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Research proposal

CSE 300

Internet addiction is defined as any online-related compulsive behavior which interferes with normal living and causes severe stress on family, friends and loved ones. The internet grew in popularity when the world-wide web was introduced in 1990, although 28 years seems to be a long time, much is still unknown about the disorder known as internet addiction. Researchers are only now beginning to recognize internet addiction as a real disorder and people have started to do extensive research on how the behavior occurs. Research has been poured into how internet addiction begins, how to diagnose it, the negative impacts it has and how to treat it. My proposal dives into the area of demographic and how socio-economic status can influence the occurrence of internet addiction of adolescent people. The question of how socio-economic status can impact the probability that an adolescent will develop internet addiction can help researchers learn more about how money can influence a person to become internet addicted. This information can further help developing a strategy on how to combat internet addiction by knowing the demographic to focus on.

In the past 28 years scientists have been studying internet addiction. Researchers have extensively studied the negative impacts of internet addiction; internet addiction has negative impacts on a person's social life and mental health. In a journal named *Examination of the Correlation Between Internet Addiction and Social Phobia in Adolescents* published by *Western Journal of Nursing Research* they researched how

internet addiction in adolescents have caused them to develop a social phobia where they don't learn the proper social skills necessary later in life. Another article A Study on Internet Addiction among College Students states that internet addiction in college students can caused an onset of depression because they are isolated from everyone and the internet is the only source of positive interaction. Since internet addiction is not as old of a disorder as other behavioral disorders there still is not a clear definition of how to diagnose internet addiction. Analyst have begun to create of set of questions that relate to criteria that can help diagnose whether a person is internet addicted. Kimberly S. Young in a journal titled Internet Addiction stated a couple of question that she believes can help identify internet addiction. Questions like Have you repeatedly made unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop Internet use? Have you jeopardized or risked the loss of a significant relationship, job, educational or career opportunity because of the Internet? These questions relate to the definition of internet addiction where the user can no long behave normally without browsing the internet and how it can harm people around them. Scientist have also studied various other aspects of internet addiction. How it can manifest, the harmful effects of it and how it can be treated. Author Sunwoo Kim explains in his journal A Study of Internet Addiction: Status, Causes and Remedies, internet addiction usually occurs when the person begins to use the internet as a coping mechanism to deal with irregular emotions. He explains how people who cannot regulate their emotions properly use the internet as a way to escape reality and their problems only for little while before they have to go back and improperly handle their emotions. Internet addiction occurs because people use it as a way of instant gratification and don't want to deal the problems in their life. With this information

various researchers have found effective treatments of internet addiction, in the article named A 2-year longitudinal psychological intervention study on the prevention of internet addiction in junior high school students of Jinan city it describes a study that was conducted to investigate the effect of psychological intervention on the prevention of internet addiction. They found that psychological intervention can effectively improve the mental health of junior middle school students and help reduce the onset of internet addiction. My research proposal wants to extend the research scientist have put into the field of how internet addiction can take place. By researching different demographics of people of different socio-economic status we can learn more about causes of internet addiction and this in effect can help researchers know more about where to focus their attention when dealing with the probability of someone developing internet addiction. Research has been conducted on schools alone however when I think about the population of schools they almost all contain the same demographic. A school in the inner city will most likely have a lower income status than a school in a suburbia or a place more rural. These studies use specific schools only that can target only a small pocket of people with similar socio-economic status. My research will extend from these studies and study if the probability of internet addiction is higher or unaffected by socio-economic status by taking population samples from different schools with different economic environments.

My research will be a statistical analysis comparing house-hold income and internet addiction probability. The age range will be taking samples of adolescents from 13-18 years old. This age range is optimal because this is the time that a person can have the most vulnerability and be negatively impacted from internet addiction. This

crucial period of their lives is when they will transition from being a child to an adult. The next part is to determine which schools to study. The research will survey samples from different socio-economic environments. There are three categories that will be surveyed: lower class, middle class, upper class. We can use definitions of house hold incomes to categorize the samples. A household income below \$40,000 can be classified as lower class, between \$40,000 and \$100,000 can be said to be middle class and above \$100,000 are the people of the upper class. To find the corresponding schools to survey for each class information can be taken from the government census that ask questions about socio-economic status that can determine the average house-hold income in a selected region. Regions in the inner city will more likely have a lower income, that's where the research can survey lower class schools, whereas the upper class will be more likely to be in a suburban area. The sample populations have been set, now there needs to be a method to determine internet addiction. In multiple sources when researching internet addiction, the internet addiction test (IAT), which is a set of questions written by Kimberly Young, was administered to find out if a person was internet addicted. The test is to be given the entire population of the school of all grades. The first step of the analysis would be to find the percentage of the population from each school that was internet addicted. Next by comparing the percentage from each school in a different economic environment will be able to tell us if financial stability has a role to play in internet addiction. If there is a notable difference between each class, then there is evidence that their money does have a part to play. There could be the outcome that the middle and upper class have similar percentages, but the lower class could be significantly lower meaning there is a threshold that can be

reached to lower the chances of internet addiction. Or there could be no notable difference which would mean money does not have a major influence on the development of internet addiction.

By conducting this research, there will be progress understanding more about this newly created disorder. Most research determining the cause of internet addiction is in the psychological field, dealing with emotional regulation, this research proposes that economics also have an influential power over someone's behavior. If this research proves that the theory is correct I could help point scientist in a new direction on how to approach internet addiction by applying various aspects of upbringing into their research. It is imperative to understand more about internet addiction as there still is much that is unknown about it. By knowing new information about the demographic that internet addiction targets it can shed light onto other effective ways treat it by being about to focus on a specific population of people.

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