

## A Study of the Rate of Internet Dependence and its Relationship with Sincerity in the Family Among High School Students (Boys and Girls)

*Case Report*

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Today the culture of medium by the superiority of the internet has become the most dominating and the most influential culture in the society. The focus of this influence is on the growing generation that is the adolescents. It means that a remarkable part of today's life of youth is attributed to communicating by the internet.

**Purpose:** The aim of this study is to examine the rate of internet dependence and its relationship with sincerity in the family among the high school students (boys and girls) of Qum.

**Method:** this study is conducted by descriptive – survey method. The statistical population consisted of all the students (girls and boys) studying at the high school in Qum. They were 38754 and the sample volume with respect to Cochran's formula was 380 people who were chosen by stratified – random sampling. 194 of them were female students and 186 of them were male. To collect the data the questionnaire of internet dependence and the scale of sincerity in the family was applied. In order to analyse the data  $\chi^2$  test (chi – squared test), correlation coefficient and independent T- test were used.

**Findings:** The conclusions of independent T- test showed that on the rate of internet dependence there is a meaningful difference between girls and boys. It means that boys are more dependent on the internet than girls. From the viewpoint of sincerity in the family also there is a meaningful difference between boys and girls. Among girls the concept of sincerity in the family is more valuable and they pay attention to it more than boys. The results of  $\chi^2$  test and correlation coefficient indicated that as the students grow up their dependence on the internet become less and it clarified as well that if the internet dependence is more the sincerity in the family will be less.

**Keywords:** Dependence; Internet; Sincerity; Family.

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### Introduction

Information and communication technology is no longer a tool with a source of production but if we pay attention to it realistically it is a new environment to work in [3].

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At the age of information by employing internet communications the borders are disconnected and the learning environment has changed. At the head of information and communication technology is the internet which has influenced the appearance of new and different methods and forms of education and has entered to educational place. To enter into this period and present actively and be interested in it require the suitable conditions to be prepared and the most important situation is to pave the way for desired use of the internet by the students and the students should be prepared in choosing the required information. It means whatever that meet the requirement should be provided for them. [1]

According to what mentioned the appropriate environment for learning must be prepared and will be available broadly with required flexibility. By practicing the new technologies it becomes possible to search the needed data individually and this caused a new form of lifelong learning to be emerged. Internet by the unlimited volume of information and rapid tools of communication make the adolescents to get familiar with the other tools. And internet is one of the most important tools that nowadays most of the people engaged in social and cultural problems use it in order to exchange and conduct the information [6].

Here some of the researches done on this subject are considered:

1. The findings of the two – year research of Homenet and Kraut and et al., which began in March 1995 and its statistical population were 169 people from 73 families, are presented here. According to this research “the more application of the internet was connected to the less family communication. The usage of the internet even for the aim of communication also leads to a decrease in the cycle of local social communications and faraway ones too. It is reported that those whose application of the internet has increased their loneliness has enhanced as well. It is declared by the researchers that spending much time on the internet will increase depression and will cause the users to withdraw from their real life [2]

2. Young (1998) studied 295 people addicted to the internet and found out that 30% of them just had the degree of their high school, 38% of them had M.A or Ph.D. , 22% of them were not employed, 31% of them were students, 6% were laborers, 22% of them were clerks such as teachers and bank clerks, and 26% of them were technical persons like computer engineers. This study indicated that those who are educated and have a high social economic status in the society are more subjected to the danger of internet addiction and disorder.

3. Christopher Sanders (2001) had conducted a research entitled “the role of internet application in depression and social isolation of the adolescents” and its conclusions were published in a magazine by the name of Adolescence. Based on the findings of the study those who used internet less than the others they had more relations with their moms and friends. And those who spent most of their time on the internet communicated with their family less and they suffered from depression. The results showed there is a relation between much use of internet and weak social relations [5].

The results of Salehi's researches entitled “Internet dependence and its influential factors on the university students (male and female) conducted in 2010 indicated that there is a meaningful relation between the internet dependence and gender, father's occupation, having skill in the use of computer and the internet, and the educational grade but between the field of study and the parents' education there is no meaningful relation.

Vizeshfar has conducted a study in 2005 entitled “A survey of the rate of internet addiction in the internet users (both male and female). Its results showed that a statistical meaningful relation exists between the internet addiction, gender, age, how long they spend time online, and the time of the use of internet. The research also suggested that the males are much dependent on the internet in a manner that the opportunity to become dependent on it in the males is 3.5 times more than the females. It is also reported that a meaningful relation is found between internet addiction and skill in the use of Internet, educational grade, and the field of study.

The results of the studies by Davis (2002), Hall (2003), and Charlton (2003) entitled “Internet dependence and the rate of its users “showed that a meaningful relation exists between internet addiction and family sincerity. Internet addiction causes the user quits communication with his/her family and friends and makes him/her occupational and educational problems. [11]

There are some young people who spend long hours on the internet and are absorbed in its attractiveness that withdraw from listening to their close relatives and do not enjoy the sincerity of the family. Internet addiction like other addictions such as addiction to drugs, alcohol, cigarette or caffeine associate with some symptoms as moral disorders, stop talking to others, quitting social relationships, sleeplessness, anxiety and stress and also the weakness of eyesight.

Those teenagers who depending on the internet or in other words are addicted to it and in order to satisfy themselves spend successive hours online whenever it would not be possible for them to have access to the internet they become anxious, angry, and have tremor. They forget to relax and instead they just fantasize a lot about internet and its temptation. [12]

When a person is addicted to internet he will miss the opportunity to interact with his family members. This causes a false cycle to be made. It means the more a person spends time on the internet the more he withdraw from his own family emotionally and mentally. He prefers his isolation and his cyber – friends.

Lessening the family relationships makes the person weaken the most important social protective source or may lose it. From the other side as the relations between couples or between parents and their children are disconnected or weaken they are attracted by the cyber – friends on the internet and they prefer not to listen to the words of their own close ones and instead spend much time on the internet to satisfy their emotional vacancy by talking to another person. [4]

Family as a social nature is created within the society and from the viewpoint of the sociologist performs a crucial role in training the active forces of the society, preparing the abilities, and protecting the mental health of the people and all negative and positive functions of family influence the society. Family is also considered as a determining factor for the contents of the emotional situations of the family. Without any doubt if a society does not possess healthy families it cannot claim to be healthy and also there is no social injuries which is not influenced by the family. [9]

This new technology has brought about some changes in the structure of the relationships between the adolescents and their parents in the matter that because of the workaholism of the parents they will allocate less time for emotional communications with their children and the mentioned relationships become limited and this causes the adolescents to search other emotional centers and as they have limited experiences and knowledge about this new or maybe corrupted centers they will be attracted to them as soon as possible and they will be deviated. While parents should make strong, emotional, and spiritual communications with their children and this will maintain the balance needed for the healthy relationships between them and at last will cause the adolescents not to search such corrupted centers. [10]

Thus we decided to examine the rate of internet dependence and its relationship with sincerity in the family between the adolescents.

Lam and his coworkers had done a research named “Internet dependency” in 2007 in Australia and its result indicated that a meaningful relation exists between internet and sex and the males are more dependent on the internet than the females. It is also suggested in a study entitled “Internet and the rate of its users” done by Johnson and et al., (2004) [7] that 12 – 18 year old Norwegian male teenagers are more dependent on the internet than the Norwegian female teenagers. [8]

## Tools and Methods

This research is conducted by descriptive – survey method. The statistical population included all the high school students of Qum who were 38754. The volume sample was 380 persons who were selected by stratified – random sampling according to Cochran's formula, 194 of them were female students and 186 of the were male students. In order to collect data the questionnaire of internet dependence and the scale of sincerity in the family were applied. To analyse the  $\chi^2$  test (Chi – squared test), correlation coefficient and independent T– test were used.

The scale of participation in the study included the tendency to participate in the study and being a student of high school and the scale of withdrawal of the study included the occurrence of the events that influences negatively the usual way of life, the behavior and functions of the person, and having a difficulty, suffering from a disease or giving up participation in the study. In order to analyse the data the descriptive statistics (Frequency table, percent and diagram and deductive statistics of independent T – test and  $\chi^2$  test (Chi – squared test) and correlation coefficient were applied and all done by SPSS software.

In other to collect the data the questionnaire of internet dependence and the scale of sincerity in the family was employed. The internet addiction questionnaire was developed by Dr. Kimberly Young and consists of 20 items and its answers are as follows:

1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Frequently 4. Often 5. Always .

It measures mild, moderate, and sever level of internet addiction. The lowest score is 20 and the highest one is 100. Widyanto and McMurran by factor analysis of internet addiction Test (IAT) revealed six factors: salience, excessive use, neglecting work, anticipation, lack of control and neglecting social life.

## The way of Scoring

1. Rarely 2. Occasionally 3. Frequently 4. Often 5. Always

The obtained score is the total score of the test and its interpretation is as follows:

## Interpretation and classification

Score	The rate of Internet dependency
20 – 39	Mild
40 – 69	Moderate
70 – 100	Sever

To obtain the score of each subscale it is just required to add all

the statements related to that subscale.

The statement related to each subscale:

1. Subscale of salience: 10, 12, 13, 15, 19
2. Subscale of excessive use: 1, 2, 14, 18, 20
3. Subscale of neglecting work: 6, 8, 9
4. Subscale of anticipation: 7, 11
5. Subscale of lack of control: 5, 16, 17
6. The specialities of psychometry

The scale of sincerity is a seventeen – question tool that is compiled to measure affection and sincerity. This tool is a part of bigger tool included several dimensions of the sincerity but it is reported as an independent scale by its producers (Alexis Walker and Linda Thompson). Sincerity is defined as the attention and importance of the family members toward each other and it consists of some emotional factors such as affection, self – sacrifice and satisfaction, that is a feeling based on this point that an important relationship is accompanied with honor, unity, and commitment. The score of test in sincerity scale is obtained by adding the score of statements and dividing it into the number 17. The scope of the score is between 1 to 17 and the higher score indicate the higher sincerity.

## The findings of the study

In Tables 1, 2 and 3, the triable specialites concerning sex and the grade of education are declared.

In Table 4 the results of independent T-test shows the difference between the two triable groups from the viewpoint of the rate of internet dependency that the calculated T-test ( $T=11/802$ ) compared to the critical test of table ( $T=1/96$ ) in the error level is 5% greater and on the other hand the significant level of the test with the amount 0/000 is smaller than 0/05. So the conclusion is that with 95% probability there is a difference between girls and boys in the internet dependence and internet dependence is greater in the boys.

Tables 5 and 6 show  $\chi^2$  test and correlation coefficient in relation to the internet dependency and the grade of girls and because the calculated  $\chi^2$  test ( $\chi^2 = 5/084$ ) in comparison with the critical test of the table ( $\chi^2 = 5/99147$ ) in the level of error is 5% greater and on the other side the significant level of test with the amount 0/027 is smaller than 0/05. So with 95% probability there is a relationship between internet dependence and the educational grade that with respect to the correlation coefficient this hypothesis is accepted in an opposite way. It means as the educational grade of the girls increases their internet dependence decreases.

Tables 7 and 8 observe  $\chi^2$  test and correlation coefficient in relation with internet dependence and the educational grade of the boys and because the calculated  $\chi^2$  test ( $\chi^2 = 7/63$ ) compared to the critical test of the table ( $\chi^2 = 5/99147$ ) in the level of error is 5% greater and the significant level of test with the amount 38% is 0/05 less. So the result is that with 95% probability there is an association between internet dependence and the educational grade of the boys that with respect to the correlation coefficient table the amount of 0/625 this hypothesis is accepted in an opposite way. It means that as the educational grade of the boys increases their internet dependency becomes less.

Table 9 shows the results of independent T in relation with the difference between girls and boys from the viewpoint of sincerity in the family and because the calculated T-test ( $T=10/242$ ) in comparison with the critical T-test of the table ( $T=1/96$ ) in the level of error is 5% greater and on the other hand the significant level of test with the amount 0/000 is 0/05 less. The conclusion is that with 95% probability there is a difference between boys and girls from the viewpoint of sincerity in the family and the mentioned amount is greater in the girls.

In Tables 10 and 11 the results of  $X^2$  test and correlation coefficient in relation with internet dependence and sincerity in the family are observed and because the calculated  $X^2$  test ( $X^2 = 31/26$ ) in comparison with the critical test of the table ( $X^2 = 5/99147$ ) in the level of error is 5% greater and on the other hand the significant level of test with the amount 0/000 is 0/05 less. So with 95% probability there is an association between internet dependence and sincerity in the family that regarding the correlation coefficient with 82% this hypothesis is accepted in an opposite side. It means that as the internet dependency increases

the sincerity in the family will decrease.

## Discussion

As mentioned the aim of this study was to examine the rate of the internet dependence and its relation with sincerity in the family between the high school students (male and female) of Qum. Making communication and apply this miraculous phenomenon, internet, caused people to achieve their civil rights in the different fields of information and knowledge. Some advantages of internet use are as follows: educational justice, the even opportunities to get informed, the right of being accompanied with the scientific and technological developments of the world, the right of learning extensively by ignoring the borders, a constant and ever-changing source of variation and innovation in all the fields of life despite of cultural and traditional differences, and the appearance of the morale of survey. Regarding all these advantages of internet when a person becomes addicted to it he / she will lose the opportunities for communication with his / her own family members and it will create a false cycle – that as the time passes

**Table 1.**

Subjects	Frequency	Percent
Girls	194	51/1%
Boys	186	48/9%
Total	380	100%

**Table 2.**

Girls	Frequency	Percent
First grade	83	42/78%
Second grade	54	27/83%
Third grade	57	29/39%
Total	194	100%

**Table 3**

Boys	Frequency	Percent
First grade	92	49/96%
Second grade	43	23/12%
Third grade	51	27/42%
Total	186	100%

**Table 4. Independent T-test in relation with the difference between girls and boys from the viewpoint of internet dependence**

Statistical index group	Number	Average	Standard deviation	Standard error	The calculate T-test	Degree of freedom	Critical T in the level of error		The level of significance
							95%	99%	
Girl	194	57/31	10/301	0/756					
Boy	186	40/72	16/316	17-Jan	11/802	378	Jan-96	Feb-57	0/000

**Table 5. The chi-test about the relationship between internet dependence and educational grade of girls**

The calculated $X^2$ test	Degree of freedom	The critical $X^2$ level of error		The level of significance
		95%	99%	
5/084	4	5/99174	9/21034	0/027

**Table 6. The correlation coefficient of internet dependence and the educational grade of girls**

		Internet dependence	Educational grade
Internet dependence	Correlation coefficient	1	-0/785
	The level of significance	0	0/037
	Number	194	194
Educational grade	Correlation coefficient	0	1
	The level of significance	0/037	
	Number	194	194

**Table 7. The chi-squared test on the relationship between the internet dependence and the educational grade of boys**

The calculated X <sup>2</sup> test	Degree of freedom	The critical X <sup>2</sup> level of error		The level of significance
		95%	99%	
7-63	4	5/99174	9/21034	0/038

**Table 8. The correlation coefficient of internet dependence and the educational grade of boys**

		Internet dependence	Educational grade
Internet dependence	Correlation coefficient	1	-0/625
	The level of significance	0	0/011
	Number	186	186
Educational grade	Correlation coefficient	-0/625	1
	The level of significance	0/037	0/011
	Number	186	186

**Table 9. Independent T-test in relation with the difference between girls and boys from the viewpoint of internet dependence**

Statistical index	Number	Average	Standard deviation	Standard error	The calculate T-test	Degree of freedom	Critical T in the level of error		The level of significance
							95%	99%	
Group									
Girl	194	93/01	22/67	1-61					
Boy	186	13/98	11-80	0/865	10/242	378	1-96	2-57	0/000

**Table 10. The chi-squared test on the relationship between the internet dependence and sincerity in the family**

The calculated X <sup>2</sup> test	Degree of freedom	The critical X <sup>2</sup> level of error		The level of significance
		95%	99%	
31/26	4	5/99147	9/21034	0/000

**Table 11. The correlation coefficient of the relation between internet dependence and family sincerity**

		Internet dependence	Sincerity in the family
Internet dependence	Correlation coefficient	1	-0/82
	The level of significance	0	0/011
	Number	380	380
Sincerity in the family	Correlation coefficient	-0/82	1
	The level of significance	0/037	0/011
	Number	380	380

he/she separates from his / her family emotionally and mentally and prefers the compulsive use of internet and his / her isolation. It was found by the research that there is a difference between the girls and boys respecting the internet dependency that regarding the amounts of the average of these groups it was declared that the internet dependency in the boys are higher than the girls. So concerning this it conforms with the results of the researches conducted by Vizeshfar (2005), Lam and et al., (2007), Johnson and et al., (2004). There is also a difference between boys and girls from the viewpoint of sincerity in the family that concerning the amount of the averages of these two groups the family sincerity is higher in the girls than the boys and as the internet dependency increases the sincerity in the family decreases. In this respect it accords with the findings of the researches done by the Sanders (2001), Homenet and et al., (1995), Davis (2002), Charlton (2003), and Hall (2003). Furthermore as the students go to a higher educational grade they are less dependent on the internet. In this respect this study does not accord with the results of the studies conducted by Young (1998), [14], and [13].

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