

The Impact of Parenting Styles, Peers, and Teachers on Internet Usage and Addiction among Secondary School Students in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Ibrahim

Azizi Yahaya, Halimah Maalip, Lee Jie Xin, Ismail Maakip, Balan Rathakrishnan, Niivethaa Murugayah, Hanun Ahmad, Nur Zahirah Abdul Hanif, Yeoh Von Cheng, Nordin Ajmain, Zeliha Mohammad Ali, Pg Razmahayati Pg Hj Mahmud

Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah

Correspondent Author Email: ateh_halimah@yahoo.com

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Abstract

The internet usage and addiction of the students has been the area of concern since internet has been used in teaching and learning approach in this new era. Therefore, this study was conducted to identify the influences of parenting styles, peers, and teachers on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students in Johor, Malaysia. This research was carried out using a quantitative method in which 200 students from ages 13 to 17 were selected randomly to take part in answering the survey form. The number of respondents was determined by using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) method of sampling. The survey form was divided into five parts, Part A demography, Part B internet usage and addiction, Part C influences of parenting styles, Part D influences of peers, and Part E influences of teachers. The reliability and validity for each of the variables were measured using Cronbach's alpha where all four variables are said to have $\alpha > 0.5$. Part B with ($\alpha = 0.883$), Part C ($\alpha = 0.851$), Part D ($\alpha = 0.744$), and Part E with ($\alpha = 0.695$). Based on the findings, it has been identified that the most dominant factor of parenting style is the permissive style as it has the highest value of mean, 3.72 compared to authoritarian (3.32), authoritative (3.52), and neglectful (3.25). This study showed that the involvement level of peers is moderate with the mean value of 3.42 and as well as teachers' involvement (3.24). While parenting styles, peers, and teachers are good predictors of internet usage and addiction among secondary school students. with the value $F(2,97) = 35.24$ $P < 0.05$. These three independent variables, which are parenting styles, peers, and teachers predicted internet usage and addiction among secondary school students. Given this, all three variables (e.g., parenting styles, and peers and teachers) have an impact on students' addiction to the internet. The implications of the study where it could raise parents' and public awareness and understanding to minimize internet addiction among the younger generation. While for students, it can boost their self-esteem to prevent peer

pressure, which can lead to internet addiction. With the limitation of this study, further research could be conducted especially on how parents and educators could monitor and control the internet usage, also the effects of internet addiction to students' mental health.

Keywords: Parenting, Peers, Internet Usage, Internet Addiction

Introduction

Internet was first introduced to the world in the 1990s and it is being widely used up to this day, across the globe (Abbate, 2000). The rapid growth of the internet can be seen as it takes just three years to reach around 50 million users. This is because it has become a necessity to use the internet as people are depending on the information from platforms on the net such as emailing, booking flight tickets online, keeping updated with the world news, online texting and the list goes on. In addition, the internet is also being widely used as a source of entertainment. In 2006, it was said that 21% of the world population uses the net for entertainment purposes and it increase to 64% drastically in the year 2008 for the same reason. From this survey, it can be concluded on the significance of the usage of the internet in people's daily lives (Cole et al., 2018). The usage of the internet can also be related to the usage of mobile phones because it is no longer a luxury item and students use it in class as a tool of learning. Therefore, teenagers never miss using the internet in their free time at school (Melani & Lutfi, 2020).

Even though internet addiction is not considered a mental disorder. However, there are a lot of people who use the internet excessively, and many studies are being conducted that try to explain internet addiction as a rare disorder. Besides, Fatema et. al (2020), said that internet addiction has a severe influence on students' academic performance and social lives. Internet usage and addiction had brought a lot of problems for teenagers, such as poor mental health and poor academic performance, influenced secondary school students' behavior, and affected their social life or relationship with family members. For instance, students who face internet addiction problems will easily get depressed, angry, or anxious when they are without the internet for an hour.

Peer pressure may have an impact on each student's life and behavior, from the taste of music to school topic selection. Although students can discover friendship and acceptance among their peers, using the internet sometimes will influence students to face internet addiction problems and bring some negative effects on their behavior. Peers can influence students because they want to fit in, be just like the peers they admire, follow what others do, or acquire what others have. When a low self-esteem student was encouraged by friends to play video games and use social media, this might lead the students to face internet addiction problems and increase their usage on the internet.

Teachers are people who have a close relationship with students and play an important role in schools, in teaching students about the knowledge of the internet. A study found by Blazar (2017) showed that teachers may assist their students to acquire critical attitudes and behaviors for self-improvement. Teachers in schools who are concerned with how to manage students' internet addiction will take some action such as conducting an event for students. Besides, during the pandemic Covid-19 teachers use the internet to teach students, so this will give a chance for students to use the internet and also increase the usage of the internet among students.

Statement of Problem

Based on the issue stated in the previous section, therefore, in this study, we would like to understand the effect of parenting styles, peers, and teachers on the usage of the internet and internet addiction among secondary school students in Johor, Malaysia. From this study, we can bring some contributions to the academic field and can serve as a reference for any education interventions or strategies that can be implemented by educators, especially parents and teachers, to ensure that students can avoid the problem of internet addiction and use the internet wisely.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of parenting styles, peers, and teachers on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students in Malaysia and also determine the differences between gender and parents' employment with parenting styles, peers, and teachers. Parenting styles can also be associated with parent's attachment that can be an effect on children as mentioned by Chua, Chua & Agnis (2017) that there is a positive effect on the parent's attachment toward global self-worth among adolescents.

Research Framework

The uses and Gratifications (U&G) framework by Stafford, Stafford & Schkade (2004) was used to integrate parenting styles, peers', and teachers' constructs. This is due to the suitability of this method that can be ensured to be used for this mentioned research. By using this method, the influence of parenting styles, peers, and teachers on internet usage and addiction among students in Malaysia can be studied. Based on the model, Figure 1 below shows the modified U&G according to the aforementioned topic of this research.

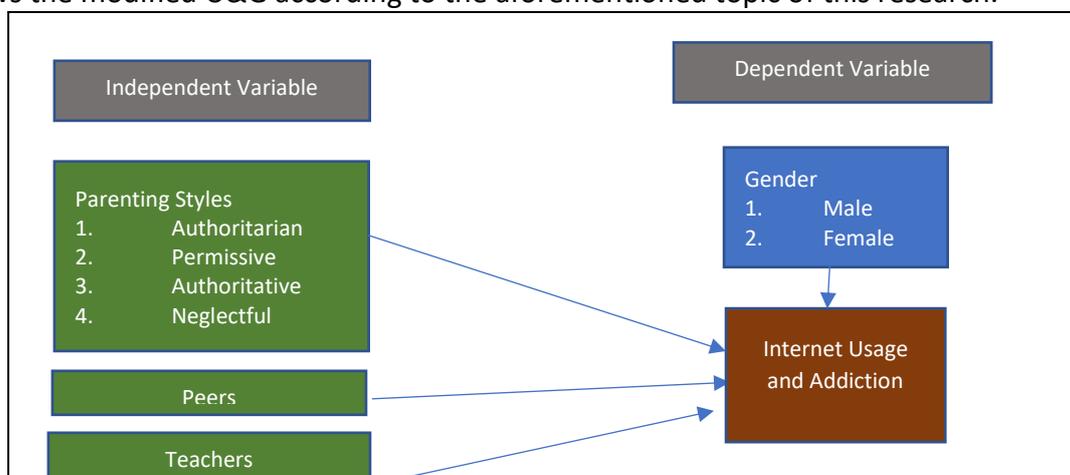


Figure 1: Uses and Gratifications of the Influence of Parenting Styles, Peers, and Teachers on the Internet Usage and Addiction among Secondary School Students in Johor.

Methodology

Population and Study Sample

The population size for this research is 200 students from ages 13 to 17 (Form 1 to Form 5) from one school in the District of Skudai in Johor were employed. The sample size was chosen from the population size and the participants were chosen randomly. This is because the population size only includes 200 students so students from all over the states in Malaysia are not needed. The sample size was determined based on (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). The reason why not all students from all over the states were chosen is due to the number of respondents that we have chosen. Since this research only needed 200 respondents from one

particular school, the focus does not have to be on every school in Malaysia as it might affect the reliability of our findings. Secondly, this type of sample was also chosen because these 200 students could be reached easily to collect information for our research as compared to students from other states. Besides, as previously mentioned a drop in the academic level of this particular secondary school was noticed. It has been decided to focus thoroughly on this school to enhance a better outcome from the research. The survey was administered to the students online.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used by the researcher to conduct this study is in the form of a questionnaire. According to Krosnick (2018), a questionnaire as an instrument is a very effective way to obtain information from respondents. It is also suitable for use in the study of internet usage and addiction among secondary school students as this survey was carried out through Google Form which is an online platform. This allows the researcher not to have to meet face to face with the respondents to distribute the questionnaire. In addition, by using the questionnaire, respondents do not need to write their names, and this allows them to answer honestly. There were some modifications made to the survey form.

The survey form is divided into five parts. Part A is on demography which is included questions related to the background of the respondent. For this section, most of the items were retained except for some parts such as parents' educational level and the time of internet usage. For Part B, the questions related to internet usage and addiction were used but have been modified more simply for the respondents to understand them better. Meanwhile, for Part C, which is about the influence of parents the question has been shortened so that it would be easier for the respondent to understand. In addition, the questions for this part were also divided according to the types of parenting styles for better analysis and to provide a reliable outcome.

For Part D, the influence of peers, and Part E the influence of teachers, additional relevant questions were created to support the study. However, by doing these modifications, each variable in this research is proved to be reliable enough as the $\alpha > 0.5$ for each stated variable. (Please refer to Table 1: Reliability Statistics of all Variables).

Pilot Study and Reliability

A small test was carried out with a sample of 132 students. This is done to ensure that the initial research can produce reliable and valid outcomes from the research that we wanted to conduct which is with a population of 200 students. Table 2 below shows the reliability of the pilot study conducted with 132 samples. Hence, the pilot study shows that the items used in this research are reliable to be carried out for research of a larger number of samples as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Reliability Statistics of all Variables

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha
Internet usage and addiction	0.883
Influence of parenting styles	0.851
Influence of peers	0.744
Influence of teachers	0.695
Overall	0.793

Result

In this section, the data were analysed based on the information from the survey form. The descriptive data analysis is made according to parts of the survey and the results are shown in Tables 2, 3, and 4 below. While the inferential analysis is made to determine the hypotheses of the study.

Table 2

Demography of the Respondents

Demography	Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Age	13	32	16.0
	14	33	16.0
	15	50	25.0
	16	37	18.0
	17	48	24.0
Gender	Male	109	54.5
	Female	91	45.5
Races	Malay	70	35.0
	Chinese	59	29.5
	Indians	54	27.0
	Others	17	8.5
Father's Education Level	PhD	18	9.0
	Masters	30	15.0
	Degree	60	30.0
	Diploma/STPM/Foundation	43	21.5
	SPM	22	11.0
Mother's Education Level	Others	27	13.5
	PhD	18	9.0
	Masters	25	12.5
	Degree	52	26.0
	Diploma/STPM/Foundation	48	24.0
Location	SPM	30	15.0
	Others	27	13.0
	Urban	91	45.5
Parents Working Sector	Rural	67	33.5
	Village	42	21.0
	Government	80	40.0
Parents Working Sector	Private	85	42.5
	Self-employed	35	17.5

Internet	Home	176	88.0
Surveying Place	Café	10	5.0
	School	7	3.5
	Friends/Relatives' house	7	3.5
Time of using the Internet	Less than 4 hours	30	15.0
	Less than 8 hours	51	25.5
	Less than 12 hours	56	28.0
	Less than 16 hours	31	15.5
	Less than 20 hours	31	16.0
TOTAL		200	100.0

Table 2 above shows the results of the respondents' demography of the study conducted related to internet usage and addiction among secondary school students of Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Ibrahim. The result shows that there are students of age 13 years with a percentage of 16%, 14 years (16%), 15 years (25%), 16 years (18%), and 17 years with 24% in total. Meanwhile, the genders of the respondents are 54.5% of male and 45.5% of female. For races, the respondents are Malays (35%), Chinese (29.5%), Indians (27%), and the rest are 8%. For respondents' father's educational level, the result shows there are 9% of them have a PhD, 15% have a Master's, 30% of Degree holders, 21.5% have a Diploma/STPM/Foundation, 11% have SPM, and the rest are 15.5%. Meanwhile, for mothers' education, there are 9% of PhD and Master's holders respectively, 12.5% of them have a degree, 24% have Diploma/STPM/Foundation, 15% have SPM, and the rest are 13%.

In terms of the location of the respondent, 45.5% of them are from urban areas, 33.5% are from rural, and 21% are from the village. For the category of parent's working sector, 40% of the student's parents are working under the government, 42.5% in the private sector, and 17.5% are self-employed. Next, for the place where the respondents use the internet, it shows that 88% of them use it from home, 5% from cafés, 3.5% from school, and friends/relatives' houses respectively. For the final item, in which to see how long the students have surveyed the internet, the result shows that 15% of them use the internet for less than 4 hours, 25.5% of the students use less than 8 hours, 28% of them use less than 12 hours, 15.5% of the students use less than 16 hours, and 16% of them use the internet less than 20 hours. These are the items that were found in the demography of this research and its percentages.

Hypothesis 1: There are no differences in gender between parenting styles, peers, and teachers on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students.

Table 3

T-Test Analysis to Determine Differences in Gender between Parenting Style, Peers, and Teachers

		F	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Internet	Male	.805	-.471	198	.638
	Female		-.476	196.994	.635
Parents	Male	.014	-.743	198	.458
	Female		-.745	193.148	.457
Peers	Male	.363	-.182	197	.856
	Female		-.181	187.798	.857
Teachers	Male	.239	-.600	197	.549
	Female		-.602	193.667	.548

According to the t-test results in Table 3, $t(198) = 0.471$, $p > 0.05$, two-tailed, since the difference was not significant, hence it can be said that Internet has no significant differences in terms of gender, as $p = 0.638$. Parents where $t(198) = -0.743$, $p > 0.05$, $p = 0.458$. While peers show $t(197) = -0.182$, $p > 0.05$ where $p = 0.856$ and teachers shows that $t(197) = -0.600$, $p > 0.05$ where $p = 0.549$. It has been proven that there are no significant differences in gender between parenting style, peers, and teachers on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Ibrahim.

Hypothesis 2: Parenting styles, peers, and teachers are not good predictors of internet usage and addiction among secondary school students in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Ibrahim.

Table 4

Regression Analysis between Parenting Styles, Peers, and Teachers are the Good Predictor on the Internet Usage and Addiction among Secondary School Students.

Regression

Model	R	RSquare	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	.589 ^a	.346	.340	.49923	.346	51.938	.433	4.875	.000
2	.649 ^b	.421	.409	.47236	.074	12.465	.314	3.531	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Peers

b. Predictors: (Constant), Peers, Parents

c. Dependant Variable: Internet

Model 1: $F(1,98) = 51.94$ $p < 0.05$

Model 2: $F(2,97) = 35.24$ < 0.05

Based on Table 4, the analysis of R^2 for model 1 (Peers) is 0.346. The smaller the R^2 , the less capable independent variables (peers) to explain the dependent variable. (Internet), $F(1,98) = 51.94$ $p < 0.05$. When viewed on the Beta, dimensions of peers (beta = 0.433, $t = 4.875$, Sig = 0.000 and $R^2 = 0.346$). This means that the proposed model fits the data in a percentage of only 34.6 per cent. The conclusion is also supported by the analysis of variance is significant

that the value of 0.000 is significantly lower than the specified significant level of 0.05. This finding means that the first influence of peers shown by the first model accounted for a 34.6 per cent increase in change criterion (internet).

Table 4 also shows that the value analysis of R^2 for model 2 (peers and parents) is 0.421. The smaller the R^2 , the less capable the independent variable (parents) to explain the dependent variable (internet), $F(2,97) = 35.24$ $P < 0.05$. Based on Table 10 when viewed on the Beta, parent dimension (beta = 0.314, $t = 3.531$, Sig = 0.001 and $R^2 = 0.074$). This means that the proposed model fits the data in the percentage is only 42.1 per cent only. The conclusion is also supported by the analysis of variance is significant that the value of 0.000 is significantly lower than the specified significant level of 0.05. This finding means that the second influencer which is parents demonstrated by the two models accounted for 42.1 per cent of additional changes in criterion (internet).

Discussion

Demography and Dominant Factors to Internet Addiction

According to the result from the analyzed data, the most dominant factor of parenting style is the Permissive style as it has the highest value of the mean ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.71$). Meanwhile, Authoritarian ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.73$), Authoritative ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.73$), and Neglectful ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.82$). It is found that the permissive style is the most dominant factor with the highest mean value, exerted by parents, make them feel appreciated and do not mind restricting their kids to certain rules being pressuring them, has given the children unwanted freedom which they misuse to surf unnecessary websites and get addicted to the world of the internet (Hale, 2008; Nijhof & Engels, 2007; Talib et al., 2011)

The result shows that level of peers' involvement has a mean value of 3.52 and an std. of 0.58. This means that the level is moderate as the mean value lies between the moderate range of 2.34 to 3.67. It was psychologically proven that most individuals crave the feeling of belongings or friendship. These can be analysed from two points of view, one is from the outcome of a negative side meanwhile another one is from the positive side (Dave, 2022; Guan & Subrahmanyam, 2009). Some students are very extroverted and easy-going in that they do not have the pressure or problems mingling with anyone and make friends easily (Noprianto, 2017).

The result shows that the level of teachers' involvement is at a moderate level. However, Erikson has stated that schooling is significant to children as they will easily gain the feeling of wanting to discover their interests and perform well when they are surrounded and encouraged by teachers, which is called gaining feelings of inferiority (Orenstein & Lewis, 2021; Syed & McLean, 2017). Besides that, teachers are said to be the second parents of every child at school as they spend most of their time with teachers.

Differences of Gender between Parenting Style, Peers, and Teachers in the Internet Usage

According to the results of the analysis that has been conducted, it is found that there are no significant differences in gender between parenting style, peers, and teachers on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students. Most students need the internet in their school curriculum, especially during the pandemic, but some students become addicted to internet activities and parenting styles are closely related to students' addiction to the

internet (Tur-Porcar, 2017). However, most modern parents understand the importance of the internet to students, so they do their best to provide their children with opportunities to use the internet. Meanwhile, most single-parent children who set strict limits on their parenting styles are well raised, whether it's just a mom or a dad (Chua et al., 2020).

In terms of peers, no matter what gender of peers, students will be affected by internet use and addiction. This is because every student will have male or female friends with similar interests and social status or background, so they will influence those around them. Especially during early adolescence, students tend to spend more time with their peers. When students want to be accepted by their friends and attach importance to themselves, they will choose to do things that they would not normally do but that their peers like to cater to their friends (Tomé et al., 2012).

However, this study also found that there was no significant difference in gender between teachers on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students. In this age of technology, both male and female secondary school teachers require and encourage students to use the internet to hand in homework. As students, they all must complete the courses according to the requirements of both male and female teachers, such as using e-learning to study. Compared with face-to-face teaching, e-learning using the internet is not easy for students and teachers, nor is it easy for students to understand the classroom, but the teachers still had to use this platform as that is the only way to conduct classes during the pandemic (Siddiquei et al., 2021).

In short, we can conclude that there are no significant differences in gender between parenting styles, peers, and teachers on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students. This is because parents, peers, and teachers are factors that are said to have a significant impact on the child or student's internet addiction as previously stated in the above paragraphs with supported findings (Kayla, 2014). Besides, students as well get addicted to the internet to be friends with all genders on social media platforms. Thus, the hypothesis of this finding shows that it is indeed not significant.

Parenting styles, peers, and teachers are not good predictors of internet usage and addiction.

The results of regression analysis showed that only peers and parents were a direct effect on internet usage and addiction among secondary students. Parents play an important role that can affect students' behavior regarding internet usage and addiction. In a study by Sarina et al (2014), in Malaysia, parents, and guardians have varying reactions to their children's online activities and behaviors, with just 4 out of 10 parents knowing what their children have been doing and they are accessing during their online time. Furthermore, parents who do not monitor their children's social media and care about their children, it will cause the children to face some social problems such as internet addiction and unruly behavior. While research by Yu et al (2012) stated that parents who monitor their children a lot have a good understanding of their children's behavior, such as knowing what their children have done when they access the internet, while parents who less monitor their kids mostly are not clear about what their children are doing with the computer. During the Covid-19 pandemic, there are a lot of students who study online, and this had caused some parents to face new challenges to monitor their children.

The usage of the internet and internet addiction is common among secondary students. Nowadays students use the internet to connect with their friends, they play online games with their friends and share information with their friends through the internet. Peer influence on behaviors becomes common especially occurs during the stage of early adolescence (Zhu et. al, 2020). Peers will always support or encourage their friends to use the internet to prove that they fit in the group, thus best friends can influence each other's behavior, decision, and attitude towards things. In addition, a study by Gunuc (2017), found that when it comes to behavior, habits, attitudes, and personality, teenagers are remarkably like their peers. Besides, from the social identity theory, individuals tend to choose a group that has similarities to theirs. In other words, those who are addicted to the internet will choose a friend who is equally addicted.

In conclusion, peers and parents are good predictors of internet usage and addiction among secondary school students. This is because the usage of the internet among students can be influenced by peers and parents and parents' parenting style could help students from becoming addicted and turning to Nomophobia. When a student with internet addiction is diagnosed with Nomophobia, he or she is to seek professional counsellors, clinical psychologists or psychiatrists for intervention (Koay et. al., 2019).

Conclusion

Findings are consistent with the outcomes of past research, while other outcomes diverge from those of past research. Through this study, it can be concluded that the parenting styles, peers, and teachers are the influences on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Ibrahim. The level of influence of parenting styles, peers, and teachers on internet usage and addiction among secondary school students was not high and is still at a safe level. However, this safe zone can change to an elevated level if they fail to control their Internet usage which will lead to Internet addiction.

Moreover, the result also found that race and location are not influence parenting styles, peers, and teachers on Internet usage and addiction among secondary school students. Lastly, the result shows that there is no significant difference between parenting styles, peers and teachers regarding gender and parents' employment sectors among secondary school students on Internet usage and addiction. In addition to offering improvements that can be addressed for future research, this study offers some ideas that are thought to be pertinent to the issue

Implications of the Study Results

From the findings and analysis of the research, parenting style, peers, and teachers had a significant impact among secondary students on the usage of the internet and internet addiction. As we all know, in this technological age, many Malaysian students face internet addiction problems. These findings have significant implications for society and educators, such as raising public awareness and understanding to improve the younger generation and minimize this problem among the younger generation. Moreover, from this research, we learn that it is important to reduce and solve this internet addiction problem because it brings negative impacts on our life and society. As a result, parents, peers, and teachers, as well as ourselves, must take full responsibility to solve this issue.

From this study, parents can have a better understanding of the importance to monitor their children's internet usage or social media, to prevent their children from facing the problem of internet addiction. There are still many parents who lack an understanding of the importance and strategies to monitor their children's internet usage (Maserumule, 2020). Thus, parents can have better guidelines to monitor their children's internet usage or social media, therefore the problems of internet addiction among students will be reduced. Moreover, from this research, students can boost their self-esteem to prevent peer pressure, which can lead to internet addiction. Self-esteem is one of the factors that might influence procrastination because people with poor self-esteem dread failing or avoiding negative repercussions (Chen, 2017).

In conclusion, this study has several benefits for us and society, such as offering recommendations and raising people's awareness and understanding of internet addiction. And we hope that everyone, especially parents and teachers, would take responsibility for preventing and reducing the internet addiction problem in our society.

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