OVERCOMING INTERNET ADDICTION

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ABSTRACT

Internet addiction or problematic internet use has made many people victims of it. There are many types of it namely for sex, social networking, net compulsion, playing games, info surfing and gambling. Although life is made simpler after coming of internet but has massive people become addicts of it.

KEYWORDS: Internet Addiction, Gambling, Net Compulsion

INTRODUCTION

Internet has changed the concept of hardship for many not only because of its one touch access to all information but also because of its greatest approach in making world a small town by connecting people worldwide. But this has also lead many to spend hours in front of computers forgetting people near them. Mainly adolescent age group suffers the causes of internet addiction.

Addiction

Addiction can be defined as a condition of being habitually occupied with or involved in something.

FARLEX

Internet Addiction

Internet addiction is defined as online-related, compulsive behaviour which comes in between with an individual’s normal living and causes severe stress on family, friends, loved ones, and one’s work environment.

Net Addiction (The Centre for Internet Addiction)

Internet addiction disorder also called as computer addiction refers to the problematic use of the Internet, including the

Internet addiction disorder also called as computer addiction refers to the problematic use of the Internet, including the various aspects of its technology, such as electronic mail (e- Internet addiction disorder also called as computer addiction refers to the mail) and the World Wide Web.

Encyclopedia for Mental Disorders

Causes of Internet Addiction

• Neurological Vulnerabilities

Addiction activates a combination of sites in the brain which leads to pleasure, called as the “reward
centre” or “pleasure pathway” of the brain. When activated, dopamine release is increased which leads to behavioural patterns to avoid withdrawal.

- **Biological Predisposition**
  This explains the genetic predisposition to addictive behaviours. Such individuals do not have an adequate number of dopamine and serotonin receptors, hence they differ from others who experiencing normal levels of pleasure in similar activities.

- **Mental Health Vulnerabilities**
  Studies have proved that psychiatric disorders such as depression, anxiety, hostility, interpersonal sensitivity, and psychoticism can be consequences of IAD.

**Risk Factors of Internet Addiction**

- Anxiety
- Depressed
- Social support

**Withdrawal Symptoms in Internet Addiction**

- Feelings of sadness
- Fatigue
- Problems sleeping
- Irritability

**TYPES OF INTERNET ADDICTION**

There are 5 types of internet addiction:-

- **Cybersex Addiction:** Addiction towards pornography via Internet which affects real-life relationships intimacy.
- **Cyber-Relationship Addiction:** Addiction to social networking site, texting/chatting which shifts the focus of the person from family and friends to a virtual based life.
- **Net Compulsions:** Compulsion towards online shopping, gaming or gambling causing crucial effects in personal, financial and job related areas.
- **Information Overload:** Compulsive use of internet, leading to decreased work productivity and lowered interaction with family and friends.

- **Computer Addiction:** Obsession of off-line computer games, such as Solitaire or Minesweeper,

**STEPS TO OVERCOME INTERNET ADDICTION**

- Acknowledge the problem
- Tapering your time
Overcoming Internet Addiction

- Identify and work on underlying issues
- Set Boundaries
- Change your routine
- Accountability
- Develop other interests
- Avoid recreational other online activities
- Psychological Approaches
  - Motivational interviewing (MI) is a client-centred method for enhancing positive motivations and learn new behavioural skills, using techniques such as open-ended questions, reflective listening, to help individuals express their concerns about change.
  - Reality therapy (RT) encourages individuals to choose to improve their lives and introduces alternative activities to the problematic behaviour.
  - Cognitive-behavioural therapy helps to explore the patient’s specific usage patterns and then introduce new schedules to interrupt previously established usage patterns. Clients are scheduled with activities which would help them to quit Internet completely.

COUNSELING/ PSYCHOTHERAPY

Long term Internet Addiction could be a risk factor for many other psychiatric disorders such as anxiety. It is advisable to approach a Counselor if such conditions occur. Counseling or psychotherapy is termed to be the best therapy which can help clients with Internet Addiction.

Counselling can help you to examine and change the thoughts and behaviours that may be fuelling ones internet dependence, as well as provide with healthier coping strategies and support. They can use cognitive behavioural therapy, which helps in changing an individual’s thoughts and behaviours surrounding a particular act or issue.

MANAGEMENT FOR INTERNET ADDICTION

Internet overuse associated with other major psychiatric disorders can only be treated by abstinence. This act can be practiced by the help of self groups such as Alcohol Anonymous. There are also other types of treatment:-

- Non-Psychological Approaches

  Antidepressant and antianxiety drugs helps to change the craving and brain activity in the ways similar to those observed in individuals with substance abuse or dependence.

  Positive signs

  - Not able to sleep
  - Obsessive thought about internet
EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS OF INTERNET ADDICTION

The following symptoms are typical of online addicts:

- Feelings of guilt
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Untruthfulness
- Euphoric feelings when in front of the computer
- Unable to keep schedules
- No sense of time
- Secluded behaviour
- Defensiveness
- Avoiding daily work
- Agitation
  - Miserable teenager
  - Socially inactive
  - Stress
  - Other addictions

Warning Signs of Internet Addiction

Failed attempts to limit the time spent online

Mood swings (restlessness, depression or irritability) when away from the Internet for longer than usual

Spending more and more time online

Problems at work due to excessive online use

Relationship problems due to excessive online use

Using the Internet to escape from difficult situations or difficult emotions

Feelings of sadness, Fatigue, Problems sleeping, Irritability

physical Symptoms of Internet Addiction

- Pain and numbness in hands and wrists
- Ophthalmological problems
- Back aches, severe headache which can deviate to neck
• Sleep disorders

• Noticed weight gain or weight loss

REFERENCES

