INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY ON INTERNET ADDICTION DISORDER AMONG CYBERCAFE USERS.

FOLARIN Olawale Akinleye

SSP/08/09/H1992

BEING A THESIS SUBMITTED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY ILE-IFE, NIGERIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY

2012

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis was carried out by FOLARIN Olawale Akinleye in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Masters Degree (Psychology) in the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

_____   _____

Supervisor   **Date**

Dr. E E Idehen

Department of Psychology

Obafemi Awolowo University

Ile-Ife.

_____   _____

Head of Department   **Date**

Professor Elegbeleye OS

Department of Psychology

Obafemi Awolowo University

Ile-Ife.

DEDICATION

To my wife and children

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am profoundly grateful to God Almighty who saw me through the rigours of this programme. I could recall several admission letters that I have not been able to honour in the past years, but it pleases God to give me the grace to start and complete this programme at His own time. He has been a strong tower for me, protecting me through several trips made in the course of the programme. To God is the glory.

I am also sincerely grateful to my supervisor Dr. Emmanuel Egbe Idehen. Sir, you have been wonderfully supportive, always available and ever ready to listen and help. Your doors are always open and indeed you have been a great influence. May God Almighty shower his blessing over you and your family.

My Sincere appreciation also goes to Professor Sola Olowu, Professor O.S. Elegbeleye, Professor Chris Ajila, and Dr. A. A. Adegoke. No doubt you have all contributed immensely to the successful completion of this programme. May God bless you all.

My gratitude also goes to my wife Funmilola and children. You have all been very supportive. May God Almighty continue to shower His mercies over you all.

Finally, to everyone who has contributed to my success in one way or the other; I say thank you and God bless.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

The study ascertained the prevalence of Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD) among cyber café users, analysed the personality traits of the cyber café users and determined the influence of the Big Five Personality traits on IAD among cyber café users in the study area. It also assessed the socio-demographic characteristics of internet addicts.

The study used primary data. The multistage sampling procedure was used to select 1,005 cyber café users from the study area. Cyber cafés in or near campuses of tertiary institutions in Osogbo, Ile-Ife, Ilesa, Iree and Ede were conveniently selected. The snowball sampling technique was then used to select the participants who were students of tertiary institution and a mixed bag of professionals such as Lawyers, Teachers, Doctors, Accountant/Banker, Civil Servant, Business men, Security agents, youth corps members, the unemployed and others. The age of the participants ranged between 17 – 52 years with a mean age of 28.77 years and a standard deviation of 8.37 years. Three instruments (one questionnaire and two standardized psychological scales) were used. The Bio data form (BDF) was used to collect information on the demographic characteristics of the participants. The Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI) and the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) were used respectively to elicit information on personality characteristics of the respondents and the degree to which internet use affects them. Data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

The result showed that there were three categories of internet users which were:

Occasional users, frequent users and problem users. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean ages of the three groups

$(F\{2, 143\} = 4.009, P < .05)$. It was revealed that the addicts were almost four years younger than those with moderate problems (24.33 years versus 27.86 years, MD = 3.53 years, $P > .05$) and six years younger than those with internet use problems (24.33years versus 30.81 years, MD = 6.48 years, $P < .05$). This shows that the addicts were younger than the two other groups and that they are mostly young adults. The results also revealed that 15% of the cybercafe users sampled were already having problems, of excessive internet usage. It also showed that 30% of the problem users had only mild problems with internet use, 64% had moderate problems, while 6% had severe problems and can be described as internet addicts. The result also showed a significant influence of personality traits on Internet Addiction Disorder $(F\{4, 1004\} = 15.49, P < .05)$. The result also revealed a statistically main influences of extraversion $(F\{1.973\} = 26.60, P < .05)$, a statistically main influence of agreeable (x = 44.86, SЄ = 0.84; MD = 3.26, P< 05), and a statistically main influence of neurotic (x = 44.77, SЄ = 0.75, MD = 3, 43, P< 05) on internet addiction disorder.

The study concluded that there is a link between four of the five personality types and internet addiction disorder.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

One of the greatest gifts of technology to mankind is the evolution of the internet. It has become a helping hand in all spheres of life and it is convenient and informative. The Internet is a major aspect of today's technology and it remains the one-stop solution for all enquiries, while the prevalence of its use has increased considerably. The Internet is the worldwide, publicly accessible network of interconnected computer networks that transmit data by packet switching, using the standard Internet protocol (IP). It is a network that consists of millions of smaller domestic, academic and government networks which together carry various information and services, such as electronic mail, online chatting, file transfer, the interlinked web pages and other documents of the World Wide Web (Hutchison & Sawyer, 2000; Capron & Johnson, 2004).

People use the internet for various reasons. While some use it as essential media channel for personal communications, academic research, information exchange, games and entertainment, others use the internet for chat rooms, sexuality and fraud. But what happens when this iconic invention becomes such an integral part of our lives that we are unable to thrust it aside without anatomically exercising our fingers on the key board? What happens when people spend excessive amount of time on the internet?

As the number of internet users keeps soaring and with the explosion of excitement about the internet, problems of excessive use are also becoming apparent. Some people seem to be too excited. Some people are definitely hurting themselves by their addiction to the internet. Some people spend too much time on the internet that makes one to wonder if this is yet another type of addiction that has invaded the human psyche, while neglect of health, time consciousness, academic, work and domestic responsibilities, disruption of relationships, social isolation and financial problems have all been identified as consequences of heavy internet usage or addiction to the internet.

The concept of addiction is not easy to define, but central to it is dependence on a substance or activity. Dependence is characterised by overindulgence, tolerance, withdrawal, craving and loss of control. Broadly speaking, addiction is defined as a compulsive, uncontrollable dependence on a substance, habit or practice to such a degree that cessation causes severe emotional, mental or physiological reactions. Addiction was originally linked with substance use, but there is now a growing recognition of behavioural addictions such as gambling, overeating and exercise. Included within behavioural addictions are behaviours that relates to the use of machines, such as playing video games, using computers and playing amusement machines. Heavy internet usage is also a behavioural addiction which requires explanation that does not rely too heavily on physiological mechanisms and psychological explanations have come to the fore.

Psychologists call heavy or excessive usage of the internet "Internet Addiction Disorder" (IAD). The IAD is the latest entrant in the category of addiction and youth related problem or disorders and with the colossal technological development and as well as the immense use of the internet, IAD may very soon transform to become one of the most

detrimental disorders of all time. IAD is a psychological dysfunction or disorder and the most appalling connotation of IAD is that, it has managed to engulf a large section of the youth without letting them have even the frailest idea about the consequences. When people lose their jobs, or flunk out of school, or are divorced by their spouses because they cannot resist devoting all of their time to virtual lands, they are pathologically addicted. While the positive aspects of the internet are renowned, concerns continue to mount regarding problematic internet usage behaviour. Many of the users, especially young adults are getting addicted such that they find it difficult to control their urge for it and this is also seriously telling on their quality of life.

Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD) is the term first proposed by Goldberg (1996) for pathological, compulsive Internet usage. The criteria for this disorder are based on similar criteria for substance abuse and other addictive disorders found in the DSM-IV (APA, 2000). Pathological Internet Computer Use Disorder was proposed as the name for a disorder in which people overuse computers to the extent that such use causes them distress or such use has a detrimental effect on