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# The Relationship between Socializing Activity and Compulsive Internet Use among Students in Primary School

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**Abstract.** This study was conducted with the aim to identify the relationship between socializing activities factor with compulsive Internet use among primary school student in Taiping Perak. This study use quantitative method. The questionnaire were distributed to 2 primary school and involve 100 primary school student in Taiping Perak as a sample in this study. The findings of this study indicates that there are high degree of positive relationship between socializing activity with compulsive Internet use.

**Key words:** Compulsive Internet use; socializing activity; level of accessing information; parenting monitoring; facilities at home

## 1. Introduction

According to Sargin (2012), compulsive Internet use can be defined as using the Internet excessively until individual has no longer capable in controlling their online activity. Excessive Internet use could lead to Internet addiction (Sargin, 2012). However, the unique features in Internet, for example its flexibility, availability and interactivity making many younger generation to access it without limitation (Fallahi, 2016). Thus, this situation has been alarming the society as more and more younger generation are using the Internet compulsively and getting addicted.

According to recent studies, large numbers of people find it hard to regulate their time spent online and this situation even develop symptoms of compulsive Internet use (Peter and Linda, 2013). In the latest study conducted by World Telecommunication, 40% of people all over the world are using the Internet (Chaffey, 2015). Furthermore, predicting the progress since few year, by the end of 2018, about 5 billion people will be using it. Additionally, from ages 9-64 are using the Internet because they mostly likely to have their desktop, laptop and smart phones. Due to that fact, more than half of human population are pre adolescence and adolescence which are overusing the Internet and being addicted (Jones, 2015).

Likewise in Malaysia, according to a survey on school-goers Internet users in year 2014 was carried out by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), found out that Malaysian primary school students was ranked third highest Internet users compared to other education level in Malaysia. Maslin, Nik and Othman (2013) further elaborates that out of 236 primary schools in Malaysia, majority primary school students are having problematic Internet use which indicates to affect the students attitudes in using Internet and also affects their behaviour and intention



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in using Internet. The main question has risen from this situation is that, what are the factors influencing problematic Internet use among primary school students? This is the main question that needed to be answered thus the development of this study.

Therefore, this study is conducted to investigate the compulsive Internet use phenomena among primary school students in Taiping, Malaysia. This study is conducted with the aim to identify the relationship between students' online activity with compulsive Internet use among primary school students.

## 2. Compulsive Internet Use

Initially, many scholars defined compulsive Internet use as Internet addiction due to its' characteristics and similarities. However, the term compulsive Internet use was modified according to its behavioural aspects (Yasser and Anne, 2012). According to Yen and Chun (2013), the pattern of compulsive Internet use was categories according to loss of control, obsession, conflict and withdrawal symptoms. This is because, people whom are diagnosed with compulsive Internet use has a very impulse control disorder where they fail to control their behaviour in using the Internet.

In Malaysia, a study was carried out by Kutty (2014) on compulsive Internet use and mental health among young adults in Malaysia. This study found out that young adults mainly university students are suffering from compulsive Internet use because about 60% of the respondents are diagnosed with mental disorder. The factors affects overusing the Internet is socio-demographics factor, for instance the marital status, time and years spent on using the Internet and gender.

Since the existence of digital media, many people around the world are being affected. People around the world can communicate with each other just by using their fingertips. Without realizing, many people are being an Internet dependent. Internet are the backbone of today's technology. Without Internet, no technology could function.

Wong, Zolkepli and Rashvinjeet (2012) revealed the ease in accessing the Internet anytime and anywhere are the major factors of one being an Internet dependent among many Malaysians. They explained in their study on how one could be an Internet dependent just by using their smart phone. This was supported by Niccolle (2016) study where she revealed why many people prefer to communicate through their smart phone rather than face to face. Niccolle (2016) stresses on the Internet convenience. With Internet coverage, it enables everyone to surf and download anything they wants with just a click. Therefore almost everything is possible with the Internet, thus people are getting very dependent on it (Amran, Liew, Abdul and Rini, 2016).

One study done by Gao (2016), stated that some people being very dependent on their smart phones for the sake of socializing can create a phenomena calls "Nomophobia". Nomophobia can happen when one feels anxiety of not using their mobile phones. The Nomophobia term is directly associated with the overuse of mobile phone, meaning that one spent too much time in surfing the Internet using their mobile phones (Gao, 2016).

### 2.1 Online Activities and Students

Since the emergence of World Wide Web (WWW) at mid-2000, more people began to involve in interactive communication phase (Nihat, 2016). The continuity of Web 1.0 and 2.0 has introduced "social media" to the world. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), defines social media as a Internet based application that allows the creation and exchange information of User Generated Content (UGC). In other words, social media refers to a platform through where people communicate, such as discussion forums, blogs, wikis, social networks and multi-media sites, as well as, most popular Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Google+, Flickr, Twitter and Youtube (Nihat, 2016).

Over the past few decade, social media has been increasing tremendously and gaining its' popularity among the students (Kuss and Griffiths, 2011). According to Bradley and Barlett (2011) study, stated that the main reasons of this online activity is for students to complete their schoolwork, play games, read and writing email, socialize, passing time, interacting and posting pictures. Many researches been

carried out on the positive and negative impact of social media towards teenagers. In Malaysia, many studies carried on the usage of social media and students. In Juan (2015) study, the usage of social media among students impacts students' socially and academically, where social media is the most used platform by students to make new friends as well as social media also a platform for the students communicating with each other of getting information on their school activities, notes and discuss homework (Juan, 2015).

In Cheah (2012), study stated that most of Malaysian students has a cell phone to access all kinds of online content where we can see most students' heads down, thumbs swiping up and down or fingers tapping their phone screen checking the latest post on social media. This can lead to a repetitive behaviour because of the ease in accessing social media using their phones where can indicate to excessiveness time in consuming the social media (Nihat, 2016). Thus, it could lead to one obvious major problem among students that is "Internet addiction".

### 3. Methodology

In completing this study, a quantitative approach will be undertaken, which is a survey in the form of questionnaire. The researcher will use quantitative approach because this research will study on the relationship between students' socializing activity with compulsive Internet use among primary school students.

#### 3.1 Research Population and Sampling

The respondent of the study are primary school students from Taiping, Perak, Malaysia. According to Ministry of Education Malaysia, in year 2017, there are 21 primary schools lies under Taiping area. For this study, the population of respondents will be the primary schools students from Taiping. Researcher will use are Simple Random Sampling technique for this study. Researcher will randomly select 2 primary schools and 50 respondent from each school in Taiping. The sample size for this study is 100 students.

#### 3.2 Research Instrument

In this study, the instrument that will be used is questionnaire. The questionnaire will consists of 6 parts. In the questionnaire, there will be multiple choices and Likert scale form of question. The questionnaire are attached in Appendix A.

#### 3.3 Data Analysis

According to Sage (2014), data analysis is applying statistical logics to a set of data that is obtain through data collection. Inferential statistic was used to measure the relationship between students' online activity with compulsive Internet use among primary school students. In order to measure the relationship between dependent and independent variable, the analysis will be done by using the Pearson correlation matrix. This is because, according to Thomas (2014), Pearson correlation matrix is used to measure linear and non-linear relationships. Pearson correlation matrix also can measure the strengths of relationship between two associated variables (Chee, 2015). In this study, the researcher wants to identify the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. Thus, Pearson correlation matrix is suitable to use in study.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1 The Relationship between Students' Socializing Activity and Compulsive Internet Use

Based on the research findings, there high degree of positive relationship between the students socializing activity with compulsive Internet use among primary school students,  $r = 0.972$  and  $p =$

0.000. The socializing activity are correlated with compulsive Internet use. The increase in students socializing activity is associated with the increase of compulsive Internet use among the students.

As stated in Nihat (2016) research, many children nowadays are exposed to various popular social media platforms such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Google+, Flickr, Twitter and Youtube. These social media platforms can gratify their needs in socializing and interacting with their family or friends. Asfaranjan (2013) claims that the advance growing number of many online application, games and social media has bring the Internet to a new phase, where many users use Internet for their own purposes and needs in order to fulfil their desires. This is supported by the theory used by researcher in this study, the Extension of Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) by Blumer and Katz (1974) claiming that people uses the media for their needs and gratification in terms of social and psychological needs. Students socialize and interact with others to gratify their needs in reducing their boredom, keeping themselves inform of social events and meeting new people (Asfaranjan, 2013). As the age of this young people is all about exploring and learning (Froget, 2013).

While, some of the users uses the Internet to look for a partner while some to gain news and information as well as keeping themselves up to date (Asfaranjan, 2013). Thus, it can be concluded that the Internet functionality are based on one's purpose of using it to the extend where media content (online activities) can gratify their needs. The more the Internet could gratify one needs and desires, the more dependent one will be on the Internet, therefore it will increase the Internet dependency among the users. This is supported by the theory used by researcher in this study that was proposed by Sandra and Melvin in 1976, Media Dependency Theory. This theory highlights on the more dependent an individual is on the media of having his or her needs fulfilled, the more important the media will be to that person. Thus, it can be concluded that the primary school students uses Internet to access on various online activities in order to fulfill their respective needs and purpose of using, eventually increases their dependency on Internet and resulting compulsive Internet use among them.

Not only that, according to Robert (2012), every human has different needs when it comes to social and build romantic relationship with others, have sexual conversation, be intimate, whereas some of them to keep themselves updated by the news and current trend. However, as Internet could gratify each students' social and psychological needs, students would make it as a habit in their daily life. This is because according to Media Dependency Theory (1976), the media will be more important to a person when the person is very dependent on the media of having his or her needs fulfilled. Thus, the chances are higher for the children using the Internet everyday to socialize with peers and others. This repetitive behaviour tends to motivate the students to use the Internet excessively. It can be concluded that the primary school students use Internet to socialize in order to fulfill their respective needs, eventually increases their dependency on Internet and resulting compulsive Internet use among them.

## 5. Conclusion

Compulsive Internet use is indeed a growing "disease" among the young children as more primary school students are overusing the Internet. The results of this study will redound to the benefit of student considering the amount of time they spent on Internet to avoid using Internet compulsively. Besides that, this study also would provide exposure for students on risk factors using the Internet excessively. Thus, students will be extra aware and conscious on their daily online activities to reduce overusing the Internet. As a result, it will reduce the negative influence of compulsive Internet use in several aspects. The findings of this study will also provide a better understanding to parents on why their children overusing the Internet. Through this, it will stimulate parents to play their parts in monitoring their children while using the Internet.

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