Internet Addiction, Loneliness, Depression Among Adolescent Boys and Girls of Kashmir

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Abstract: *Internet Addiction:* **A Psychological Dependence on the Internet and is characterized by an increasing investment of resources on Internet related activities, unpleasant feelings when offline, an increasing tolerance to the effects of being Online, and denial of the Problematic Behavior". (Kimberly Young, 1995)** *Loneliness:* **Young (1982) stated that loneliness was the absence or perceived absence of satisfying social relationships. Wheeler, Reis and Nezlek (1983) pointed out loneliness was strongly predicted by how meaningful one's interactions were, rather than just the amount of those interactions.** *Depression:* **Depression is defined as a mood that includes a feeling of hopelessness, helplessness, or worthlessness. Depression (major depressive disorder) is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act (DSM-5, 20).** *Objectives of the study:* **To Assess the level of Internet Addiction, Loneliness and Depression among the Adolescent of Kashmir. To measure the Correlation between the three variables used in the study. To compare the males and females on the three variables used in the study.** *Method:* **60 CBSE students from an English Medium school of Kashmir were chosen using purposive sampling. The sample consisted of equal number boys and girls who were matched on other variables like age, class and school. The questionnaires were distributed to the students with standard instructions and the scores were obtained for Internet Addiction, Depression and Loneliness.** *Questionnaires Used:* **Three questionnaires were used in the study, Internet Addiction Test developed by Young (1998). Beck Depression Scale developed by Beck and colleagues (1961). University of California Los Angeles Loneliness Scale (UCLA) developed by Russell and Colleagues** *Results:* **Our research results revealed that there is Significant Positive correlation between variables Loneliness and Depression among adolescent boys at 0.01 level. The result also revealed that there is significant positive correlation between variables of Loneliness and depression among Adolescent girls at 0.01 level. Findings indicate higher the Loneliness score higher will be score on Depression. Findings also suggest that there is significant positive correlation between internet addiction and Depression scores (significant at 0.05 level) among adolescent girls only. Higher the score on internet addiction higher will be the scores on Depression. The result also revealed that there is a positive correlation between variable Depression and Loneliness among Adolescent (both boys and girls) at 0.01 level. The result revealed that there is no significant difference on the basis of gender differences on these three variables (i.e., Internet Addiction, Loneliness, and Depression) in the adolescents of Kashmir.**

Keywords: **Internet addiction, Loneliness, Depression among adolescent boys and girls.**

1. Introduction

Internet Addiction:

The internet is a new tool that's evolving into a vital part of way of life everywhere around the globe (Nalwa & Anand, 2003) and its use has increased particularly among youngsters. In spite of the wide perceived benefits of this tool, psychologists and educators are conscious of the negative impacts of its use, particularly the over or misuse and therefore the connected physical and psychological issues (Greenfield, 2000).One of the foremost common of those issues is internet addiction (Murali & George, 2007; Shapira, Lessig, Goldsmith et al., 2003; Young, 1998). This drawback could be a raising development moving individuals with variable frequency round the world and has created negative impacts on the educational, relationship, financial, and occupational aspects of the many lives (Chou & Hsiao, 2000; Griffiths, 2000; Young, 1998). The term "internet addiction" was proposed by Dr. Ivan Goldberg for pathological compulsive internet use. Goldberg (1996) coined the term Internet Addiction Review of Literature 18 Disorder (IAD) and clarified further its definition as "the pathological, obsessive use of the Internet including tolerance and withdrawal as a standard for diagnosis". Young (1996) defined pathological internet use (PIU) as "an impulse control disorder which does not involve an intoxicant". Internet addiction is defined as "a psychological dependence on the internet and is characterized by an increasing investment of resources on internet related activities, unpleasant feelings when offline, an increasing tolerance to the effects of being online, and denial of the problematic behavior

Loneliness:

Loneliness is always a concern for psychologists and sociologists. There has been a widespread assumption stating that the more social interaction a person participates in, the less lonely he will be. In other words, a person's loneliness is decided by how much a person socializes with others. Peplau and Perlman (1979) defined loneliness as a subjective experience in which the individual's relationships were fewer or less satisfying than desired. Young (1982) stated that loneliness was the absence or perceived absence of satisfying social relationships. Williams (1983) said loneliness was not the same as aloneness or isolation but represented feelings of dissatisfaction with current interpersonal relationships.

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Wheeler, Reis and Nezlek (1983) pointed out loneliness was strongly predicted by how meaningful one's interactions were, rather than just the amount of those interactions. Researchers began to realize that loneliness was decided by two factors: the social interaction a person both desires and acquires. When a person's social interaction is inadequate, or more specifically, assumed by himself to be inadequate, so much so that it cannot meet his psychological need, feelings of loneliness will occur. The first dimension is reflected in discussion of positive and negative functions of loneliness. Despite the present and popular recognition that loneliness is an unpleasant and depressive experience, early German philosophers emphasized the positive side of the "Einsamkeit" (loneliness) experience. It can help human beings have self-reflection and realize the strength of spirit (de Jong-Gierveld & Raadschelders, 1982). Moustakas (1961) pointed out that loneliness was part of human nature and universal among individuals, "involving periods of self-confrontation and providing an avenue for self-growth" (Peplau & Goldston, 1984). The studies on the chronicity of loneliness reflect a third dimension, namely, time. It is a focus of the present study's discussion of loneliness. Peplau and Goldston (1984) pointed out that "the duration of loneliness over time is an important dimension", while "it has generally been overlooked" (Young, 1982).

Depression:

Recently, the mental health status of students has become a hot topic in public health, education, and research policy (Kernan, Bogart & Wheat, 2011). Depression is the most common psychological disorder among students. Researchers have reported depression and anxiety among students in several countries and in numerous disciplines, such as counseling, medicine, law, and psychology (Jungbluth, Macfarlane, Veach & Leroy, 2011). Depression is defined as a mood that includes a feeling of hopelessness, helplessness, or worthlessness. Depression (major depressive disorder) is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act (DSM-5, 2013). Fortunately, it is also treatable. Depression causes feelings of sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities once enjoyed. It can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems and can decrease a person's ability to function at work and at home (DSM-5, 2013). According to DSM-5 (2013) depression symptoms can vary from mild to severe and can include:

- Feeling sad or having a depressed mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed
- Changes in appetite — weight loss or gain unrelated to dieting
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Loss of energy or increased fatigue
- Increase in purposeless physical activity (e.g., hand-wringing or pacing) or slowed movements and speech (actions observable by others)
- Feeling worthless or guilty
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating or making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Symptoms must last at least two weeks for a diagnosis of depression.

2. Review of Literature

Reviewing of appropriate literature is very pertinent in pursuing any research process because it provides a firm footing and justifies the research work that we are supposed to undertake. By review of literature, we mean an overall and thorough description of previous studies that are related to a researcher's specific area of research. By reviewing the past literature of one's area it helps the present research by way of describing, summarizing, evaluating and clarifying it**.** Here is some pertinent research related to current study

Bengu Yucens Ahmet Uzer (2018), Conducted a study to the relationship between Internet Addiction, Social Anxiety and Depression. The Study has conducted on 390 undergraduate medical students of turkey. The Scales used were Leibowitz Social Anxiety Scale (LSAS) Barratt impulsivity Scale –ii (BSI). Beck Depression Inventory and Rosenberg Self –Esteem Scale (RSES).The results indicated that internet Addiction Group had notably higher scores on (LSAS, BDI,BSI) scales, and lower Scores on RSES. Thus, the study suggested that undergraduate medical students with internet addiction show higher social Anxiety, and more depressed than those with no internet Addiction.

Shahla Ostovar Hassan Aminpoor (2016), conducted a study to investigate the association of Internet Addiction with Stress, Depression and Loneliness. The sample comprised of 1052 Iranian Adolescents and young adults. The results indicated that Internet Addiction is a predicator of Stress Depression and loneliness and also indicated that internet Addiction is higher in Males as compared to females.

Vidya D. C. Geekha Mani (2018), conducted a study to assess internet addiction and Depression among medical college students of Karpaga Vinayaga institute of Medical Sciences Tamil Nadu. The Sample compressed of 600 students out of which 489 were Participants of the study. The results indicated that the students with internet addiction had four times a risk of developing depression when compared with students without Internet Addiction.

Payal Sharma et. al 2015, postulated a study to determine the prevalence of internet addiction and its co-relation with psychopathology in school going adolescents. In this very study semi structured preformed, young's internet addiction test and depression anxiety stress scale were administered on a sample of 603 adolescents studying in 8th to 10th std. In the final analysis 555 questionnaires were incorporated using descriptive statistics and correlation by spearman's method. The results revealed internet addiction of 3.96% in boys and 1.62% in girls from the Total sample over 15% showed extra-use of internet However, below internet addiction criteria. The stress scores were notably correlated with the internet use patterns in both of the sexes. In this study, however, no correlation was found between anxiety levels and internet use. In their study these researchers also found that there was no correlation between working status of both parent and internet. Furthermore, they found parental job status and unavailability can be impactful on

boredom and loneliness with few parental restrictions leading to increased internet use. In addition to this, they found higher depression and stress scores in those who were using the internet for longer hours. Finally, the researchers concluded that, whether depression, anxiety and stress lead to internet addiction or internet addiction causes further psychopathology is still a matter of debate and needs further research.

Vyjayanthi et al. (2014), put forward a study to evaluate gender differences in the prevalence and features of internet addiction among Indian college students. The sample consisted of 810 undergraduate students between the ages of 19 -21 years of age. The results of the study revealed the total prevalence of 8.8%. It was found that males were more addicted than females. Among males it was found to be 10.33% and among females it was 6.87%.

Arvind Sharma, et. al (2018), conducted a cross-sectional study from MP to measure Internet addiction & psychological well-being amongst college students. The total of 461 students' college students between age group of 17 and 25 years from (Jabalpur)Madhya Pradesh were selected through simple random sampling. The results of the study revealed that Internet addiction problem among college students is growing rapidly and Psychological Well Being is getting negatively affected by internet addiction. Further it was suggested by the researchers to frame various measures to prevent internet addiction.

Anku M. Saikia, et. al (2019), conducted a study on Internet addiction and its relationships with depression, anxiety, and stress in urban adolescents of Assam. The sample size of 440 students of higher secondary colleges/school was taken. This study provided a picture of how internet addiction is associated with depression, anxiety and stress.

Vidya D. C. Geekha Mani (2018), had conducted a study to access internet Addiction and Depression among medical college students of Karpaga Vinayaga Institute of medical Sciences in Tamil Nadu. He took 600 students as a sample out of 489 were participants of the research investigation. The outcome revealed that students with internet have 4 times more risk of developing depression in comparison of students without having addiction to internet.

Methodology is a logical way of explaining things scientifically and systematically, that aids researchers, investigators and scientists to get to the bottom of scientific and research problems. Methodology is a way of describing, explaining and justifying of methods used in the research process and it does not mean the methods themselves. When we talk about methodology employed in social sciences, for example, psychology, we mean methods used by psychologists, e.g., Survey method, case study method, observational method and the like. It is a highly organized intellectual human activity that is particularly used for collection, analyzing and explanation of data.

Rationale of the study:
- Internet has become an essential part of daily lives especially among adolescents and youth. The excessive use of internet by adolescents is becoming a cause of concern among research and health professionals. As the pathological overuse of internet

has been linked with social withdrawal, Loneliness and depression.
- The present study was undertaken to estimate the levels and relationship of Internet Addiction, Loneliness and Depression in adolescents of Kashmir as the social and political condition of the state is different from the rest of India and it affects the psyche of the adolescents the most.

Research Design:
The Ex-post Facto Research Design.

Objectives:
1. To study the Correlation between internet addiction, loneliness and depression.
2. To assess the difference between males and females on the three variables.
3. To assess the level of Internet addiction among adolescents of Kashmir.
4. To assess the level of Loneliness among adolescents of Kashmir.
5. To assess the level of Depression among adolescents of Kashmir.

Hypotheses:
1. H_{A1}: There will be a significant relationship between Internet Addiction, Loneliness, and Depression.
2. H_{A2}: There will be more Internet Addiction among boys as compared to girls.
3. H_{A3}: There will be significant difference in the levels of Loneliness among boys and girls of Kashmir.
4. H_{A4}: There will be significant difference in the levels of Depression among boys and girls of Kashmir.

Variables:
The variables of the study are as under
1. Internet Addiction
2. Loneliness
3. Depression

Sampling technique:
Purposive sampling method was used in the research. Purposive sampling is techniques where the subjects are selected, who are conveniently available to the researcher. A Total sample of 60 in which 30 boys and 30 girls between the age group of 14-17 years was taken from schools of Kashmir. This sample of adolescents was in grades 9th, & 11th.

Inclusion criteria:
The CBSE students who are permanent resident of Kashmir will be part of the sample.
School children studying in CBSC schools will be included.
Equal number of male and female students will be included.

Exclusion Criteria:
School children from other geographical locations of India except Kashmir
Schools registered under other boards other than CBSC.

Tools used for data collection:
To determine the valid and reliable results from the students the following questionnaires were used. Three scales were used namely Internet Addiction Scale, Loneliness Scale and Depression Scale.

Young's Internet Addiction Test (IAT):

The IAT developed by Young (1998), were used to measure internet addiction among the sample of the present study. The scale consists of 20 items associated with Internet use, including psychologic0al dependence, compulsive use, withdrawal symptoms and related problems of school, sleep, family and time management. For each item, a graded response can be selected (1 = "not at all" to 5 = "always"). The minimum score is 20, while the maximum is 100; the higher the score, the greater the level of Internet addiction. As suggested by Young, cut-off scores for the IAT were used to classify Internet users on the basis of the severity of their addictive behavior (Young, 1998). In the present study, the same cut-off scores were used: Minimal users (scores 20 to 39) – average online users who have complete control over their Internet use, Moderate users (scores 40 to 69) – those experiencing occasional or frequent problems due to Internet use, Excessive users (scores 70 to 100) – those who have significant problems caused by Internet use.

University of California Los Angeles Loneliness Scale (UCLA):

The University of California Los Angeles Loneliness Scale, developed by Russell and colleagues will be used to examine the individual's sense of loneliness. This questionnaire contains 20 items with a four-point-Likert scale (never = 1, rarely = 2, sometimes = 3, and always = 4), including 10 negative sentences, and 10 positive statements. In this instrument, items 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 15, 16, 19, and 20 were scored reversely. The minimum and maximum scores of this instrument are 20 and 80, respectively, and its mean score was 50. A score higher than the mean score is indicative of higher severity of loneliness. The reliability of this scale was reported as 0.89 by Russell et al. using test-retest reliability.

Beck Depression Inventory:

The Beck Depression Inventory will be used to assess depression in the study group. This scale was developed in 1961 by Beck and colleagues. The scale consists of 21 Likert-type questions. Each question contains four options, which are scored from 0 (none) to 3 (severe). The total score ranges from 0 to 63 points. Students with scores of 17 points or more are suspected of having depression.

Instructions for the Data collection:

Following instructions were giving at the time of collection of data.

"There are set of statements given below which are related to our day to day thinking and feeling. Your experiences, thoughts and feelings are important for this research. Your honest responses will be highly appreciated and this will be your contribution for the cause of research.

Statistical analysis:

SPSS was used for analysis. Basic statistics, Pearson's correlation and t - test was used for analysis.

3. Results and Analysis

This section is dedicated for presentation of result and their interpretation; the relevant statistical techniques have been applied through computerized programming (SPSS 23) in order to make the obtained data tangible. Before presenting the data

in tabulated form it is pertinent to mention here that results have been presented keeping in view the objectives of the study.

Table 1
Correlations between internet addiction, loneliness, depression among adolescent boys, N= 30

Adolescent Boys N= 30			
Variables	**Internet**	**Loneliness**	**Depression**
Internet	1	-.055	-.107
Loneliness	-.055	1	.657**
Depression	-.107	.657**	1

**Correlation is Significant at p <0.01
*Correlation is Significant at p <0.05

Table 1 shows that there is significant positive correlation between variables Loneliness and Depression among adolescent boys at 0.01 level. Findings indicate the higher the Loneliness score, higher the score on Depression will be there. Rest no significant relationship was found between any of other variables among adolescent boys.

Table 2
Correlations between internet addiction, loneliness, depression among adolescent girls

Adolescents Girls N= 30			
Variables	**Internet**	**Loneliness**	**Depression**
Internet	1	.133	.380*
Loneliness	.133	1	.515**
Depression	.380*	.515**	1

**Correlation is Significant at p <0.01
*Correlation is Significant at p <0.05

Table 2 shows that there is significant positive correlation between Loneliness and Depression among Adolescent girls and is significant at 0.01 level. Findings indicate higher the Loneliness score, higher will be the score on Depression. Findings also suggest that there is significant positive correlation between Internet Addiction and Depression scores (significant at 0.05 level) such that higher the scores on Internet addiction higher will be the scores on Depression.

Table 3
Correlations between internet addiction, loneliness, depression among adolescent boys and girls

Adolescent boys and girls, N= 60			
Variables	**Internet**	**Loneliness**	**Depression**
Internet	1	.015	.136
Loneliness	.015	1	.569**
Depression	.136	.569**	1

Table 3 shows the correlation between internet addiction, loneliness and depression among adolescents (both boys and girls). Pearson's correlation suggests that there was significant positive correlation between Depression and Loneliness among adolescents (Significant at 0.01 level) suggesting higher the values for depression will have higher the values for loneliness. No other significant correlation was found between any other variables.

Table 4 describes the gender differences on Internet Addiction, Loneliness, and Depression among adolescent boys and girls of Kashmir. On Internet Addiction scale the mean score among adolescent boys was found to be 41.40 with the Standard Deviation of 18.35. While as the Adolescent girls

Table 4
Comparison of internet addiction, loneliness, depression among adolescent boys and girls

Variables	Boys, N=30, Mean ±SD	Girls, N=30, Mean ± SD	t-value	Df	Sig
Internet	41.40±18.35	37.88 ± 19.90	.715	58	.478
Loneliness	42.66 ±9.06	46.30±10.95	1.40	58	.167
Depression	14.86 ± 9.33	15.20±8.51	.144	58	.886

Table 5
Describes levels of internet addiction among adolescent boys and girls

Variables	Adolescent Boys, N=30	Adolescent Girls, N=30	Chi-Square/Fisher	Df	P
Internet Addiction					
None	6 (20 %)	14 (46.66%)			
Mild	14 (46.66 %)	7 (23.33%)	5.592	3	.133
Moderate	9 (30 %)	8 (26.66%)			
Severe	1 (3 .33%)	1 (3.33%)			

Table 6
Levels on depression among adolescent boys and girls

Variables	Adolescent Boys, N=30	Adolescent Girls, N=30	Chi-Square/Fisher	Df	P
Depression					
1. Normal Ups & Downs	10 (33%)	12 (40%)			
2. Mild Mood Disturbance	6 (20%)	7 (23%)			
3. Borderline Clinical Depression	7 (23%)	4 (13%)	1.077	4	.898
4. Moderate Depression	5 (16%)	5 (16%)			
5. Severe Depression	2 (6%)	2 (6%)			

scored mean of 37.88 with Standard Deviation of 19.90. t-test showed no significant difference between the two groups on Internet Addiction scores (t = .715; sig =. 418). On Loneliness scale the mean score among adolescent boys was found to be 42.66 with the standard deviation of 9.06. While as the Adolescent females scored mean 46.30 with standard deviation of 10.95. Statistical test showed no significant difference between the two groups on Loneliness (t= 1.400; Sig =.167) Similarly, on Depression scale the mean score among adolescent boys was found to be 14.86 with the standard deviation of 9.33. While as the Adolescent girls scored mean of 15.20 with standard Deviation of 8.51. Students t-test showed no significant difference between the two groups on Depression score (t-test = .144; Sig = .886).

Table 5 describes different levels of internet addiction among adolescent boys and girls. Chi-square test suggests that there has no significant difference between the groups with respect to their levels on internet addiction. Though, around 46% of adolescent boys had Mild level of internet addiction while as 30% had Moderate level and only three percent had severe level of internet addiction. With respect to adolescent girls, around 23% had Mild, around 26% had Moderate while as 3% had severe level of internet addiction. The None category reflects the biggest gender difference. As 20% boys fall in the not addicted category 80% are in the addicted category whereas approximately 47% girls are not addicted and 53% are addicted. This shows that 80% boys are addicted as compared to 53% girls.

Table 6 shows that there is no significance difference in levels of depression among Adolescent Boys and Girls. Majority of Cases (23%) among adolescent girls were having Mild Mood Disturbance. While as 13 percent among them were having Borderline Clinical Depression and 16% were reported to have Moderate level of depression. Similarly, six percent i.e., two of the adolescent girls were having Severe level of Depression. With respect to Boys, twenty percent had mild

mood disturbances, 23% had Borderline Clinical Depression, 16% had Moderate Depression while as two participants among boys had Severe level of Depression. Chi-Square test suggests that the two groups didn't differ with respect to different levels of depression.
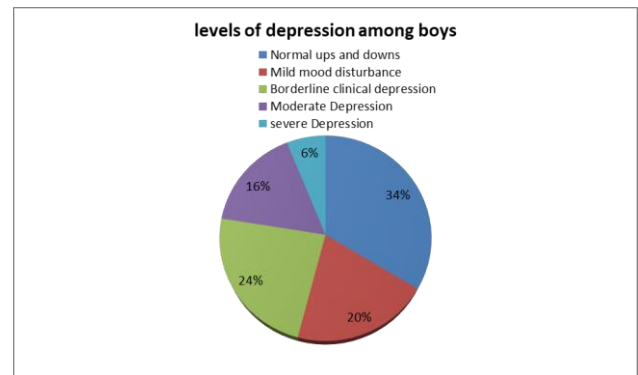
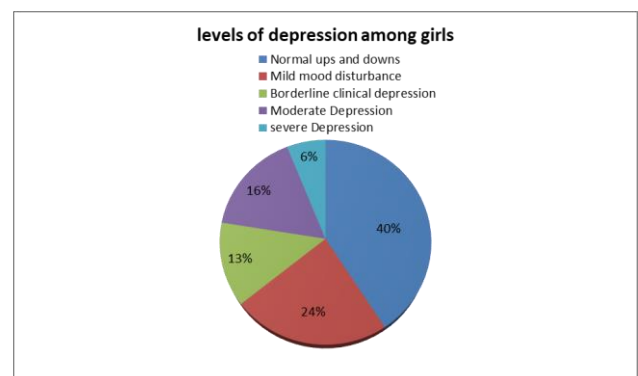

Fig. 1. Levels of depression among adolescent boys

Fig. 2. Levels of depression among adolescent girls

Table 7 describes the median score on loneliness scale among adolescents. Loneliness measure gets values as continuous scale and authors of the scale had not made distinctions with respect to severity levels. Thus, median score was calculated on

Table 7
Median score on loneliness scale among adolescent boys and girls

Percentiles	Loneliness Score
25	37.00
50	43.50
75	50.00

Table 8
Median scores on loneliness scale among adolescents

	Adolescent Boys N=30	Adolescent Girls N=30	Chi-Square/Fisher	Df	P
Loneliness					
Less than 50 Percentile	16(53.33 %)	12 (40 %)	1.071	1	.301
More than 50 Percentile	14 (46.66%)	18 (60%)			

loneliness scale in order to divide the group into two, one with scores higher than the median and other group with scores lower than the median. Further with the help of chi-square, difference between the groups was sought in the table 8.
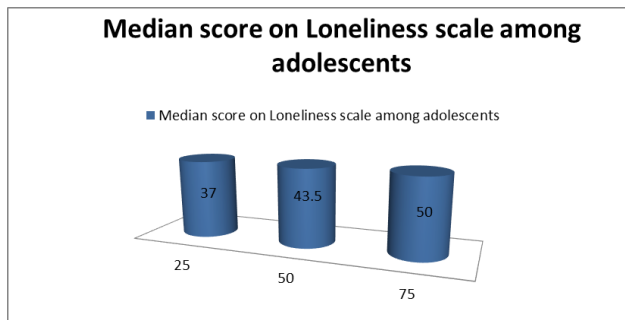

Fig. 3.　Median score on loneliness scale among adolescents

Table 8 describes median scores on loneliness scale among adolescents. With the median score of 43.50 the groups were divided into two. Further adolescents' boys and girls with scores less than median and more than median were compared with the help of Chi-square. Findings suggest that around 53% of boys score more than fifty percentile on Loneliness scale while as around 46% had scored more than fifty percentile. Forty percent of girls score less than fifty percentile on loneliness scale while as 60% score higher than 50 percentile on the scale. Chi-square suggests that there is no significant difference between the boys and girls with respect to scores on loneliness scale.

A.　Summary

- Among adolescent boys, significant positive correlation was found between depression and loneliness.
- Among adolescent girls, significant positive correlation was found between Depression and Internet addiction.
- Among adolescent girls, Significant positive correlation was found between Loneliness and Depression.
- Significant positive correlation was found between Depression and Loneliness among adolescents (boys and girls together).
- No significant difference was found between adolescent boys and girls with respect to Internet Addiction, Loneliness and Depression.
- No significant difference was found between adolescent boys and girls with respect to levels of internet addiction.
- No significant difference was found between adolescent boys and girls with respect to levels of Depression.
- No significant difference was found between adolescent boys and girls with respect to levels of Loneliness.

4. Conclusion

The present study found that there was no significant difference between adolescent boys and girls on Internet addiction, depression and loneliness and their levels. Further research found that Loneliness and depression was found to be positively correlated among adolescent boys and girls and when boys and girls were taken together but an additional correlation was found between depression and internet addiction among adolescent girls only.

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