

Self concept and internet usage of adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The term 'adolescence' is commonly understood to define the period of life between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is the period of identity formation and is one of the important and vital stages of life which includes the ages between 10-19 years old and is the bridge for transition to the independency from the childhood dependency. Self-concept reflects how an adolescent evaluates himself or herself in domains, in which he or she considers success as important. Today, the Internet plays a vital role in the learning process of adolescents. It is assumed that the students in India feel more dependent on the Internet for their class assignments and for the latest information of their subject areas than conventional resources of information. Reported research revealed that internet use would lead to less social interaction and thus decrease the primary means of boosting self worth. The present study was conducted to know the relationship between self-concept and internet usage of adolescents. The sample of the study were selected purposively only those using internet and thus 324 adolescents (240 boys and 84 girls) those studying 7th, 8th and 9th standards in Govt. and Private school of Chittoor District constituted the sample. Tools used for the study were General Information Schedule, internet Usage Questionnaire (Anuradha, and Vani Prasanthi, 2014) and Self-Concept Rating Scale (Prathiba Deo, 2011). The results revealed that self-concept scores of adolescents increased with the increase of age. Comparatively girls have more self-concept than boys. Comparatively boys were using internet for more time (719.1 minutes per week) than girls (548.2 minutes per week). However, the sample adolescents did not differ significantly in their self-concept score as per their internet browsing time.

Key Words : Adolescents, Internet usage, Self concept

INTRODUCTION

WHO identifies 'adolescence' as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19 years. Adolescence is the period of life between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is the period of identity formation and is one of the important vital stages of life and is the bridge for transition to the independency from the childhood dependency. It represents one of the critical transitions in the life span and is characterized by a tremendous pace in growth and change that is second only to that of infancy. During this period, physical and brain functions undergo dramatic changes, which lead to quicker development of cognitive and social abilities and the intellectual, physical and all the capabilities are very high. Distinct changes in thinking, self-perception, and motivation occur during adolescence. These changes

may significantly influence a variety of developmental outcomes, including academic achievement, self-concept development, achievement motivation, and prototypes of physical activities. Self-concept refers to the totality of a complex, organized and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence. Self-concept also reflects how an adolescent evaluates himself or herself in domains in which he or she considers success important.

The Internet has emerged as the single most powerful vehicle for providing access to unlimited information. The Internet is an inseparable part of today's students educational system. The Internet is an integral part of many adolescents' lives. Ninety-one per cent of adolescents in the United States report occasional or daily Internet use (Gross, 2004). With the increase of easy accessibility of internet in India, the percentage of internet use has been increased in Indian context also. Reported research revealed that internet use would lead to less social interaction and thus decrease the primary means of boosting self-worth. With this background the present was conducted to know the relationship between internet usage of adolescents and self-concept of adolescent. The following are the objectives framed.

OBJECTIVES :

- To find out the internet browsing time of adolescents according to grade, gender, and type of school studied.
- To measure self-concept among adolescents according to grade, gender and type of school studied.
- To assess whether sample adolescents differ in self-concept according to their internet usage.

The following hypotheses were framed based on the above objectives

HYPOTHESES :

- Adolescents did not differ significantly in their self-concept scores according to gender, grade and type of school.
- Adolescents did not differ significantly in their internet browsing time according to gender, grade, and type of school.
- Heavy and light internet using adolescents did not differ significantly in their self-concept scores.

METHODOLOGY

The sample of the study were adolescent who were using internet, studying 7th, 8th and 9th standards in Chittoor district. Random and purposive sampling techniques were used to collect the data. In the first stage one private and one Govt. school were identified randomly from four towns of Chittoor district viz., Chittoor, Madanapalle, Srikalahasti and Tirupati. In the next stage 7th, 8th and 9th standard students were selected from each school who were using internet. Thus, 324 adolescents (240 boys and 84 girls) from four towns constituted the sample of the study.

Tools for the study :

- General Information Schedule
- Internet Usage Questionnaire (Anuradha and Vani Prasanthi, 2014)

- Self-Concept Rating Scale (Prathiba Deo, 2011)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data was pooled and subjected to suitable statistical analysis. The results are discussed in the following tables

Table 1 shows the distribution of adolescents using internet across grade, gender and type of school

| Sr. No. | Variables | Number | Per cent |
|---------|-----------------------|--------|----------|
| 1. | Gender | | |
| | Boys | 240 | 74.1 |
| | Girls | 84 | 25.9 |
| | Total | 324 | 100.0 |
| 2. | Grade | | |
| | 7 th Std | 61 | 18.8 |
| | 8 th Std | 117 | 36.1 |
| | 9 th Std | 146 | 45.1 |
| | Total | 324 | 100.0 |
| 3. | Type of school | | |
| | Govt. | 106 | 32.7 |
| | Private | 218 | 63.3 |
| | Total | 324 | 100.0 |

Table 1 shows the distribution of sample adolescents who were using internet across gender, grade and type of school. From the table it is clear that boys were spending more time in internet usage than girls. With regard to the grade, the usage of internet increased as the grades of the students increased. Comparatively students studying in private schools were spending more time in internet than students of govt. school.

The first objective of the study was :

To measure the internet browsing time of adolescents according to gender, grade, and type of school :

The amount of time spent on internet browsing, was collected using Internet Usage Questionnaire. The students were given diaries in which they were asked to record the time spent in internet browsing over a week period. The mean internet browsing time of total sample adolescents was 674.8 minutes per week (SD = 184.4).

Table 2 shows the mean internet usage time of the sample adolescents (n=324).

Table 2 shows the amount of time spent in internet browsing by the adolescents according to grade, gender and type of school studied. It divulges from the table that there was significant difference in internet browsing time of boys and girls, t-value was 7.990 (p<.000). Subrahmanyam *et al.* (2001) also reported that boys were heavier users of the Internet in comparison to girls during adolescence. Comparatively boys were spending more time in internet browsing (around 13 hours per week) than girls. Students studying in private schools were spending more time than students studying in Government schools. However, the difference was not significant with regard to grade

Table 2 : Amount of time spent in internet browsing by the adolescents According to gender, grade, and type of school studied and t/f values

| Sr. No. | Variables | Amount of time spent in internet browsing by the sample adolescents (Minutes per week) (n=324) | | t/f values |
|---------|---------------------------------|--|-------|------------|
| | | Mean | S.D | |
| 1. | Gender | | | |
| | Boys(n=240) | 719.1 | 163.3 | 7.990** |
| | Girls(n=80) | 548.2 | 183.2 | (p<.000) |
| 2. | Grade | | | |
| | 7 th Standard(n=61) | 658.6 | 189.9 | 2.182@ |
| | 8 th Standard(n=117) | 548.2 | 189.9 | (p<0.1) |
| | 9 th Standard(n=146) | 698.2 | 175.9 | |
| 3. | Type of school | | | |
| | Govt.(n=106) | 671.7 | 179.9 | 0.212@ |
| | Private(n=218) | 676.3 | 186.9 | (p<.832) |

**Significant

@ Not significant

and type of school studied.

Based on the amount of time spent in internet browsing the sample adolescents were divided into heavy and light internet users considering mean \pm SD. Table 3 shows distribution of sample according to usage of internet across gender, grade and type of school.

Table 3 : Distribution of sample according light and heavy internet usage

| Sr. No. | Variables | Type of Internet users | | | | Chi-square |
|---------|----------------------------------|------------------------|----------|-------------|----------|------------|
| | | Light users | | Heavy users | | |
| | | No. | Per cent | No. | Per cent | |
| 1. | Gender | | | | | |
| | Boys (n=240) | 94 | 57.3 | 146 | 91 | 48.558** |
| | Girls (n=80) | 70 | 42.7 | 14 | 9 | (p<.000) |
| 2. | Grades | | | | | |
| | 7 th Standard (n=61) | 34 | 21 | 27 | 17 | 53.952** |
| | 8 th Standard (n=117) | 59 | 36 | 58 | 36 | (p<.000) |
| | 9 th Standard (n=146) | 71 | 43 | 75 | 47 | |
| 3. | Type of school | | | | | |
| | Govt. (n=106) | 54 | 33 | 52 | 33 | 0.007@ |
| | Private (n=218) | 110 | 67 | 108 | 67 | (p<.935) |

**Significant

@Not significant

Table 3 shows the distribution of sample according to light and heavy internet usage. From the table it is clear that significant association was found between gender and internet usage. Majority of the boys (91 %) were heavy internet users than girls (9 %). With regard to grades and internet usage also significant association was found. Students who were studying 9th standard (47 %) were heavy internet users followed by 8th and 7th standard students. Comparatively students studying in private schools were heavy internet users (67 %) than Govt. school students (33 %) but no significant association was found.

The second objective of the study was-

To measure self-concept of adolescents according to grade, gender and type of school:

The sample adolescents were administered with Self-Concept Rating Scale developed by Pratibha Deo (2011). The mean self-concept score of sample adolescent was 118.8 (S.D. =28.66), which shows that the sample had above average self-concept scores.

Table 4 shows the distribution of sample according to Self-Concept Scores across gender, grade and type of school.

| Table 4 : Distribution of sample according to self-concept scores according to gender, grade and type of school | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------|----|------------|
| Sr. No. | Variables | Self-Concept Scores | | t/f values |
| | | Mean | SD | |
| 1. | Gender | | | |
| | Boys(n=240) | 116 | 30 | 2.763 |
| | Girls(n=80) | 126 | 23 | (p<.006) |
| 2. | Grades | | | |
| | 7 th Standard(n=61) | 113 | 29 | 1.305 |
| | 8 th Standard(n=117) | 121 | 29 | (p<.273) |
| | 9 th Standard(n=146) | 120 | 27 | |
| 3. | Type of school | | | |
| | Govt.(n=106) | 121 | 28 | 0.841 |
| | Private(n=218) | 118 | 28 | (p<.401) |

From Table 4 it is known that the sample adolescents differed significantly in self-concept scores according to gender, the t-values was 2.763 (p<.006). The self-concept scores of adolescents increased with the increase of age. Comparatively girls had more self-concept than boys. Children studying in private schools had more self-concept score than the government schools, but the difference was not significant regarding type of school and grades.

To test the significant difference between heavy and light internet using adolescents and self-concept scores t-test was conducted and results were presented in Table 5.

The third objective of the study was –

To find out the significant difference in self-concept of heavy and light internet using adolescents :

t-test was conducted and results are presented in Table 5.

From Table 5 it is clear that sample adolescents did not differ significantly in their self-concept score as per their internet browsing time. The t-value is 1.317 (p<0.834) which is not significant. Hence, parents and teachers have no need to worry about heavy internet users by adolescents as reported by McKenna and Bargh (2000) who opinioned that internet use would lead to less social

| Table 5 : Time spent in internet browsing by sample adolescents across self-concept scores and t-value | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|----------------|-----------------|---------|
| Sr. No. | Type of internet usage by the sample | Self-concept score | | | | t-value |
| | | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | |
| 1. | Light users | 164 | 120.92 | 28.064 | 2.191 | 1.317@ |
| 2. | Heavy users | 160 | 116.73 | 29.211 | 2.309 | P<0.834 |

interaction and thus decrease the primary means of boosting self-worth.

Conclusion :

- Comparatively boys are spending more time in using internet than girls.
- Significant difference was found in internet browsing time of boys and girls, t-value was 7.990 (p<.000)
- Students studying in private schools were spending more time than students studying in government schools.
- Significant association was found between gender and internet usage. Majority of the boys (91 %) were heavy internet users than girls (9 %).
- With regard to grades and internet usage also significant association was found. Students who were studying 9th standard (47 %) were heavy internet users followed by 8th and 7th standard students.
- Self-concept scores of adolescents increased with the increase of age. Comparatively girls have more self-concept than boys. Significant difference was found in self-concept scores according to gender, the t-values was 2.763 (p<.006).
- Adolescents did not differ significantly in their self-concept score as per their internet browsing time.

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