

Life without internet: A study from Kashmir

Tabasum Farooq

Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, AMU, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract

The Internet has become an essential and integral part of our lives. When we wake up in morning, the thing we hold first is our mobile phone. It is hard to imagine one's life without internet. But the people of Kashmir valley had to live this beyond imagination life- a life without internet. Since 8th July 2016, the valley of Kashmir slipped into dark ages due to a ban on internet and mobile services. People, especially younger generation suffered a lot. But amidst suffering, some opportunities were recognized. In the present study, 50 adolescents were approached from Kashmir valley. They were interviewed about the activities they performed during and before internet ban. On the basis of results, it was concluded that the lack of internet created many problems for them at the same time some good also happened. It was seen in the results that the time spent by adolescents on the internet was now being utilized in more productive things such as reading newspapers, morning walks, religious activities family get to gathers, etc. Besides, adolescents have understood the existence and value of people and things outside their world of internet. Procrastination was also assessed during the ban and after the restoration of internet services and a significant increase was found in procrastination levels. This study is not confined to the valley of Kashmir only; this is the reality of a young generation of present time. Internet should not be banned, but teens need to be banned from using this facility inappropriately. The Internet is a blessing for modern times but we have made this blessing a curse. The study thus provides an insight to the fact that no doubt internet has made us global citizens, but to a large extent, we are drifting apart from ourselves and from our homes. There is a dire need to control the usage of internet, especially in adolescents and this need has to be fulfilled by parents, teachers, counselors.

Keywords: internet ban, adolescents, procrastination, social relations

Introduction

The Internet has become an essential and integral part of our lives. India ranks second in internet usage with a total of 462,124,989 internet users (Internet World Stats, 2016). When we wake up in morning, the thing we hold first is our mobile phone to look for the messages we might have. Before brushing our teeth we enquire about our friends if they have done so. This is the beginning of our days with no morning walks, no newspapers, no conversation apart from internet chatting. Though using the internet is beneficial as it helps us to keep in touch with the world but at the same time overusing it is problematic. Overuse of internet could be as problematic as drug addiction and that is why in DSM V there is Internet Gambling Disorder which was earlier referred to as compulsive Internet use (CIU), Internet overuse, problematic computer use, or pathological computer use, problematic Internet use, or Internet addiction disorder, which involves the overuse of internet to such an extent that it starts interfering with our daily lives. Many studies have shown that overuse of internet can cause a cluster of cognitive behavioral and social problems. Increase in usage of internet decreases well-being (Waldo, 2014). Addiction to internet use can cause psychiatric symptoms such as Somatisation, Obsessive Compulsive, interpersonal sensitivity, depression, anxiety, hostility, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation and (Koc, 2011).

Besides, internet overuse facilitates and develops academic procrastination in adolescents. Academic procrastination is an interactive dysfunctional and behavior avoidance process characterized by the desire to avoid an activity, the promise to get to it later, and the use of excuses to justify the delay and

avoid blame (Ellis and Knaus, 2002) ^[1]. The Internet can be considered as a tool for procrastination in that it provides an environment where all features contributing to the maintenance of a procrastination field are present to the user. In fact, the Internet developers place the user at risk for procrastination (Mohammadi, Tahiri and Hasaskhah, 2015).

Few studies regarding internet use and psychological well-being have been conducted in Kashmir and the significant negative relationship has been found between them (Rehman, Shafi, and Rizvi, 2016) ^[7]. Besides a significant positive relation has been found between internet addiction and psychological distress (Kawa and Shafi, 2015) ^[3].

Despite the ill effects of overusing internet, it is a basic necessity one can't live without. It is hard to imagine one's life without internet. But the people of Kashmir valley had to live this beyond imagination life- a life without internet. Since 8th July 2016, the valley of Kashmir slipped into dark ages due to a ban on internet and mobile services. People suffered a lot. Nobody was able to wish their loved ones on the occasion of Eid. The young generation suffered most. Students were unable to search for their queries in Google; some were unable to apply for different posts and courses.

But amidst this suffering that was caused due to internet ban, some positive changes were observed in people especially in adolescents. This research study was conducted with the aim to examine those positive changes.

The main objectives of our research endeavors is to know the differences in the time spent by adolescents on various activities before & during internet ban and after the restoration of internet and to assess the level of procrastination in

adolescents during internet ban and after restoration of internet services

Participants

The target population for this research paper was adolescents from the valley of Kashmir who were present during these turmoil months in Kashmir. The objective was to get population as reliable as possible. Due to heavy deployment of forces and continuous curfew, it becomes difficult to meet a large number of people. So the total number of participants who took part in this study remains 50. The data was collected in the month of curfew because after the month of data collection conditions return to normal.

Method

An attempt was made to provide an insight to the participants regarding the over usage of internet and alienation from some productive activities due to it. They were informed about the

internet addiction and its hazards.

In order to know the amount of time that adolescents spent on various activities, participants were provided a list of activities and they had to indicate the time spent on them per day before and during internet ban. They were also required to mention the activities they have started performing during internet ban. After the restoration of internet services, the participants were again approached and enquired about the time they spend on those activities now.

Tuckman Procrastination Scale: Besides their procrastination levels were assessed using the 16 item Tuckman Procrastination Scale during internet ban after the restoration of internet services. It is a self-report measure of the tendency to waste time, delay and intentionally put off something that should be done (Tuckman, 1991) [8]. It is a four-point scale ranging from 1 (that's not me for sure) to 4 (that's me for sure).

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Time spent on various activities before and after internet ban

Activities	Time spent in hours per day (Average)		After restoration of internet
	Before internet ban	During internet ban	
Sports	0.98	3.7	3.2
Study	3.16	4.9	4.5
Family	3.7	5.54	5.5
Religious	0.54	3.86	3.3
Social	0.9	3.92	3.1

As can As

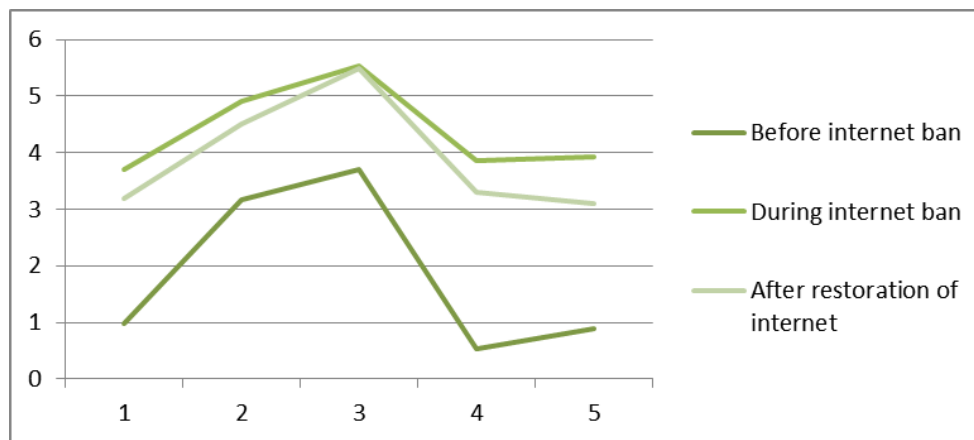


Fig 1: Line graph showing changes in time spent during three occasions (before internet ban, during internet ban and after the restoration of the internet).

As can be seen in fig 1 time spent in different activities shows a rapid increase from the period of no ban to the period of the ban. Again time spent in the period of internet restoration showed small decrease only.

Social activities here refers to activities that involved participation in preparing and providing food to the attendants of injured persons at hospitals, a collection of money and food for needy, etc.

Besides this, out of 50 participants, 40 participants have started to read newspapers, 19 have started to go for morning walks, 12 adolescents have begun to read books apart from the prescribed ones and 32 participants have begun to do all these activities.

As far as procrastination is concerned, a paired samples t-test was used.

Table 2: Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair1 PRN2 PRN1	52.42	50	5.68	.80
	21.36	50	11.77	1.66

Table 3: Paired Samples Test

Pair 1 PRN1-PRN2	Paired Differences			t	Df	Sig(2 tailed)
	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean			
	31.06	14.62	2.06	15.01	49	0.00

In the tables above PRN 1 and PRN2 represent procrastination during internet ban and procrastination after internet restoration respectively.

As can be seen in the tables above, there is a significant increase in procrastination levels from time 1 (M=21.36, SD=11.7,) to time 2[M=52.42, SD=5.68, t (49) =15.01, p= 0.00].

Also, eta square statistic of 0.82 was calculated which indicates a large size effect.

Discussion

Being cut off from the world, for almost four months, Kashmiri adolescents lessened their reliance on the internet to a greater extent. Meanwhile, they regained most of the virtues they had lost. Amidst problems created by this ban, opportunities for personal growth were found. Once again that thread of social support could be felt, once again there were long conversations among neighbors and once again children prefer to play with others instead of individual net surfing.

An important finding of the present study was that after the restoration of internet services in the valley, the time spent on activities didn't decrease much to the initial levels (fig 1). Therefore it can be said that during the ban, adolescents were able to gain that understanding of the value of the time they wasted on futile activities on the internet and thereby even after restoration of internet services in the valley, no drastic relapse was found in the utilization of time on productive activities.

Regarding procrastination, internet usage does play a significant role in its facilitation. The Internet provides the grounds for procrastination. As can be seen in results, procrastination levels increase drastically after internet restoration. The results are in line with those of Mohammadi *et al* who found a positive significant relationship between internet use and academic procrastination (Mohammadi, Tahiri and Hasaskhah, 2015) ^[6].

Thus it can be said that the need of the hour is to make adolescents understand the value of time and the productive age they are in. Psychologists can play a vital role in providing insight to the adolescents and their parents regarding the inappropriate use of the internet.

This study is not confined to the valley of Kashmir only; this is the reality of a young generation of present time. Internet should not be banned, but teens need to be banned from using this facility inappropriately. The Internet is a blessing for modern times but we have made this blessing a curse. Besides a digital life, a person should live a personal and social life as well.

Limitations and Recommendations

The study was carried out with only 50 adolescent boys from only three districts due to the prevailing conditions in the valley. Future researchers could be conducted on large samples from both genders.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

References

1. Ellis A, Knaus WJ. Overcoming procrastination (Rev. Ed.). NY: New American Library, 2002.
2. Pallant J. SPSS Survival Manual- a Step by Step Guide to Data Analysis using SPSS for Windows. Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2005.
3. Kawa MS, Shafi H. Evaluation of Internet Addiction and Psychological Distress among University Students. International Journal of Modern Social Sciences. 2015; 4(1):29-41.
4. Knaus WJ. Procrastination, blame, and change. Journal of Social Behavior and Personality. 2000; 15:153-166.
5. Lay C. At last, my research article on procrastination. Journal of Research in Personality. 1986; 20:474-495.
6. Mohammadi M, Tahirri A, Hassaskhah J. The Relationship between Internet Use and Academic Procrastination of EFL learners across years of study. International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature. 2015; 4(1):231-241.
7. Rehman A, Shafi H, Rizvi T. Internet Addiction and Psychological Well-being among Youth of Kashmir. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*. 2016; 3(3):2349-3429.
8. Tuckman BW. The development and concurrent validity of the Procrastination Scale. Educational and Psychological Measurement. 1991; 51:473-480.
9. Tuckman BW. Using tests as an incentive to motivate procrastinators to study. Journal of Experimental Education. 1997; 66:141-147.