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INTERNET ADDICTION BEHAVIORS AS PREDICTORS OF FUNCTIONAL IMPAIRMENT AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS: A BASIS FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAM

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Abstract:

The internet was originally used for military purposes to facilitate communication. However, commercialization leads to worldwide internet use. The demand for the internet is increasing and numerous studies have been published regarding the pathological use of the internet or internet addiction. This study aimed to investigate internet addiction as a predictor of functional impairment in young adults. A total of 257 young adults participated and filled out a self-report questionnaire including Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and Weiss Functional Impairment Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIRS-S). There were 161 (62.6%) females and 96 (37.4%) males. The participants' ages range were from 18 years old to 24 years old (M=20.25, SD= 2.08). Pearson correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between Internet Addiction (Salience, Excessive Use, Neglect Work, Anticipation, Lack of Control, and Neglect Social Life) and Functional Impairment (Family, Work, School, Life Skills, Self-Concept, Social, and Risky Activities). The result shows that there were significant positive correlations among variables at N=257, $p < .05$ except between self-concept and neglect social life. Multiple regression analyses were also utilized to find predictors of Functional Impairment (FI) in terms of Internet Addiction (IA). Regression results suggest that IA variables namely: Salience, Neglect Work, Lack of Control, and Neglect Social Life are possible predictors of FI in the Family, Work, School, Self-Concept, Social and Risk. However, no evidence was found in excessive use and anticipation of using the internet to functional impairment. In addition, the result has shown that life skills are not associated with any of the predictors.

Keywords: Internet addiction, Functional impairments, Young adult

1. INTRODUCTION

The Internet is the global system of interconnected computer networks that use the Internet Protocol Suite (TCP/IP) to link devices worldwide. The internet was established in the early 1960's by the U.S Department of Defense primarily for military purposes to build robust, fault-tolerant communication via computer networks. Private funding led to worldwide participation in the development of new networking technologies. This commercialization of internet paves way to public access not only for academic and military but especially for communication (Peter, 2004). The internet use increases rapidly driven by online information, business, entertainment and social networking.

Easier access to computers and the modernization of countries around the world has given the people the opportunity to use internet. As of December 31, 2020 Internet, World Stats reported that Asia has the biggest internet users in the world with 53.6% followed by Europe (14.4%), Africa (11.7 %), Latin America/Caribbean (9.4%), North America (6.6%), Middle East (3.7%) and Oceania/Australia (0.6%). The world's total internet users are 5,053,911,722 which comprise the 64.2% of the world's population of 7,875, 765,584. In the Philippines, internet growth continues to increase despite of high rate and slow connection compared to other countries wherein 73,000,000,000 or 64% of the population in the country people is using the internet as of January 2020. Also, data shows that the median age of internet user in the Philippines is 24, or the millennials who grew up as digital natives. Filipinos approximately use internet every day on mobile for about 3.2 hours while 5.2 hours spent on desktop or tablet (Rappler, 2016).

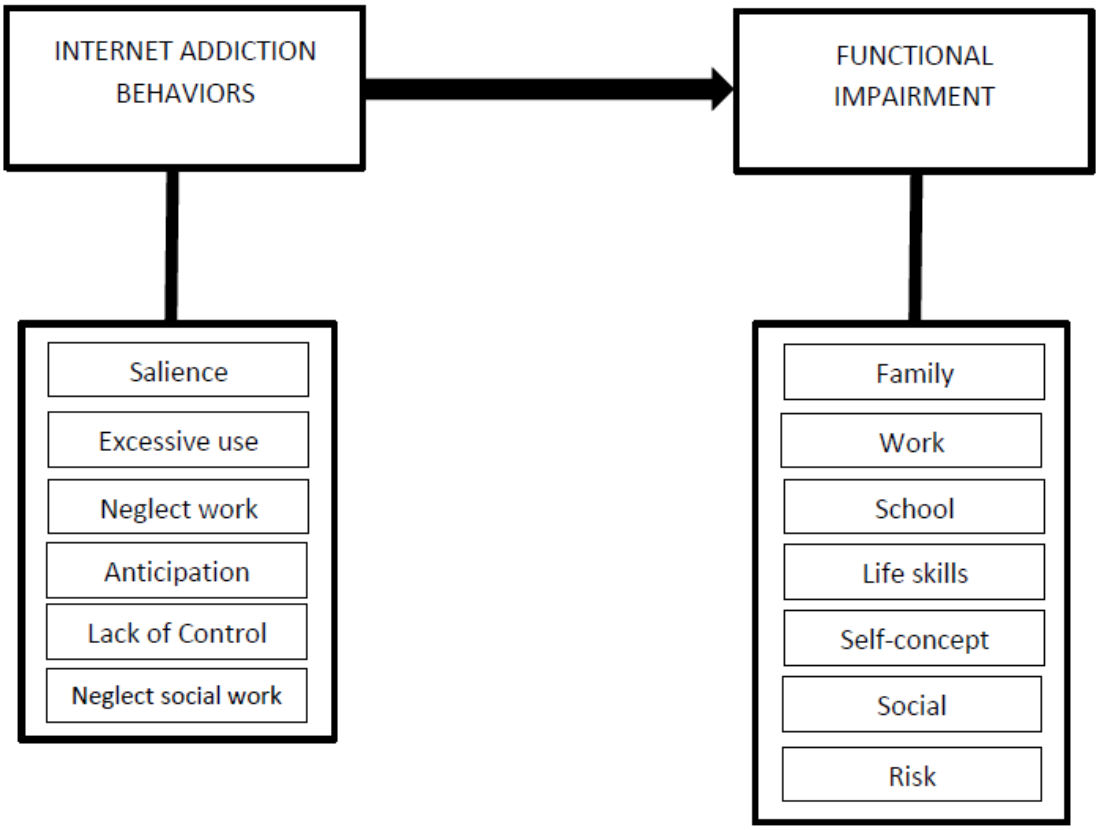
Use of internet inevitably contributes to our daily life. It has provided the internet users new sources of communication, information and entertainment. As it changes our lifestyles, we also become more and more reliant to the internet. Using internet can be seen now as an easy access to satisfy human needs such as need for interaction, need to compete with others, belongingness or affiliation, approval, respect and recognition. Although there are many advantages in using the internet, there are indications of an addiction risk that may carry behavioral problems. Some people become overly attached to the use of the internet that often results to the individual's dysfunction. One of the most pressing behavioral problems of internet addiction is the inability of people to control their internet use that can eventually lead to psychological, social, academic, and occupational problems. In the literature, overuse of internet is referred to as internet addiction (Young, 1998), pathological use (Davis, 2001), problematic internet use (Caplan, 2002), internet dependency (Wang, 2001), or excessive internet use (Yang, et al.,2005). Individuals suffering from internet addiction spend less time with real people in their lives, attempt to hide the time they spent online, may alter their identities, and may create a world of their own. These activities may result strain in relationships such as distrust and arguments. In addition, low self-esteem, fear of disapproval, feeling of inadequacy and isolation that associated with internet addiction may lead to clinical problems such as anxiety and depression.

Underlying internet addiction is the anonymity of electronic transactions that provide a virtual context that cultivates a subjective escape from emotional difficulties (e.g., stress, depression, anxiety) or problematic situations or personal hardships (e.g., job burnout, academic troubles, sudden unemployment, marital discord). When online addicts are forced to go without the internet, they feel a sense of withdrawal with racing thoughts of "I must have it," "I can't go without it," or "I need it." Because addictions serve a useful purpose to the addict, the attachment or sensation may grow to such proportions that it damages a person's life. (Young, 2004). Several studies of the potential addictive properties of the internet were published (Cash, et al., 2012; Li, et al., 2015; Miyazaki et al., 2018). Moreover, other studies proved that internet addiction predicts functional impairment of the user. There are evidence that shows the correlation of internet addiction to impairments in daily functioning, school performance and academic failure, interpersonal and family relationships (Head & Eisenberg, 2011; Wilmer, et al., 2017; Yebowah, 2018), professional functioning (Pooler, 2012),risky activities (Tsitsika et al. 2011), social isolation (Dalbudak et al. 2013; Luss, et al., 2014), low self-esteem and social anxiety (Bahrainian, et al., 2014),introversion, aggression, and substance abuse (Senormanci et al. 2014).

Internet addiction can also be described as a disorder in which individual's inability to control his or her use of internet causes marked distress and/or functional impairment (Tripathi, 2017). In addition, internet addiction has generally been considered to be identified based on the criteria for both substance dependence and pathological gambling (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), such as using the internet in a manner similar to a maladaptive preoccupation, using the internet for a longer duration than intended; and being preoccupied with the use of the internet, causing significant problems, including academic/professional, social and relationship problems.

With this study, it is aimed to (i) examine the correlation between internet addiction and functional impairment and (ii) identify variables in internet addiction that predicts functional impairment. The result may contribute to the further understanding of psychological problems concerning internet addiction and functional impairment of the individual.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework in the study. In this figure, variables are group into two namely as independent and dependent variables.



It can be seen in figure (1) that independent variables consist of salience, excessive use, neglect work, anticipation, lack of control, and neglect of social life or the internet addiction behaviors. These factors as independent variables serve as a predictor of functional impairment in family, work, school, life skills, self-concept, social, and risk which are the dependent variables. This means that the existence of these variables depends on the presence and condition of the aforementioned independent variables.

2. Material and Methods

2.1 Design and Population

The research is a quantitative study that utilized a predictive, cross-sectional type design. A total of 300 respondents have participated. However, 43 of the respondents were excluded (did not complete the survey) leaving a total of 257 respondents. Participants in this study were female and male young adults age 18-24 years old (M=20.24, SD=2.08). The researcher obtained participants from several schools and internet shops in Bulacan, Philippines. Respondents were recruited by personally asking permission to answer self-report questionnaires. The researcher had chosen the young adults considering that this is the age of transition to adulthood. This transition is a very crucial time since a person needs to be comfortable in their ability to function in their life at home, school, work, and in public. Functionality in a variety of situations of a person's daily living is very important for the overall quality of life.

Table 1 provides a socio-demographic profile of the respondents who participated in the study. The sample was dominated by female respondents with 62.6% and the majority of respondents fell in the age of 18 years old to 19 years old with a combined 49% of the sample population.

Table 1

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Age group	Female		Male		Total
	N	%	*N*	%	
18	44	17.1	19	7.4	63
19	40	15.6	22	8.6	62
20	21	8.2	16	6.2	37
21	12	4.7	7	2.7	19
22	10	3.8	13	5.1	23

23	14	5.4	6	2.3	20
24	20	7.8	13	5.1	33

Note: The percentage in each column refer to the proportion of individuals from each gender to each age bracket.

2.2 Measures

2.2.1 Young's Internet Addiction Test (IAT). This was designed to evaluate the respondents' level of internet addiction. The 20-item questionnaire measures characteristics and behaviors associated with compulsive use of the internet that includes compulsivity, escapism, and dependency. Questions also assess problems related to addictive use in personal, occupational, and social functioning. Questions are randomized and each statement is weighted along a Likert-scale continuum that ranges from 0 = less extreme behavior to 5 = most extreme behavior for each item.

2.2.1.1 Salience. High ratings in this area indicate a preoccupation with the Internet, hides the behavior from others and may display a loss of interest in other activities and/or relationships only to prefer more solitary time online. High ratings also suggest that the respondent uses the Internet as a form of mental escape from distributing thoughts. Example questions to assess salience are, "How often do you fear that life without the Internet would be boring, empty, and joyless?" or "How often do you choose to spend more time online over going out with others?"

2.2.1.2 Excessive Use. Indicate that the respondent engages in excessive online behavior and compulsive usage, and is intermittently unable to control time online that he or she hides from others. Questions like "How often do you find that you stay online longer than you intended?" or "How often do you try to hide how long you've been online?" assessed how the respondent feels without the internet for an extended length of time.

2.2.1.3 Neglect Work. Job or school performance and productivity are most likely compromised due to the amount of time spent online and the respondent may become defensive or secretive about the time spent online. This area is examined thru questions to determine how the respondent more likely to view the Internet as a necessary appliance akin to the television, microwave, or telephone. "How often do you become defensive or secretive when anyone asks you what you do online? or "How often does your job or performance or productivity suffer because of the Internet"? are examples.

2.2.1.4. Anticipation. "How often do you check your email before something else that you need to do?" or "How often do you find yourself anticipating when you will go online again?" are examples of questions to know what the respondent most likely thinks about being online when not at the computer and feels compelled to use the Internet when offline.

2.2.1.5 Lack of Control. High ratings with this item indicate that the respondent has trouble managing his or her online time, frequently stays online longer than intended, and others may complain about the amount of time he or she spends online. Example questions are "How often do you find yourself saying "just a few more minutes" when online?" or "How often do you try to cut down the amount of time you spend online and fail?"

2.2.1.6. Neglect Social Life. The respondent who scores high in this area indicates the respondent to most likely utilize online relationships to cope with situational problems and/or to reduce mental tension and stress. Questions like, "How often do you prefer the excitement of the Internet to intimacy with your partner?" and "How often do you form new relationships with fellow online users?" are examples to evaluate respondent who uses the internet to establish social connections that may be missing in his or her life.

The reliability (Table 2) of Internet Addiction Test (IAT) is 0.93 in Cronbach's alpha (M=38.88 and SD= 18.53) indicating a very high internal consistency.

Table 2

Descriptive results and reliability of Internet Addiction Test (IAT)

	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha
IAT	38.88	18.53	0.93

2.2.2 Weiss Functional Impairment Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIR-S). A 68-Likert scale statements of which the scale points were as follows: 0 = Never or not at all, 1 = Sometimes or somewhat, 2 = Often or much, 3 = Very often or very much, and N/A = Not Applicable. This instrument allows a clinician to obtain a pre-and post-assessment of the patient's areas of difficulty and evaluates how an individual can function. The WFIR-S are framed to assess not only symptoms but also to what degree an individual's behavior or emotional problems have impacted various clinically relevant domains of functioning.

2.2.2.1 Family. An eight-item scale that describes the relationship with family or spouse/partner. It is about the state and nature of the relationship at home.

2.2.2.2 Work and School. A 21-item scale that examines the impairment in learning and occupational functioning. It is the productivity and ability to maintain demands in school and employment.

2.2.2.3. Life Skills. An eleven-item scale that measures daily activities. This is the ability to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.
2.2.2.4 Self-Concept. A five-item scale that describes feeling about self. It is the emotional competence related to self-definition and self-understanding.
2.2.2.5 Social. A nine-item scale that measures the social activities. It is the social interactions and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.
2.2.2.6 Risk. A 14-item scale that examines activities that may be risky for the individual. It is the behavior that has potentially harmful consequences to self and others.

Weiss Functional Impairment Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIRS-S) result in Table 3 showed that high mean score was obtained from the subscale of Life Skills (*M*=9.97, *SD*=6.23) while the lowest mean score was from Risk subscale (*M*=3.89, *SD*=6.20). Results also showed Cronbach's alpha for the subscales of Risk = .94, Work and Social = .91, School and Self-Concept = .90, Life skills = .86 and Family = .81 indicating very high reliability for each sub scales.

Table 3

Descriptive results and reliability of Weiss Functional Impairment Rating Scales (WFIRS-S)

	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha
Family	7.40	4.72	0.81
Work	5.49	6.38	0.91
School	7.98	5.92	0.90
Like Skills	9.97	6.23	0.86
Self-Concept	4.73	3.73	0.90
Social	5.64	5.17	0.91
Risk	3.89	6.20	0.94

2.3 Statistical Treatment.

First, descriptive results were conducted to measure the reliability of the instruments. Then, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis was used to determine the relationship between Internet Addiction (IA) and Functional Impairment (FI) variables. Next, predictors of FI were determined by conducting multiple regression analysis with family, work, school, life skills, self-concept, social, and risk as dependent variables while salience, excessive use, neglect work, anticipation, lack of control, and neglect social life served as the independent variables.

In all analyses, the *p*-value of 0.05 was used as the decision rule unless otherwise noted. The statistical program used was Statistica 7.0 software.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Correlation Analysis

Cross-sectional Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated correlation between IA and FI (Table 4). Significant positive relationships were found in family, work, school, life skills, self-concept, social, risk, salience, excessive use, neglect work, anticipation, lack of control and neglect social life with the exception of correlation between neglect social life and self-concept (r = 0.09 at *p* = ns).

Table 4

Correlations between Internet Addiction and functional impairment variables

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Family	1.00												
2	Work	0.35**	1.00											
3	School	0.41**	0.34**	1.00										
4	Life Skills	0.47**	0.32**	0.66**	1.00									
5	Self-Concept	0.35**	0.25**	0.51**	0.68**	1.00								
6	Social	0.39**	0.44**	0.51**	0.62**	0.55**	1.00							
7	Risk	0.37**	0.50**	0.34**	0.44**	0.25**	0.55**	1.00						
8	Salience	0.36**	0.20**	0.30**	0.45**	0.33**	0.40**	0.31**	1.00					
9	Excessive Use	0.32**	0.17**	0.21**	0.46**	0.36**	0.32**	0.22**	0.78**	1.00				
10	Neglect Work	0.37**	0.31**	0.32**	0.41**	0.28**	0.33**	0.35**	0.67**	0.63**	1.00			
11	Anticipation	0.29**	0.15*	0.25**	0.39**	0.28**	0.27**	0.21**	0.73**	0.67**	0.60**	1.00		
12	Lack of Control	0.36**	0.19**	0.27**	0.45**	0.39**	0.33**	0.29**	0.75**	0.78**	0.68**	0.68**	1.00	
13	Neglect Social Life	0.27**	0.16*	0.12*	0.24**	0.09	0.16*	0.27**	0.46**	0.49**	0.45**	0.42**	0.48**	1.00

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 (2-tailed)

3.2 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to find predictors of FI (family, work, school, life skills, self-concept, social, and risk) in terms of IA (salience, excessive use, neglect work, anticipation, lack of control, and neglect social life.)

Table 5

Multiple regression coefficients showing the association between variables of predictor (Neglect Work) and functional impairment (Family) as measured by the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and Weiss Functional Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIRS)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	Std.Error	Beta	*t*	*p*	R^2
Family	Neglect Work	0 .104	0.046	0.190	2.246	0.026	0.173

Note: Coefficients are significant at $p < .05$

The results in Table 5 showed that neglect work is a predictor of impairment in the family (β=0.104 at $p < 0.05$). It means that function in the family had a significant association with neglect of work. Salience, lack of control, excessive use, anticipation, and neglect social life however shows no relationship with the family function of the respondents.

Table 6

Multiple regression coefficients showing the association between variables of predictor (Neglect Work) and functional impairment (Work) as measured by the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and Weiss Functional Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIRS)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	Std.Error	Beta	*t*	*p*	R^2
Work	Neglect Work	0.183	0.048	0.337	3.819	0.000	0.102

Note: Coefficients are significant at $p < .05$

It is shown in Table 6 that neglect work is also a predictor of impairment in work (β=0.104 at $p < 0.05$). The data above shows that individual failure to perform job or duty had associated with work quality but not on salience, lack of control, excessive use, anticipation, and neglect social life.

Table 7

Multiple regression coefficients showing the association between variables of predictor (Neglect Work) and functional impairment (School) as measured by the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and Weiss Functional Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIRS)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	Std.Error	Beta	*t*	*p*	R^2
School	Neglect Work	0.122	0.048	0.218	2.509	0.013	0.126

Note: Coefficients are significant at $p < .05$

Table 7 presented how neglect work predicts functional impairment in school (β=0.122 at $p < 0.05$). Disregarding job or responsibility has shown significant association with academic performance. Nonetheless, salience,

lack of control, excessive use, anticipation, and neglect social life has shown no relationship with school functioning of the participants.

Table 8

Multiple regression coefficients showing the association between variables of predictor (Salience) and functional impairment (Social) as measured by the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and Weiss Functional Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIRS)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	Std.Error	Beta	*t*	*p*	R^2
Social	Salience	0.198	0.058	0.366	3.402	0.001	0.172

Note: Coefficients are significant at $p < .05$

Data presented in Table 8 has shown salience as a predictor of social impairment (β=0.122 at $p < 0.05$). Internet users who spent solitary time online and hides their activities are associated with their interaction with others. Lack of control, excessive use, neglect work, anticipation and neglect social life are not correlated with functional impairment in social life.

Table 9

Multiple regression coefficients showing the association between variables of predictor (Lack of Control) and functional impairment (Self-concept) as measured by the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and Weiss Functional Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIRS)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	Std.Error	Beta	*t*	*p*	R^2
Self-Concept	Lack of Control	0.181	0.066	0.286	2.749	0.006	0.159

Note: Coefficients are significant at $p < .05$

As presented in Table 9, lack of control is a predictor of self-concept (β=0.181 at $p < 0.05$). Respondents who lack in managing their time online and stay longer than intended shows significant relationship in view of one self. In contrast, salience, excessive use, anticipation, and neglect work were not associated with self-concept.

Table 10

Multiple regression coefficients showing the association between variables of predictor (Salience and Neglect Social Life) and functional impairment (Risk) as measured by the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and Weiss Functional Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIRS)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	β	Std.Error	Beta	*t*	*p*	R^2
Risk	Salience	0.101	0.450	0.242	2.230	0.027	
.	Neglect Social Life	0.052	0.025	0.139	2.037	0.043	0.164

Note: Coefficients are significant at $p < .05$

It is shown in Table 10 that salience (β=0.101 at $p < 0.05$) and neglect social life (β=0.052 at $p < 0.05$), are predictors of risk in functional impairment. Hiding online activities from others and neglecting relationship with other people implies association with risk or harmful behavior while lack of control, excessive use and anticipation shown no evidence of correlation.

4. DISCUSSION

As early as 1995, Dr. Kimberly Young, a professor at St. Bonaventure University and director of the Center of Internet Addiction Recovery associated addictive use of the internet to impairment in psychological well-being, peer and family interactions, and academic performance. Many researchers studied how the internet impacts the life of users in terms of prevalence, length of time using the internet, the application used, sites visited, and personality traits, among others as risk factors. To my knowledge, this study was the first to compare internet addiction to functional impairment using the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and Weiss Functional Impairment Rating Scales Self-Report (WFIR-S). The IAT measures the presence and severity of internet dependency of the users. It also assesses psychological functioning exhibited by the person in terms of salience, excessive use, neglect of work, anticipation, lack of control, and neglect social life. On the other hand, Weiss Functional Impairment Rating Scale Self-report (WFIRS-S) evaluates how an individual is able to function. WFIRS-S also assesses the impact of behavioral problems on domains of functioning such as family, work, school, life skills, self-concept, social, and risk. These two questionnaires have been psychometrically validated and both showed high internal reliability of > .80 suggesting that both tests may effectively quantify the level of functional impairment in relevant domains and addiction to the internet.

The goals of this study were to find the relationship and find predictors between variables of IAT and WFIRS. Significant associations were found in salience, excessive use, neglect of work, anticipation, lack of control, neglect social life, family, work, school, life skills, self-concept, social and risk but not between self-concept and social. It is possible that self-concept may not influence the internet user in making friends or getting along with people.

In this study, the expected relationships among variables of WFIRS-S and IAT as predictors were established. First, salience is a predictor of functional impairment in the area of social life and risky activities. High salience indicates that the person feels preoccupied with the internet, hides their activities online, and may display a loss of internet in other activities involving other people. Moreover, salience suggests respondents use the internet as a mental escape and feel that life without the internet would be lonely. Salience may affect the relationship with other people since they prefer more solitary time online. They may avoid social activities that involve interaction with others. Some researchers also found the relationship between internet addiction and social impairment (Dulbudak, et al., 2013a; Luss, et al., 2014). Salience may also result to risk especially those hiding their activities online and they may be vulnerable to the wrong information on the internet (Tsitsika, et al., 2011). Various studies found that internet addiction is associated with risky activities (Tsitsika et.al.2011; Senormanci et al. 2014).

Second, the study shows that neglect work may cause problems in the family relationship, school achievement, and job or work performance. Conflict with family members may arise due to unfulfilled duties such as doing household chores. Addiction to the internet can also result in consequences in school functioning. For example, a student who obsessively chats with friends may disregard study time resulting in poor academic performance. Job or work performance may likely compromise due to the amount of time spent on the internet. Employee's internet abuse translates into billions in lost revenue for employers and lost productivity. Previous studies show the correlation of internet use to conflict with relatives, lower grades, and work difficulties (Pooler, 2012).

Third, the result also indicated positive significant relationships between lack of control and self-concept. Lack of control implies that the respondent has difficulty managing their time spent online resulting to stay online longer than intended. Self-concept is a general term used to refer to how someone perceives themselves. Lack of control may affect self-concept since more time spent online, more information may be conveyed by the internet that possibly affects the cognition and thinking of the person to the self. This is consistent with the findings that indicate a significant relationship between internet addiction and self-concept (Agarwal et.al. 2014).

Fourth, neglect social life appeared to predict functional impairment by doing risky activities. Neglect social life indicates that respondent most likely utilizes online relationships or forms new relationships with fellow online users to cope with mental tension and stress. There was a study that links social anxiety to increased preference for interaction on the internet instead of face-to-face interaction (Bahrainian, et al., 2014). An individual may also prefer sex-related activities online without the fear of negative consequences (Suler, 2004). However, people online may prove very dangerous since one cannot verify the reality of a person, who may probably give all kinds of wrong information. They may form an intimate relationship with these people and may meet them personally without knowing their true intention. Another risk is the cybercriminals who may extract personal information such as an address, phone numbers, or anything else so they can harass the victim. This research contradicted the study that the internet may offer a relatively safe place to have social interaction (Ybarra, Alexander, & Mitchell, 2005).

However, no evidence was found in excessive use and anticipation as a predictor of functional impairment. The findings may indicate that compulsive usage and feel compelled to use the internet when offline may not be associated with functional impairment. This research confirmed studies that found no relationship between psychosocial wellbeing and heavy internet use (Wastlund, et al., 2001; Kraut, 2002) or frequency of internet use (Gross, 2004).

On the other hand, the life skills variable is not associated with any of the predictors. The outcome of the analysis showed that scores in IA may not affect the life skills of internet users. Life skills in FI include keeping an acceptable appearance, nutrition, sex, sleeping, exercise, household chores, managing money, among others. In other words, internet users may still effectively meet the demands and challenges of everyday life regardless of high or low scores in IA. It is possible that an individual's function in terms of interpersonal relationships is affected but not the skills or the ability to survive in life. No related literature was found between associations of internet addiction to life skills among young adults. These result needs to be examined in future studies.

There are limitations in this research. First, this study was done by self-report questionnaires. Participant's answers may exaggerate symptoms or may under-report the severity of symptoms to minimize their problems. Respondents may be too embarrassed to reveal private details or may be biased by the person's feelings at the time they filled out the questionnaire. An interview may be added to avoid biases and validate the answer of the respondents. Furthermore, this study focused mainly on young adults (ages 18-24 years). A similar study is needed among other age groups such as children, adolescents, or adults ages 25 years and up to see what developmental stage of the individual predominantly affects functional impairment due to internet addiction. In addition, sites visited, availability of internet, length of time using the internet, emotional status, and quality of life might be included to have an in-depth understanding of the causes of functional impairment connecting to internet addiction. The longitudinal design of the study is also suggested since this is a powerful type of research that may allow researchers to detect developments or changes in the characteristics of the target population over some time and to further examine the direction of the effects of internet addiction on functional impairment.

The present research may benefit other researchers in investigating internet addiction as a psychological disorder since the results showed a significant positive relationship in the individual's functioning. Mental health practitioners may use this study to identify which area of functional domains may be affected in the individual who suffers from internet addiction. It may give a clear understanding of the symptoms that may be used for deciding what treatment is fitted for each person. Family and school may also profit from this research in understanding how internet addiction affects the person and how they can help in the prevention and treatment. Family interactions and school-based intervention may strengthen the functionality in family and school rather than directly restricting internet use. Managers may also use this study as guidance in implementing rules and regulations to resolve the issue of internet addiction in the workplace. Risk management strategies may help aid detection and prevention of internet addiction in work setting instead of terminating employees. This study may also help the individual using self-assessment and solve the problem of internet addiction before it gets out of hand. Finally, this study will further the understanding of why internet addiction leads to the pathogenesis of the individual.

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