the authorities. The Internet is no longer exclusive to wealthy North Americans and Western

Europeans; comprehending its significance requires a progressively global perspective.

The Internet is undoubtedly the greatest significant advance in the realm of communication in human history. It is a synthesis of the most advanced technology to date. However, many modern technologies possess a detrimental aspect, like to nuclear energy and pesticides. The Internet is analogous. The Internet's influences potentially encompass the entire spectrum of human activity, presenting significant issues-technological, social, political, legal, economic, environmental, and cultural. A comprehensive viewpoint is necessary to comprehend and address the contentious issues. Despite its pros and downsides, the Internet is significantly transforming how individuals live, work, communicate, engage in recreation, and participate in public life globally.

2. Significance of the study

In our society, a gradual transformation is taking place. We're on our way to become a "dot com" nation. We are evolving as a society. We're innovating new ways of communicating, doing business, and exchanging personal and public information. All of these things are possible in various ways thanks to the Internet, the most powerful innovation of the century. The Internet is one of the most important technology systems currently transforming our understanding of knowledge, personal worth, and social interactions. It has evolved into a universal hub for information, communication, commerce, and entertainment. Users of all ages can find opportunities to broaden their horizons and get help from others in pursuing their passions. It allows the user to experiment with new ideas, enter complex systems, and/or form new intellectual bonds.

The Internet has ramifications for children's and adolescents' physical, cognitive, social, and behavioural development. As a result, it is critical to determine the impact of the Internet on adolescent social competence, emotional maturity, and overall well-being so that the study's findings may be used to develop curricula. The studies mentioned above show that different factors associated with Internet use operate differently in different races, cultures, and gender groups, and since there is a scarcity of systematic research in India, it is appropriate to investigate whether Internet use alone or in combination with other factors is responsible for differences in Social Competence, Emotional Maturity, and General Well-being. Research on the impact of Internet use on teenage social competence, emotional maturity, and overall well-being is still in its infancy, particularly in India, and needs to be enhanced qualitatively and statistically. The current research is a step in that direction.

3. Objectives of the study

The following goals were pursued in this study:

1. To develop and standardize the General Well-being Scale for assessing adolescents' general well-being.
2. To investigate the effects of residential background, gender, academic stream, Internet access frequency, and their interactions on the social competence of Internet users in adolescence.

4. Review of Literature

Tennant *et al.* (2020) ^[20] developed and validated the

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale, which consists solely of positively worded items relating to various facets of positive mental health (WEMWBS). A five-point Likert scale is used. All of the items received a favourable rating. WEMWBS had a high level of content validity. WEMWBS had strong connections with other mental health and well-being scores but less correlations with overall health scales. In a population sample, its distribution was near normal, and the scale did not display ceiling effects. The test-retest reliability was excellent (0.83). The scale has a high level of internal consistency and face validity. Other related scales had reduced or similar social desirability bias. WEMWBS is a mental well-being scale that focuses solely on positive elements of mental health. It is suited for use in measuring mental well-being at a population level since it is a short and psychometrically robust scale with no ceiling effects in a population sample.

On 447 first-year university students, conducted a study on the Psychometric Properties of the General Well-Being Index (GWBI). The psychometric qualities of the GWBI were discovered to be excellent. Internal consistency and test-retest reliability were also high, and the measure's concurrent and concept validity were excellent. The General Well-Being Index (GWBI) is a quality of life measure that has been specifically designed to assess psychological distress rather than physical incapacitation. Factor analysis revealed three significant factors: 'general mood/effect,' 'life satisfaction/vitality,' and 'poor physical health/somatic complaints.'

5. Research Methodology

Research methodology is a systematic approach to resolving the research challenge. Research is a meticulous and methodical examination of a subject aimed at uncovering or refining facts, theories, and applications. Methodology refers to the systematic approach of procedures employed within a specific discipline. A research technique delineates the approach employed in doing research.

This study aimed to investigate the perceived impact of Internet usage on adolescents' social competence, emotional maturity, and overall well-being. Consequently, a descriptive survey inquiry employing a factorial design was utilized. Descriptive survey research is likely the most commonly employed method of observation in the social sciences. The researcher usually selects a sample of respondents from a certain group and gives standardized questionnaires or scales to them (Beukman, 2005) ^[7].

A 2×2×2×3 factorial design was utilized to examine the primary and interactive effects of Residential Background, Gender, Academic Stream, and Frequency of Internet Access on the Social Competence, Emotional Maturity, and General Well-being of adolescent internet users. In this design, the three demographic factors were manipulated at two levels, whereas the fourth demographic variable was manipulated at three levels. Residential Background was classified as 'A' (A1 for Metropolitan and A2 for Non-metropolitan), Gender as 'B' (B1 for Male and B2 for Female), Academic Stream as 'C' (C1 for Science and C2 for Commerce), and Frequency of Internet Access as 'D' (D1 for Regular, D2 for Moderate, and D3 for Infrequent).

The initial sample for this study comprised 480 teenage Internet users enrolled in various senior secondary schools

in Delhi and Bahadurgarh. The sample comprised both male and female adolescent students from the Science and Commerce academic streams. A stratified multi-stage random sampling method was employed to get the data. Delhi was chosen to represent the metropolitan area, whereas Bahadurgarh was designated for the non-metropolitan area. Delhi and Bahadurgarh were separated into five zones: east, west, north, south, and central. A compilation of educational institutions in Delhi and Bahadurgarh was acquired from the relevant District Education Officer (DEO) for each zone. To achieve an adequate stratification, 20 schools were randomly chosen using a lottery approach from the list. Only adolescent Internet users who completed all measurement instruments were included in the sample. Twenty-five adolescent internet users from each school were chosen for the study. A sample of 480 adolescent Internet users was sufficiently representative of the population in both Metropolitan and Non-metropolitan areas for the study. The entire sample was segmented at each level in accordance with the study's design.

6. Results and Data Analysis

6.1 Description of sample characteristics

This chapter presents descriptive data in the form of frequency tables for a sample of 480 respondents. Descriptive statistics include frequency tables (Beukman, 2005) [7]. According to Ferguson (1981) [22], frequency tables are a way to categorize and describe numbers that help the researcher comprehend and evaluate the key elements of the collected data. Each frequency table in the current study shows the ratios against the frequency of occurrence, with the percentage in brackets. Therefore, 480 respondents' descriptions of their Internet access are shown in Frequency Tables 1.

Table 1: Full form of internet

S. No	Area	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan
1.	International Network	170(71.00%)	200(84.00%)
2.	Interrelation Network	16(19.16%)	20(09.00%)
3.	Interactive Network	26(10.83%)	05(02.08%)
4.	Internal Networking	28(11.66%)	15(06.25%)

The precise complete form of the Internet was marked in the provided alternatives by 71.00% of metropolitan and 84.00% of non-metropolitan teenage respondents, as can be seen from Frequency Table 2. This suggests that they knew what the term "Internet" meant.

Table 2: Define internet

S. No	Area	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan
1.	Yes	210(87.05%)	230 (96.00%)
2.	No	30(12.05%)	10(04.00%)

According to Frequency Table 3, 87.05% of respondents from metropolitan areas and 96.00% of those from non-

metropolitan areas provided their own definition of the term "Internet." Both metropolitan and non-metropolitan adolescents have a comprehension of the Internet idea, according to the table analysis.

Table 3: Place Where accessed the internet

S. No	Area	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan
1.	Cyber Cafe	95(40.00%)	50(20.00%)
2.	Athome	120(50.00%)	175 (73.00%)
3.	School Library	15(06.25%)	05 (03.00%)
4.	At Friend's Home	10(04.00%)	10(04.00%)

According to Frequency Table 4, the majority of respondents, both metropolitan (50.00%) and non-metropolitan (73.0%), used the Internet from home, with cyber cafes coming in second. However, 4.00% of respondents from metropolitan areas utilized the Internet at a friend's house, whereas 3.00% of adolescents from non-metropolitan areas used the school library. The outcome shows that the teenager's room has been invaded by the Internet. Teenagers nowadays have the ability to access the Internet from anywhere, and they do so in a variety of locations.

Table 4: Time Period since using the internet

S. No	Area	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan
1.	Less than 1 Year	40(16.00%)	60(25.00%)
2.	1-2 Year	40(16.00%)	75(32.00%)
3.	2-3 Years	85(36.00%)	50(21.00%)
4.	More than 4 Year	75(32.00%)	55(22.00%)

Regularity The duration since the teenagers started using the Internet was displayed in Table 5. It reveals that whereas 32.00% of non-metropolitan respondents had been using the Internet for 1-2 years, followed by less than a year (25.00%), 36.00% of adolescents in metropolitan areas had been using it for 2-3 years, followed by more than 4 years (32.0%). According to the table, teenagers in urban and non-metropolitan areas were more adept at using the Internet.

Table 5: Regular visit of certain websites

S. No	Area	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan
1.	Yes	162 68.00%)	150(62.00%)
2.	No	78(32.00%)	90(38.00%)

Regularity The frequency distribution of respondents from metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas with relation to frequent visits to specific websites was shown in Table 6. Table shows that 61.00% of respondents from non-metropolitan areas and 68.00% of respondents from metropolitan areas said they frequently visited certain websites. They also indicated the names of websites based on their personal preferences.

Table 6: Mean and sd scores for general well-Being of internet user adolescents

Levels	Mean	Std Dev	N	Levels	Mean	Std Dev	N
A ₁	188.08	20.13	240	B ₂ C ₁ D ₂	206.43	24.69	42
A ₂	199.83	31.25	240	B ₂ C ₁ D ₃	199.68	24.02	38
B ₁	186.08	33.14	240	B ₂ C ₂ D ₁	194.30	30.64	37
B ₂	201.83	24.81	240	B ₂ C ₂ D ₂	204.44	21.49	41
C ₁	188.90	29.46	240	B ₂ C ₂ D ₃	196.98	24.77	46
C ₂	199.01	28.91	240	A ₁ C ₁ D ₁	195.90	26.49	41
D ₁	196.35	30.02	155	A ₁ C ₁ D ₂	196.77	30.40	44
D ₂	201.45	29.27	160	A ₁ C ₁ D ₃	193.00	25.25	39
D ₃	198.02	29.32	165	A ₁ C ₂ D ₁	199.33	31.13	39
A ₁ B ₁	195.89	31.67	120	A ₁ C ₂ D ₂	204.40	29.35	40
A ₁ B ₂	202.17	24.29	120	A ₁ C ₂ D ₃	204.56	25.41	45
A ₂ B ₁	198.27	34.67	120	A ₂ C ₁ D ₁	205.59	31.28	44
A ₂ B ₂	201.38	27.44	120	A ₂ C ₁ D ₂	201.48	23.67	40
B ₁ C ₁	197.79	31.75	120	A ₂ C ₁ D ₃	206.33	31.08	40
B ₁ C ₂	196.08	31.14	120	A ₂ C ₂ D ₁	187.34	33.13	38
B ₂ C ₁	202.01	24.71	120	A ₂ C ₂ D ₂	199.55	29.39	42
B ₂ C ₂	199.65	24.83	120	A ₂ C ₂ D ₃	192.07	29.15	44
C ₁ D ₁	201.92	28.36	83	A ₁ B ₁ D ₁	195.76	28.60	41
C ₁ D ₂	198.01	26.34	81	A ₁ B ₁ D ₂	195.93	36.06	42
C ₁ D ₃	198.75	29.96	76	A ₁ B ₁ D ₃	199.00	27.09	41
C ₂ D ₁	194.42	33.48	75	A ₁ B ₂ D ₁	199.49	29.08	39
C ₂ D ₂	202.92	28.29	80	A ₁ B ₂ D ₂	204.88	21.83	42
C ₂ D ₃	197.38	26.88	85	A ₁ B ₂ D ₃	199.37	24.90	43
A ₁ D ₁	198.58	27.71	75	A ₂ B ₁ D ₁	196.03	36.71	40
A ₁ D ₂	201.41	28.97	82	A ₂ B ₁ D ₂	194.95	27.77	41
A ₁ D ₃	198.19	29.13	82	A ₂ B ₁ D ₃	200.65	36.27	43
A ₂ D ₁	198.13	32.28	80	A ₂ B ₂ D ₁	198.19	30.07	42
A ₂ D ₂	201.49	25.61	80	A ₂ B ₂ D ₂	206.02	24.49	41
A ₂ D ₃	199.86	31.75	81	A ₂ B ₂ D ₃	196.98	23.95	41
A ₁ C ₁	196.30	26.40	120	A ₁ B ₁ C ₁ D ₁	194.43	27.39	21
A ₁ C ₂	201.86	27.44	120	A ₁ B ₁ C ₁ D ₂	191.82	35.05	22
A ₂ C ₁	203.50	29.86	120	A ₁ B ₁ C ₁ D ₃	192.11	27.66	19
A ₂ C ₂	192.15	31.66	120	A ₁ B ₁ C ₂ D ₁	197.15	30.47	20
B ₁ D ₁	194.89	31.65	78	A ₁ B ₁ C ₂ D ₂	200.45	37.51	20
B ₁ D ₂	196.45	33.04	81	A ₁ B ₁ C ₂ D ₃	204.96	25.74	22
B ₁ D ₃	198.85	32.94	82	A ₁ B ₂ C ₁ D ₁	197.45	26.14	20
B ₂ D ₁	199.82	28.42	78	A ₁ B ₂ C ₁ D ₂	201.73	24.74	22
B ₂ D ₂	206.45	22.05	81	A ₁ B ₂ C ₁ D ₃	193.85	23.42	20
B ₂ D ₃	199.20	23.32	80	A ₁ B ₂ C ₂ D ₁	201.63	32.47	19
A ₁ B ₁ C ₁	193.79	28.93	60	A ₁ B ₂ C ₂ D ₂	208.35	18.11	20
A ₁ B ₁ C ₂	201.98	30.08	60	A ₁ B ₂ C ₂ D ₃	204.17	25.66	23
A ₁ B ₂ C ₁	196.81	23.60	60	A ₂ B ₁ C ₁ D ₁	204.00	34.16	20
A ₁ B ₂ C ₂	203.74	26.65	60	A ₂ B ₁ C ₁ D ₂	191.25	18.67	20
A ₂ B ₁ C ₁	201.79	30.27	60	A ₂ B ₁ C ₁ D ₃	206.46	36.63	22
A ₂ B ₁ C ₂	192.76	34.81	60	A ₂ B ₁ C ₂ D ₁	188.05	38.29	20
A ₂ B ₂ C ₁	209.21	24.94	60	A ₂ B ₁ C ₂ D ₂	198.38	34.43	21
A ₂ B ₂ C ₂	191.55	25.74	60	A ₂ B ₁ C ₂ D ₃	194.57	35.75	21
B ₁ C ₁ D ₁	198.10	31.86	38	A ₂ B ₂ C ₁ D ₁	206.92	29.55	24
B ₁ C ₁ D ₂	192.60	27.12	41	A ₂ B ₂ C ₁ D ₂	211.60	24.20	20
B ₁ C ₁ D ₃	198.81	32.19	38	A ₂ B ₂ C ₁ D ₃	206.17	23.63	18
B ₁ C ₂ D ₁	191.60	33.46	40	A ₂ B ₂ C ₂ D ₁	186.56	27.36	18
B ₁ C ₂ D ₂	198.39	34.53	38	A ₂ B ₂ C ₂ D ₂	200.71	24.13	21
B ₁ C ₂ D ₃	198.88	30.10	41	A ₂ B ₂ C ₂ D ₃	189.78	22.09	23
B ₂ C ₁ D ₁	203.61	27.14	44	Grand M	198.95	29.18	480

7. Conclusion

The goal of the current study was to find out how adolescents' perceived usage of the Internet affected their social competence, emotional maturity, and general well-being. Based on the data analysis, interpretation, and outcomes discussion, the current study can be interpreted as follows:

- Adolescent Internet users' social competence was found to be unaffected by their gender, academic stream, residential background, or frequency of internet access.
- In terms of social competence, the first-order interactions between residential background and gender, gender and academic stream, academic stream and internet access frequency, residential background and internet access frequency, and gender and internet access frequency did not significantly interact.
- Adolescent Internet users' social competence was found to be significantly impacted by the interaction between their residential background and academic stream. Adolescent internet users from non-metropolitan areas with a science stream had far higher social competence than other users.
- There was no significant interaction between Social Competence and the second order interactions of Residential Background, Gender and Academic Stream, Gender, Academic Stream and Frequency of Internet Access, Residential Background, Academic Stream and Frequency of Internet Access, Residential Background, Gender and Frequency of Internet Access.

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