



## ROLE OF PERSONALITY TRAITS IN INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

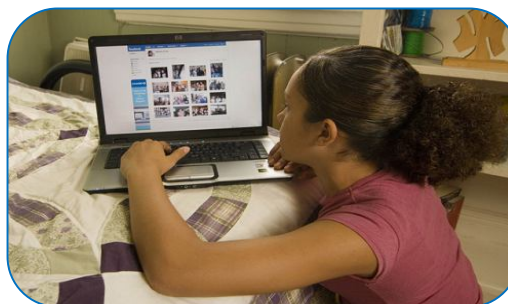
Ravinder Kumar<sup>1</sup>, Vinod<sup>2</sup>, Anupam<sup>3</sup> and Dr. Naresh Kumar<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Dept. of Psychology, MDU, Rohtak.

<sup>2</sup>Research Scholar, Dept. of Psychology, MDU, Rohtak.

<sup>3</sup>Resource person Dept. of Psychology, CRS University, Jind.

<sup>4</sup>Clinical Psychologist, H.No. 2085, N.H.B, Sector-1, Rohtak, Haryana.



### ABSTRACT:

Present study was planned to investigate the role of personality traits in internet addictive behavior of young adults as previous researches shows that this is the stage in which people are more prone to use internet. A purposive sample of 108 young adults of both the gender with the age range of 20 to 25 years was taken in present study. The minimum educational qualification of the participants was graduation and they have ability to read write and understand English language. To achieve the purpose of the study Internet addiction Test (IAT; Kimberly Young, 1998) and NEO-Five Personality Factor Questionnaire (Costa & McCrae, 1992) were used in the present study. To examine the role of personality traits in internet addiction correlation and multiple regression coefficient analysis were computed. Results of the present study showed statistically strong association between personality traits and internet addiction. In multiple regression coefficient neuroticism factor of personality emerged as a positive predictor of internet addiction while extraversion factor determine or predict internet addiction in negative direction.

**KEYWORDS:** Personality traits, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and internet addiction.

### INTRODUCTION

Now a day's internet has become global city for all the people of this world with the help of this new technology we can easily communicate throughout the world at a single moment of time. Internet has provided us various types of social media by which we can easily interact with each other like (whatsapp, instagram, facebook and twitter ) and most of its effect can be seen on to the young generation young people spend a lot of their time in chatting, surfing new things and also in playing up a lot of online games. Its use can also take up an adverse form also when we keep on using the internet very frequently then it can get transformed into internet addiction which can have a very devastating effect onto our day to day life. The term internet addiction is a new kind of disorder that was first described by Kimberly young in 1996.

Internet addiction has been traditionally defined as an uncontrollable and damaging use of the Internet, and conceptually framed as a compulsive-impulsive phenomenon, one of those in the spectrum of impulse-control disorders as discussed in the literature. In the present era of information and technology computers and all other digital equipments play a very vital role in each and every aspect of the person's life. Now, computers, laptops and all other digital devices are considered as a very integral part without which no person can carry out his/her work.

Nowadays it has become a trend that people are not only using up the internet services for their professional or educational purposes but it also has become a very big platform for making and maintaining social relationships with the other person. Every coin has two side so it is also true for internet also being a important tool that provide us a lot of benefits it can also have its negative effects like social isolation and low self esteem (Tsai, Cheng, Yeh, Shih, Chen, Yang & Yang, 2009). Some of the researchers also shows that it has also lead to increase in aggression and impulsive behaviors, (Kim, Campbell, Mahoney, Chan, Molyneux & May, 2008), male gender and neurotic personality characteristics (Tsai et. al., 2009) and its over usage also tend to degrade the subjective well-being of the person addictive to it. (Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukopadhyay & Scherlis, 1998).

Therefore, many research findings also show that personality traits can also be considered as the predictors of Internet addiction. Personality traits can explain different behaviors on the Internet (Zhong, Zu, Sha, Tao, Zhao, Yang, Li & Sha, 2011). Moreover, the traits of the personality, parenting style and influence of the family, alcohol abuse, and social anxiety can be considered as the predictive factors of Internet addiction disorder (Ko, Yen, Yen & Chen, 2011). According to Amichai-Hamburger, these studies play a very important role because the traits of the personality are considered as significant factor in determining a person's behavior while he/she is using the internet (Amichai & Artzi, 2003).

The five dimensions of personality add significantly to the variance explained by gender and Facebook experience concerning time spent on Facebook (De Cock, Vangeel, Klein, Minotte, Rosas, Meerkerk, 2014). Results of the research findings shows that the big five personality dimensions that are extraversion, openness to experience, neuroticism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are correlated with internet addiction or high internet usage. A study carried out on internet addiction amongst a Taiwanese sample, Tsai et al. (2009) surveyed 1,360 University students and found that 17.9% of the sample can be categorized as internet addicted the results of the study shows that high score on neuroticism are significantly positively correlated with internet addiction. In relation to high use of Internet applications, the research done by Ehrenberg, Juckes, White and Walsh (2008) revealed people who have high score on neuroticism reported stronger mobile phone addiction. Yan, Li and Sui (2014) investigated the relationship between Internet addiction, personality, stressful life events and family functioning in 892 college students. The results of their study shows that participants with very high or severe addiction to internet (9%) are having difficulties in smooth functioning of their families they have low level of extraversion found high on neuroticism, and psychoticism and they also tend to face more stressful life situations as compared to the non-addicted participants.

Study conducted by Mehroof and Griffiths' (2010) revealed that neuroticism was correlated with online gaming addiction. Recent research by Li, Zou, Wang and Yang (2016) reported that 4.8% of subjects into their Chinese sample of 651 subjects were identified as having addiction of the online games; these addicts also had high scores on the dimension of neuroticism as compared to the non-addicts subjects and also tend to opt for the avoidant coping style. Researches also show trait of extraversion as highly correlated with uses of Internet. Research carried out by Servidio (2014) on Italian students has revealed that there exist a negative correlation between the internet addiction and extraversion. Other researches also show that there exist a positive correlation between internet addiction and extraversion.

People who are found to be high o extraversion and on openness to experience are tend to be members of more groups on Facebook, and also wants to get more and more socialize by using up the socializing function (Ross, Orr, Sisic, Arseneault, Simmering & Orr. 2009), extraversion (together with depression) has been found to be linked to Facebook addiction study carried out by (Hwang, 2014) reported that a combination of online gaming and openness to experience increased Internet addiction risk. Servidio (2014) reported that there was a positive association between openness and Internet addiction.

Ko et al. (2010) reported that novelty seeking, which is part of openness, was related to Internet addiction, the authors concluded that college students with a high rate of novelty-seeking might appreciate Internet activities with higher motivation and excitement; this behavioural involvement may make students prone to problematic Internet use.

In the light of previous researches of personality and organization psychology, it was decided to study the role of personality traits in internet addiction of Young adults. To achieve present objective of the research, following research problem was formulated.

**PROBLEM:** Role of personality traits in Internet addiction among young adults.

**OBJECTIVE:**

on the basis of the problem following objectives were formulated

1. To find the relation between Internet addiction and personality traits among young adults.
2. To study the role of Internet Addiction on personality traits among young adults.

**HYPOTHESIS:**

Following hypothesis were formulated

1. There will be significant relationship between personality traits and Internet addiction.
2. Personality traits will found to be significant predictor of Internet Addiction.

**METHOD:**

**RESEARCH DESIGN:**

A Correlational design was used to study the role of personality traits in Internet Addiction among Adults.

**SAMPLE:** A purposive sample of 108 young adults of both the gender with the age range of 20 to 25 years was taken in present study. The minimum educational qualification of the participants was graduation and they have ability to read write and understand English language. It was assured that all the participants were healthy and free from any types of medical history; has similar socio-economic background. All participants complete a package of appropriate questionnaires

**MEASURES:**

- **Internet addiction Test (IAT; Kimberly Young, 1998).** This test consists of 20 self – report items to assess the internet Addiction. Response category for each statement is based on 5-point Likert's scale ranging from 1 rarely to 5 always in which 0 means not applicable. Interpretation of item is quite easy and the scores of the individual is defined the time spent on the computer. IAT have satisfactory reliability (Cronbach's alpha was calculated .90, spearman brown value was 0.86 and factor analysis used to determine the validity of the test.
- **NEO-Five Personality Factor Questionnaire (Costa & McCrae, 1992).** The test consist 60 self reported items to assess the five basic personality factors. The items ranked on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) that assessed the five-factor model of personality including: neuroticism (N), agreeableness (A), and conscientiousness (C), extraversion (E) and openness (O) factors.

**PROCEDURE:** to meet the objective of the present study, participants were contacted individually. The purpose of the study was informed to the participants. After establishing the rapport with participants those who gave their written consent were further provided with the standardized instructions verbally for each questionnaire or scale further it was ensured that each participant had completed the given set of measures in a single setting. At the end of the administration, it was ensured that every participant has responded properly to each statement and the session was terminated with the vote of thanks for their cooperation.

**RESULTS**

**Table 1**  
*Intercorrelation matrix of Internet addiction and personality traits*

Variable	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
Internet Addiction	<b>.321**</b>	<b>-.344**</b>	<b>.206*</b>	-.166	-.109

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Intercorrelation matrix shows the significant correlation between internet addiction and personality traits. There is positive correlation between neuroticism and Internet addiction ( $r = +.321^{**}$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ), Openness to experience ( $r = +.206^*$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ) and negatively correlated with extraversion ( $r = -.344^{**}$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). On the other side internet addiction is statistically not correlated with Agreeableness ( $r = -.166$ , NS) and conscientiousness ( $r = -.109$ , NS).

**Table 2**  
*Multiple Regression analysis Results related to the extent to which Personality traits predict Internet addiction.*

Variables	B	$\beta$ (Beta value)	t-value	Sig.
Neuroticism	.553	.242	2.671	.009
Extroversion	-.688	-.271	-3.002	.003
Openness	.418	.148	1.668	.098
Agreeableness	-.380	-.106	-1.175	.243
Conscientiousness	.010	.004	.046	.964

$R = .467$ ,  $R^2 = .21$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$

As shown in table 2, dimensions of personality traits; neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness explain nearly 21 percent of total variance in overall internet addiction ( $R = .467$ ,  $R^2 = .21$ ,  $F = 5.750$ ,  $p \leq 0.001$ ). The findings obtained through multiple regression coefficient described neuroticism and significantly predict the internet addiction behavior. On the other Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness not statistically predict addictive behavior of internet.

According to the multiple regression coefficient, the significant predictors of Internet Addiction can be given in order of importance as follows: Neuroticism ( $\beta = .242$ ), Extraversion ( $\beta = -.271$ ). The total 21% variance shows that these construct as very significant predictor of internet addiction.

**DISCUSSION:**

Table 1 inter-correlation matrix shows that both internet addiction and neuroticism are significantly positively correlated, means as the level of neuroticism increases a person also start spending most of his time on internet surfing or on internet websites. This may be because of the reason that people who are high on neuroticism are tend to be less emotionally stable and they are also more prone to guilt that's why they keep on avoiding the companies of other people and tend to devote most of their time on internet. The obtained correlational values for extraversion also there exist a significant negative correlation between extraversion and internet addiction that means people who are more extraverted tend to spend very less time on internet The reason behind this, can be that the extraverted person always enjoy being in company of others instead of spending up their time on

internet. Results also revealed that third dimension of personality that is openness to experience is significantly positively associated with internet addictive behavior. People who spend more time with the internet, may be they are in searching of some new content e.g. social websites, social media, chatting and any other material related to their work. Similar association were studied in previous researches e. g. Ko et al., (2012) and De Cock et al., (2014) which exhibits a strong relationship internet addiction and personality traits.

Table-2 of multiple regression analysis showed that only one of the personality traits that is, neuroticism positively predict the internet addiction. Neurotic tendencies and internet addictive behavior both are negative in nature. Neuroticism refers to feeling of worry, depressed mood, guilt, emotional instability, anxious, irritable. Personality dimension extraversion also emerged as a significant negative predictor of internet addiction it shows that people who are more social and extrovert experience less internet addictive behavior.

Thus both the hypotheses have been proved that personality traits are associated with internet addiction and personality traits play a crucial role in internet addiction. Previous researches (Zhong, 2011; Ko et al., 2012; Amichai-Hamburger, 2002; De Cock et al., 2014) stated that personality factors play a significant role in internet addiction behavior. Personality traits are more stable which to some extent determine our interests and priorities regarding internet and technology.

## REFERENCES

- Amichai-Hamburger Y, Ben-Artzi E. (2003). Loneliness and Internet use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 19(1): 71-80
- Costa, P. T., Jr., & McCrae, R. R. (1992). NEO PI-R professional manual. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.
- De Cock R., Vangeel J., Klein A., Minotte P., Rosas O., Meerkerk G. J. (2014). Compulsive use of social networking sites in Belgium: Prevalence, profile, and the role of attitude toward work and school. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 17(3), 166–171.
- Demkanin, P. (2008). One small, but significant step in science education in Slovakia. In P. Demkanin, B. Kibble, J. Lavonen, J. G. Mas, & J. Turlo Eds., *Effective use of ICT in science education*. 120–140. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, School of Education
- Ehrenberg, A., Juckes, S., White, K. M., & Walsh, S. P. (2008). Personality and self-esteem as predictors of young people's technology use. *Cyberpsychology & Behavior*, 11(6), 739-741.
- Hawi, N. S. (2012). Internet addiction among adolescents in Lebanon. In: *Computers in Human Behavior* 28(3): 1044–1053.
- Hirzalla, F., Van Zoonen, L. (2008). *Uses of the Web for Civic Participation: výskumná správa*. London: Institute of Education. 140 pages. <http://www.civicweb.eu/images/stories/reports/wp9civicwebdeliverable8.pdf>
- Horrigan, J., Rainie, L. 2006. The internet's growing in life's major moments. Retrieved August 30,
- Host'ovecký, M. Zatlková, T. (2010). Options for implementing videoconferencing system in a combined form of education. In: *Acta Universitatis Facultatis Paedagogicae Tyrnaviensis*. Ser. C – Trnava, 157-16
- Hwang, Y. (2014). Personal Characters and Addictive Use of Facebook. *Journal of the Korea Society of IT Services*, 13(4), 45-63
- Kim, J., Campbell, B., Mahoney, N., Chan K., Molyneux, R., & May, G. (2008) Chemosensitization prevents tolerance of *Aspergillus fumigatus* to antimycotic drugs. *Biochem Biophys Res Commun* 372(1), 266-271.
- Ko, C. H., Hsiao, S., Liu, G. C., Yen, J. Y., Yang, M. J., & Yen, C. F. (2010). The characteristics of decision making, potential to take risks, and personality of college students with Internet addiction. *Psychiatry Research*, 175(1), 121-125
- Ko, C. H., Yen, J.Y., Yen, C. F., & Chen, C. S. (2011). The association between Internet addiction and psychiatric disorder: A review of the literature. *European Psychiatry* 27(1), 1-8.

- Kraut R., Patterson, M., Lundmark, V., Kiesler, S., Mukopadhyay, T., & Scherlis, W. (1998). Internet paradox. A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? *American Psychologist*, 53(9) 1017-31.
- Kuss, D. J., Griffiths, M. D., & Binder, J. F. (2013). Internet addiction in students: Prevalence and risk factors. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(3), 959–966.
- Li, H., Zou, Y., Wang, J., & Yang, X. (2016). Role of Stressful Life Events, Avoidant Coping Styles, and Neuroticism in Online Game Addiction among College Students: A Moderated Mediation Model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7.
- Maltby, J., Day, L., & Macaskill, A. (2010). *Personality, individual differences and intelligence* (2nd ed.). Essex, UK: Pearson Education Limited
- Mehroof, M., & Griffiths, M. D. (2010). Online gaming addiction: The role of sensation seeking, self-control, neuroticism, aggression, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 13(3), 313–316
- Ross, C., Orr, E. S., Siscic, M., Arseneault, J. M., Simmering, M. G., & Orr, R. R. (2009). Personality and Motivations associated with Facebook Use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 25(2), 578–586.
- Servidio, R. (2014). Exploring the effects of demographic factors, Internet usage and personality traits on Internet addiction in a sample of Italian university students. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 35, 85–92.
- Tsai, H. F., Cheng, S. H., Yeh, T. L., Shih, C. C., Chen, K. C., Yang, Y. C., & Yang, Y. K. (2009). The risk factors of Internet addiction—a survey of university freshmen. *Psychiatry Research*, 167(3), 294–299.
- Yan, W., Li, Y., & Sui, N. (2014). The relationship between recent stressful life events, personality traits, perceived family functioning and internet addiction among college students. *Stress and Health*, 30(1), 3–11.
- Zhong, X., Zu, S., Sha, S., Tao, R., Zhao, C., Yang, F., Li, M., & Sha, P. (2011). The effect of a family-based intervention model on Internet-addicted Chinese adolescents. *Social Behavior and Personality: An international journal*, 39, 1021-1034.



**Ravinder Kumar**  
Research Scholar, Dept. of Psychology, MDU, Rohtak.



**Vinod**  
Research Scholar, Dept. of Psychology, MDU, Rohtak.



**Anupam**  
Resource person Dept. of Psychology, CRS University, Jind.



**Dr. Naresh Kumar**  
Clinical Psychologist, H.No. 2085, N.H.B, Sector-1, Rohtak, Haryana.