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Compulsive Internet Use among Students in Primary School: The Role of Parenting Monitoring

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Abstract. This study was conducted with the aim to identify the relationship between parenting monitoring 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 negative relationship between parenting monitoring and compulsive Internet use among primary school students.

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

1. Introduction

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 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.

Apart from that, Livingstone and Helsper (2010), believes that parents plays an integral role in shaping children cyber ethics (attitudes in using Internet) and cyber literacy (behaviour and intention in using Internet). However, a study conducted by Sook (2012) revealed that, parenting role was unclear in reducing the children time spent online. It is because of by the age 10, children have entered



puberty, which is related to physical, emotional and social changes. They become so actively involved in diverse online activities in Internet (Erkan and Melih, 2011). This creates a tough situation for the parents in controlling their children's Internet use. Therefore, this phenomenon begs a very important question. What are the relationships between parenting role and compulsive Internet use especially among primary school students?

2. Compulsive Internet Use

According to Joyce, Carno and Racidon (2016), this situation can increase the Internet dependency that will increase one's time spent using the Internet, where one could overuse the Internet which can result to compulsive Internet use.

However in Malaysia, the term of compulsive Internet use usually can be referred to Internet addiction because most researches carried out in Malaysia use Internet addiction term in showing the Internet overuse. According to Choi and Lim (2016), "addictive behaviour", for example, smoking and gambling, are formed with repetitive attitude and behaviour that could indicate disease and social problem. Addictive behaviour also occurs when one decided to continue doing it despite from stopping.

Over the past few years, obvious addictive behaviour that had become a problem in our lives are Internet addiction and excessive use of the Internet for microblogs, blogs or social networking sites (Duggan, 2015). According to Nihat (2016) study, social media is the most widely used by everyone, thus social media addiction term come to known. However, Duggan (2015) expressed that the younger people, specifically students are considered as the risky group for Internet addiction. Lu (2013), study found that there is a positive interrelation between students' Internet addiction with their behaviours, physical health and psychological well-being. This is because according to Shek (2012), Internet addiction among students are associated with the electronic products such as, smart phones, tablets and computers. Shek (2012), study also revealed about 90.5% of worldwide primary and secondary school students obsessed with smartphones, desktop, computers, tablets and laptops.

According to Accenture (2010), Malaysia was ranked as first on the list of Social Networking Sites Usage (SNS) in year 2009 compared to other Asian countries. This is an evidence on the rate of Internet usage in Malaysia is very high. In Malaysia, more than half primary and secondary students are reported that they spent more than 3 hours of using the electronic products a day at home (Xie, 2014). However, this situation arises and questions the role of parenting in family in monitoring their children's Internet usage (Choi and Lim, 2016). Livingstone (2013) also points out that there is a relationship between the degrees of media dependency of children and parenting role, thus the "parental mediation" existed.

2.1 Parental Mediation and Internet Addiction

In this modern era, media surrounds the children and young people in households (Chiu and Huang, 2015). Parental concerns had arise on the negative effects of media consumption towards their children's attitude and behaviour (Nathanson, Eveland, Park and Paul, 2002).

There are few forms of mediation, for instance rule making and restrictions (Livingstone and Helsper, 2010). Parental mediation is also refers to parental management of the relation between children and media, where it emphasizes parental role in restrictions as well as parental monitoring activities (Huang, 2015).

However, based on the past researches, the parental strategies was still unclear. In Lee and Robert (2007) study suggested that time restriction is ineffective in reducing time spent online, online exposure risk and compulsive Internet use. Meanwhile, Lee and Robert (2007) study also emphasize on online interaction restriction contributes to lower down the risk to sexual material/exposure. However, parental mediated strategies was still uncertain in reducing addictive tendencies of children (Lee and Robert, 2007). Evren (2014), argued the uncertainty between parental mediation and Internet addiction in her research "Internet Addiction and Relationships", where she express the proliferation

of media goods in the home, especially in children's bedrooms. Evren (2014) illustrates about 75% of people aged 9-19 years old in United Kingdom have online facilities at home.

In Malaysia, most of the parents are aware of their children addiction towards Internet. According to The Star Online (2016), 37% of Malaysian parents actually aware that the Internet is interrupting their home and school obligations. However in Malaysia, most of parents practices parental mediation towards their children Television viewing. But there is one study was carried out by Zobidah (2014) revealed that in Malaysia, parental mediation strategies like the active co-use, interaction restriction, technical restriction and monitoring on children has a positive relationship with children Internet use. However, there are very limited studies on parental mediation towards children Internet usage in Malaysia because of the parents inability in controlling their children. This is because of the parents provides various online facilities at home such as computers, tablets, smart phones, Ipads and many more (Benrazavi, 2015). However, as the parents provides great online facilities at home where it increases the internet dependency among their children (Nihat, 2016).

3. Methodology

This study used quantitative research approach. The respondent of this 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. Simple Random Sampling technique was used in 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.

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. In order to measure the relationship between dependent and independent variable, the Pearson correlation matrix will be used. 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 Parenting Monitoring And Compulsive Internet Use*

Based on the research findings, there is a high degree of negative relationship between parenting monitoring and compulsive Internet use among primary school students, $r = -0.958$ and $p = 0.002$. The parenting role are correlated with compulsive Internet use. This indicates that the decrease in parenting monitoring is associated with the increase of compulsive Internet use among the students.

The family institution has a very crucial role in creating socialization of the children (Lee and Robert, 2007). In Miller and Plant (2015) study, mentioned that family are the main course of either preventing or encouraging children to be involved in problematic behaviour. Through this research findings, it is proven that parents plays an important role in preventing compulsive Internet use among primary school students. This is because, the research findings indicates that there are very lack of parenting monitoring that is done while children using the Internet.

According to Benrazavi (2015), most of Asian parents are unaware on the bad side of the Internet unlike western parents. In Benrazavi (2015) study found out that 79% of Asian parents focuses on their child academic by providing them all Internet facilities at home by thinking their children would use the Internet to complete school matters and homework. Duggan (2015) research argued that, if the parents could afford on Internet facilities, they also could spare few minutes or half to monitor their children using the Internet. Unfortunately, most of the parents are occupied with their daily matters and jobs. According to Fallahi (2016), the lack of parental monitoring on Internet could indicate to

many online social problems among the children for example one obvious problem are pornography addiction. This is because the parents does not play their role by restricting the Internet and application sites or monitoring their online activity as well as lack in time restriction for the children to use the Internet. At this point the children will began to expose with many pleasurable online activities such as socializing, getting bizarre information and many more.

According to Lu (2013), the Internet is an exceptional platform to gratify the children needs and desires. As Internet become so important to the children in satisfying their needs and answering their question, Internet dependency occurs. With lack of parenting monitoring and role, more children are overusing the Internet and eventually resulting compulsive Internet use among them.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, there is a high degree of negative relationship between parenting monitoring and compulsive Internet use among primary school students. This indicates that the decrease in parenting monitoring is associated with the increase of compulsive Internet use among the students. Compulsive Internet use is a widespread social problems that affects millions of children in Malaysia and also worldwide. The findings of this study 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. Apart from that, this study also will create awareness among parents in fulfilling their roles to avoid excessive Internet use among their children. Consequently, children will be wiser in using Internet as parents plays their respective roles

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