The Relationship Between Interpersonal Stress and Internet Usage among Adolescents

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Abstract: In recent years, the problems focusing on interpersonal stress of teenagers and internet usage become a hit. During adolescence, gender differences, biological changes, and social-emotional development have a significant impact on pubertal development as well as interpersonal stress. For example, females have a obviously higher need for companionship and interpersonal interaction. They use social media more frequently, and they are at higher risk of being victimized by their peers, which exacerbates their high rates of depression and interpersonal stress, leading them to rely on the internet as well. The growth of the internet and social media also deepens comparisons between people. For example, body shame, where adolescents continue to enhance content when they receive compliments and overly pander to make themselves look perfect when they receive dissatisfaction, can, to some extent, increase their anxiety and cause disturbances in their psychological development. Similarly, positive online bloggers who post videos can be inspiring, but posting about negativity or venting about reality can make immature teens more prone to depression and anxiety and further derivation into internet addiction, leading to depression and interpersonal problems. In this article, the relationship between interpersonal interactions and internet use is explored.

Keywords: interpersonal stress, adolescents, internet usage, social anxiety

1.   Introduction

Interpersonal stress mainly manifests in fear of social occasions. It often occurs during adolescence. Due to living in the age of the internet information explosion, people have more options for socialization. In the last few years, teenagers who experience interpersonal stress, according to research are more inclined to isolate themselves from reality and avoid face-to-face communication. However, this also led to various problems, such as inability to have normal interpersonal interactions in future workplaces. In recent years, interpersonal stress has been widely observed. However, few studies have focused on that. Some research found that interpersonal stress and internet use are positively correlated, so online communication is considered more relaxed and easier. It is all because the internet is unlike other ways. The primary research topic in this thesis is the area of the interaction between teens' internet usage choices and interpersonal stress.

1.1. Impact of Gender Differences during Adolescence

Gender differences have a powerful impact on interpersonal and peer pressure, especially in adolescence. Major depressive disorder (MDD) is twice as likely to be diagnosed in women than in men worldwide. Adolescent participants reported higher levels of co-hypochondriasis among females, and females have the highest need for companionship in interpersonal relationships. Peer conflict is simultaneously a topic that causes teens to come up many times in interpersonal interactions as well as on social media. And a higher percentage of girls suffered from peer victimization compared to boys, all around 15.7 years on average [1]. Precisely because girls experience more friendship conflicts than boys and are willing to invest more energy and time in order to have one, they become more demanding on social media: they are willing to post comments or abuse on the internet when their best friends are in trouble in real life, a phenomenon that also increases the psychological risk of adolescents in modern society, and of course with early adolescence, the risk of being victimized by their peers. This phenomenon also increases the psychological risk of modern adolescents, depending on the early, middle and late adolescent years [1]. The high incidence of adolescent depression is not divorced from the use of the internet. The pressure of interpersonal interactions and peer relationships between people of the same and opposite sexes is at the same time an important factor in the psychosocial risk factors of contemporary adolescents.

1.2. Physiological Changes and Social-Emotional Development during Adolescence

Discussions about adolescent development cannot be separated from the definition of adolescence. There are many factors that influence the beginning and end of puberty such as cultural, biological and social differences, so it is hard to determine specific starting and ending times. Based on these differences, adolescence is defined in terms of the physical, social and emotional development that occurs during this period of development. Physical changes during puberty deeply affect the social and emotional functioning of adolescents. The development of puberty also represents physical development. Chinese girls' puberty usually begins between the ages of 9 and 12. During this period, in addition to changes in height and weight, breasts develop, armpit and pubic hair appear, and then the reproductive organs of the uterus, ovaries, vagina, and vulva develop rapidly, the onset of menstruation usually occurs at age of 11 [2]. Puberty develops later in males than in females, typically from age 12 to 14. During this period, the remaining secondary sexual characteristics of males' change. In addition to physical development, psychological changes occur during puberty, and the development of mental health is one of the components of puberty.

Adolescent development depends significantly on socialization and emotional development. Parents play a crucial role in this stage of development, when adolescents seek their own identity and need to comfort and rely on their parents as they become independent. Parents play a crucial role in this stage of development, when adolescents seek their own identity and need to comfort and rely on their parents as they become independent [2]. Parents play a crucial role in this developmental stage. Teenagers imitate adults, so all family members should set a good example, and at the same time give their children the human body, understanding and trust to create a good family atmosphere.

2. Factors of Social Perfection Image

Body shame has been a hot topic on the internet, and social networking has taken over a large part of it at the same time. When teens are overly concerned about their appearance, this creates a self-objectifying behavior [3]. Teenagers are more inclined to create their own personal exclusive profiles, chat or share their lives with their online friends in YouTube, Instagram and snapchat. This type of life has become an ideal to allow adolescents to construct their own identity and build a sense of belonging to the area, but in the scientific community, this excessive and frequent posting of daily

life activities turns into a pathologizing process. Social networking sites' increased emphasis on photos and visual self-presentation could lead to an increase in appearance-related concerns and potentially problematic surveillance of individuals' own body image and photos [3]. Adolescents reinforce what they post online after receiving certain compliments to cater to more intense responses from people who are dissatisfied with their image. Specifically, according to the objectification theoretical framework, repeated experiences of objectification gradually influence (especially in girls) individuals to see themselves as an individual and conceptualize this behavior: body surveillance, body shame, and appearance control beliefs [3]. According to the previousresearch, adolescents whose social networks are overused and whose own external drift does not match the culturally idealized body image may feel shame about their bodies [3]. At the same time, the aesthetic realm of the body is rapidly evolving with social media, and this development also has a huge disruption on the future psychological development of adolescents.

Instagram has become the second most used platform by today's teenagers [4]. Instagram allows users to share, like and express themselves and is a perfect platform to achieve self-expression and self-fulfillment as a social media for teenagers [4]. There are not only positive bloggers on the internet, but there are also many bloggers who log on to Instagram to vent their real-life worries or to escape from reality. However, this can make adolescents more depressed, anxious, and lonely, making already mentally immature adolescents unable to control themselves and affecting eating or sleeping problems [4]. Higher body image dissatisfaction (BID) may be one of the reasons why modern adolescents' self-esteem has become lower, for example, adolescents who are exposed to thin ideal body image females on the internet automatically engage in social comparisons between their bodies and their abilities and are associated with an increase in the accessibility of negative thoughts. Thus, body image dissatisfaction and social media are creating a great association [4-5].

The pressures of modern society have long played a role in teenage internet addiction. They are looking for their needs for a better life on the internet [6]. Internet addiction, especially in Asian countries, has the greatest impact on adolescents, which is not only a huge damage to their own psychology, but also family conflicts, peer rejection and academic decline [6]. According to the self-determination theory, human beings have a strong psychological need for the ability and relevance of self-determined behaviors, which are essential additions to human life. In numerous Asian countries, many families are not able to fully satisfy an adolescent child, and instead, they become maladjusted to their current environment, prompting them to develop elsewhere, for example, in social media. Secondly, unmet psychological needs are the main source of motivation for adolescents to use the internet [6]. Nowadays, there are many software or websites on social media that can give enough compensation to teenagers in their life. Teenagers nowadays can't have many opportunities to do what they want to do in their normal life, the economic crisis of the family and academic problems will motivate the frequency of teenagers to go online [6]. At the same time some external factors, such as escaping from real life and solving personal growth problems, are several important factors for addiction to the internet [6].

3. Depression, Internet Addiction, and Relevant Factors

In the world, depression in adolescents is one of the most severe, usually accompanied by social anxiety and others. According to research, internet addiction is associated with social anxiety as well as depression. Wang's research indicates that teenagers who are developing an addiction to the internet will suffer from its adverse consequences such as conflicts with parents, impaired academic performance, which also leads to the possibility of isolation from classmates and low self-esteem in the real world. Further damage in interpersonal relationships also increases the risk of suffering from depression [7]. Adolescents become overly dependent on the internet to the point of addiction because activities such as gaming on the internet provide them with peace of mind and a brief escape from the

real world, as well as a desire for relief from the virtual world, but again, this can further exacerbate social anxiety. To compensate for the lack of interpersonal interactions, they increase the amount of time they spend engaging in online social activities, searching for a sense of identity and reclaiming their missing self-esteem. However, this creates a vicious cycle that exacerbates depression. Gender differences are associated with the incidence of depression, with women being more sensitive to external perceptions and more likely to be depressed as a result of poor interpersonal relationships.

Adolescent depression and loneliness are highly correlated with adolescent academic stress. In Peng's research study, gender differences in depression and loneliness were also included. Men have a higher PIU (Pathological Internet Use) than women, and men and women have different patterns of internet use; men may prefer leisure activities such as gaming and music, while women focus on social media and are more likely to receive negative comments, which can exacerbate depression [8].Adolescents exhibiting elevated levels of depression choose to opt for engagement in the virtual online realm as a medium of escape from reality and are reluctant to face negative emotions and interpersonal pressures, so the more depressed they are, the higher the likelihood of PIU.

Numerous studies have established a correlation between the prevalence of internet addiction among adolescents and various factors, including social support. Sun conducted a study to investigate the factors contributing to internet addiction. The study identified parental control, annual family income, academic achievement, internet browsing, online activities, and social support as significant factors influencing internet addiction [9]. In a study conducted on adolescents aged 14 to 24 years old, the participants were assessed using the Internet Addiction Test (IAT). The results revealed that 10.4% of the respondents were classified as internet addicts.

And the rate of internet addiction usage increased significantly with household income, with the highest percentage of internet addiction among adolescents who accessed the internet at internet cafes. With the exponential growth of the internet and the significant increase in the global population of internet users. Internet addiction has become a serious problem. The problem of internet addiction among teenagers should not be ignored, researchers need to intervene in the problem of internet addiction among teenagers as early as possible. First of all, interventions for parents are necessary to strengthen the supervision of teenagers. Research shows that the time of internet addiction among teenagers is related to the unsupervised time spent alone, some teenagers with poor self-control are addicted to the internet through the game for recreation, thus leading to the decline of academic performance as well as the depression and social anxiety.

Adolescence is a time of high incidence of depressive episodes. Steven discovered that the utilization of Facebook was positively correlated with depressed mood among girls, while no such correlation was observed among boys. In either the public or private sphere, there will be a positive impact on girls, and the opposite, a negative impact on boys [10]. Girls' use of social networks is more beneficial as it reduces their feelings of isolation, girls are better at expressing themselves and socializing than boys, and are more likely to develop close online relationships. While the boys' shortcomings in social skills, such as the tone of their feedback on matters, can lead to a diminished and impaired sense of well-being and happiness, which can have an impact on their depression. The reduction of depression among adolescents is associated with the positive use of social media and the social support they receive from their friends. When adolescents utilize social media in a correct and positive manner, it serves as a bridge between their well-being and the alleviation of depression. In addition to this, not all adolescents who use these social software or mediums are potentially at risk of suffering from depressive moods and have a direct impact on their well-being.

4. Conclusions

After reading all the literature, it is concluded that two factors are the major source of influence: self-satisfaction and escaping from real life. Here are a few reasons why modern teenagers are so

dependent on the internet. Teenagers rely too much on the internet to the point of addiction, as activities such as games on the internet provide them with peace of mind and a brief escape from the real world, as well as a desire to be free from the virtual world, but this can also further exacerbate social anxiety. At the same time, teenagers have a higher desire for the outside world and a stronger sense of expectation and dependence on social media, so they will send pictures of themselves with high satisfaction on social media, but this will also lead to physical dissatisfaction of most teenagers. At the same time, the social pressure is also increasing, and for today's teenagers, immersing themselves in social media can make them feel better about themselves and leave the real world behind.

Author Contribution

All the authors contributed equally, and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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