CYBER PSYCHOLOGY:

Cyber psychology is a developing field that encompasses all psychological phenomenal associated with or affected by Emerging technology.

UTOPIANISM AND NEW TECHNOLOGY

Cyber-utopianism is the belief that online communication is emancipatory and that the internet favours the oppressed rather than the oppressor; which, has been present since the beginning of the internet and has been the subject of critique as early as 1995 by the Critical Art Ensemble. Utopian views of cyberspace were considerably diminished by the bursting of the dot-com bubble; however, such views re-emerged in the 2000–2010 period. Douglas Rushkoff notes that, "ideas, information, and applications now launching on Web sites around the world capitalize on the transparency, usability, and accessibility that the internet was born to deliver".

However, the rise of Internet censorship and surveillance and cyber sovereignty across the world has led to a growing number of "cyber skeptics", who argue that repressive governments are now able to adapt their tactics to respond to threats by using technology against dissenting movements.

Cyber-utopianism has been considered a derivative of Extropianism, in which the ultimate goal is to upload human consciousness to the internet.

Ray Kurzweil, especially in *The Age of Spiritual Machines*, writes about a form of cyber-utopianism known as the Singularity; wherein, technological advancement will be so rapid that life will become experientially different, incomprehensible, and advanced.

Internet addiction revisited

Internet use, overuse, abuse and addiction have been among the most intense areas of psychological inquiry in the last decade. As millions of people send billions of messages and posts on a daily basis, it becomes increasingly difficult to detect the line between what is addiction and what is a normal part of living in the digital age.

Dr. Kimberley Young is one of the most prominent experts in the world on Internet Addiction and related subjects. She founded the Center for Internet Addiction in 1995 and originated research on Internet Addiction in the US. In 1996, she presented the first paper on the topic at the American Psychological Association's annual conference entitled, *"Internet Addiction: The Emergence of a New Disorder."* Dr. Young has developed several courses and materials available through the Zur Institute on **Internet Addiction**.

Internet addiction disorder (IAD), also known as problematic internet use or pathological internet use, is generally defined as problematic, compulsive use of the internet, that results in significant impairment in an individual's function in various life domains over a prolonged period of time. Young people are at particular risk of developing internet addiction disorder.[1]

This and other relationships between digital media use and mental health have been under considerable research, debate and discussion amongst experts in several disciplines, and have generated controversy from the medical, scientific and technological communities. Such disorders can be diagnosed when an individual engages in online activities at the cost of fulfilling daily responsibilities or pursuing other interests, and without regard for the negative consequences. The Internet can foster various addictions including addiction to pornography, game-playing, auction sites, social networking sites, and surfing of the Web.[2]

Excessive Internet use has not been recognised as a disorder by the World Health Organization, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)* or the *International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11)*. The diagnosis of gaming disorder has been included in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). Controversy around the diagnosis includes whether the disorder is a separate clinical entity, or a manifestation of underlying psychiatric disorders. Research has approached the question from a variety of viewpoints, with no universally standardised or agreed definitions, leading to difficulties in developing evidence based recommendations.

As adolescents (12–19 years) and emerging adults (20–29 years) access the Internet more than any other age groups and undertake a higher risk of overuse of the Internet, the problem of Internet addiction disorder is most relevant to young people.[3]

Physical symptoms

Physical symptoms include a weakened immune system due to lack of sleep, loss of exercise, and increased the risk for carpel tunnel syndrome and eye and back strain.

Symptoms of withdrawal might include agitation, depression, anger and anxiety when the person is away from technology. These psychological symptoms might even turn into physical symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, tense shoulders and shortness of breath.

Ease of access to the Internet can increase escapism in which a user uses the Internet as an "escape" from the perceived unpleasant or banal aspects of daily/real life. Because the internet and virtual realities easily satisfy social needs and drives, according to Jim Blascovich and Jeremy Bailensen, "sometimes [they are] so satisfying that addicted users will withdraw physically from society." Stanford psychiatrist Dr. Elias Aboujaoude believes that advances in virtual reality and immersive 3-D have led us to "where we can have a 'full life' [online] that can be quite removed from our own."

Internet has its impact on all age groups from elders to children. According to the article 'Digital power: exploring the effects of social media on children's spirituality', children consider the Internet as their third place after home and school.

One of the main effects social media has had on children is the effect of cyber bullying. A study carried out by 177 students in Canada found that "15% of the students admitted that they cyberbullied others" while "40% of the cyber victims had no idea who the bullies were".[34] The psychological harm cyber bullying can cause is reflected in low self-esteem, depression and anxiety. It also opens up avenues for manipulation and control. Cyber bullying has ultimately led to depression, anxiety and in severe cases suicide. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 24. Cyber bullying is rapidly increasing. Some writers

have suggested monitoring and educating children from a young age about the risks associated with cyber bullying.

Positive aspects of internet and identity

The internet is the guiding technology of the IT Age just as the electrical engine was of the Industrial Age. The internet is a global network of inter-linked networks that mainly provide wireless interactive communication. Though the internet was first deployed in 1969, it was only in the 1990s that it became available to the public.

From there onwards, its use has diffused rapidly throughout the world with there being around 7 billion users of wireless devices currently that employ internet technology. With about 7.7 billion people in this world and with limited use among those under 5 years of age, it's almost safe to say that the entire humanity is now connected to the internet! There are however variations in the bandwidths available, the efficiency and cost of its use.

It's been postulated that about 95% of all information available has been digitized and made accessible via the internet. The internet has also led to a complete transformation in communication, availability of knowledge as well as social interaction. However, as with all major technological changes, there are positive and negative effects of the internet on the society too.

The positive impacts of the internet include the following:
- It provides effective communication using emailing and instant messaging services to any part of the world.
- It improves business interactions and transactions, saving on vital time.
- Banking and shopping online have made life less complicated.
- You can access the latest news from any part of the world without depending on the TV or newspaper.
- Education has received a huge boost as uncountable books and journals are available online from libraries across the world. This has made research easier. Students can now opt for online courses using the internet.
- Application for jobs has also become easier as most vacancies are advertised online with online applications becoming the norm.
- Professionals can now exchange information and materials online, thus enhancing research.

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE INTERNET AND IDENTITY

Creating an on-line persona usually only leads to negative reactions when doing so violates the norms of the particular environment-on MUD s and MOOs it is expected, while on places like Anand tech forum it violated a general assumption that each on-line persona was associated with a single embodied person in real life.
However, this is not to say that identities on line, even when there is an implicit or explicit norm against multiple personae, do not represent something other than a reflection of identity in real life. on-line one's identity is constructed through text-what you choose to say and reveal about yourself, and how you say it. This brings with it the opportunity for people essentially to
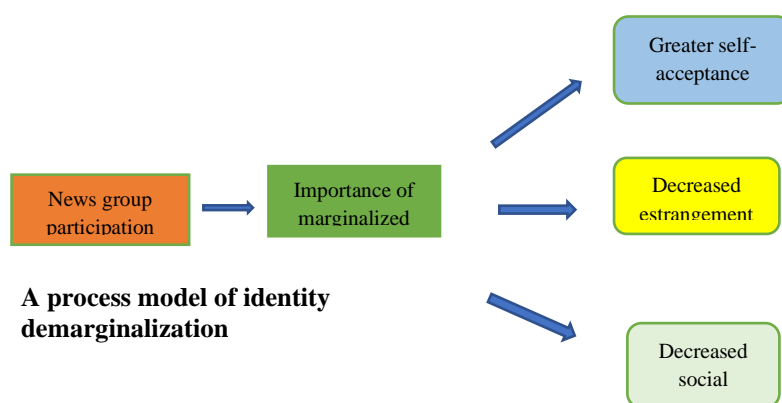
craft an identity that exists quite apart from the usual pressures of RL identity and impression management. Turkle (1995) argues that the Internet makes concrete the postmodern condition of multiple, fragmented identities. In many of the examples Turkle cites, the participants in MUDs see a very real connection between their on-line persona and their real-life identity. The use of on-line personae can serve a useful purpose for expressing and understanding our 'core'selves unfettered by shyness, social anxiety and physical states.Bargh et al. (2002) argue that the Internet may allow people the freedom to express what Carl Rogers called the 'true self'. According to Rogers (1951), a goal of therapy is to discover the 'true self' in order to allow its more full expression in everyday life. In comparison, the self we express in everyday interaction is the actual self. The social persona we adopt that might not be what we truly are, but to used to protect the self from vulnerability.

ON-LINE IDENTITY AND REAL LIFE

Online identity is a tool for either developing desired characteristics of ourselves or expressing a true self, this obviously raises the question: what are the implications of Online identities for real life? While Turkle presents case studies that suggest both therapeutic and counterproductive outcomes of online identities, the social psychological literature on ideal selves suggests that working though desired identities might be beneficial. The nature of social communication technologies combined with relating anonymity of cyberspace create conditions for users to experience less behavioral inhibitions that in real life (RC) or face to -face (f2F) situation.

Internet activity and marginalised identities

A number of commentators have discussed the idea that the Internet and role playing games in particular, might provide suitable identity workshops for people to work through identity projects'. For instance, McKenna and Bargh (1998) studied newsgroup participation by people with marginalised but non obvious identities. They predicted that participation in newsgroups would lead to an increased importance of the marginalised identity to the person, and thence to greater self-acceptance, and decreased estrangement from society and loneliness.

A process model of identity demarginalization

News group participation → Importance of marginalized → Greater self-acceptance / Decreased estrangement / Decreased social

POSSIBLE SELVES AND INTERNET IDENTITY
The concept of possible selves is also useful for understanding the potential role of the Internet in self-development. Possible selves are the way people think about their potential and future. Possible selves are effectively personalised versions of higher- level motivations. For the

various array of possible will be salient, and then only part of the time. Cues in the environment might activate a possible self.

DECEPTION AND POSSIBLE SELVES

Curtis (1997) noted that a large number of personal descriptions in MUDs were if mysterious but unmistakably powerful figures suggesting that the development of personae in virtual worlds may well be an exercise in wish fulfilment. But atleast for some users the Internet also allows them to elaborate and practise their hoped for possible selves, or even to express a true self normally suppressed. In another sense, the Internet may provide an incentive for people to change in their real life existence, if one can act as a certain type of person on-line, this may well serve as an incentive to achieve a similar state off-line.

MEDIA CHOICE, IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT AND METAPERCEPTION

Patrick O'Sullivan (2000) developed an impression management model to outline the functional and strategic role of communication choice in social relationships. He argues that one thing people are motivated to do is to manage their self-presentation, such that they are able to achieve desirable outcomes. This does not imply deception most self-presentation is aimed at allowing the person to see the 'true' -but it does suggest some selectiveness in h0ow we present ourselves.

IMPRESSION FORMATION ON THE INTERNET

Internet communication does not seem to be instantly amenable to impression formation, even before an interaction begins, cues are available that allow other users to form an early initial impression. E-mail addresses usually convey information about the person's country of origin, possibly their occupation or employers and even their name. A private user's choice of Internet Service Provider (ISP) is also used to form an impression- particularly if the ISP like AOL or Free serve, is seen as catering to 'newbies'(new users).

INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION

Cyberpsychology is a relatively new field in applied psychology. ... While the most commonly studied technology in the field is the Internet, cyberpsychology also encompasses human interactions with other technologies, such as mobile computing, gaming, virtual reality and artificial intelligence.

Online interaction can be both rewarding and challenging. ... The asynchronous environment— that is, an online space in which interaction can occur at different times and often when others may not be online—enables the individual student to post, reflect, and digest content at their own pace and in their own time.

EXPLOITATION OF TEENS BY ON-LINE CONTACTS

The Internet has become integral to adolescent life. Teens develop and maintain contacts, and many anonymously discuss intimate topics in the privacy of their rooms, without their parents' knowledge.2-5 "Hanging out" in chat rooms has become commonplace.While some adults are still adjusting to the explosion of on-line information and communication,6 it is common for adolescents to communicate and to seek health information or information for homework

assignments on-line.7,8 Concern has been expressed in the medical literature about risky on-line behaviour, particularly teen-to-stranger Internet contact.

One study revealed that 74% of teenage respondents reported e-mail or chat room contact with a stranger.10 A Canadian-government survey found that most teenagers had visited adult-only chat rooms and that 15% had met personally with at least one person whom they had first encountered in cyberspace.3 While not all interactions with strangers have negative implications, there is increasing evidence that the absence of basic social cues, such as age, and the common use of constructed identities in on-line interactions could facilitate exploitative relationships.

The Importance of different online interaction

Social interaction in online learning allows students to share their ideas on various subjects with each other. Student-led online discussions typically motivate deeper understanding as well as yield interesting personal applications of course concepts and theories.

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The Protocols of online interaction

Types of Communications Internet Protocols (IP)

Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) – used for data transmission.

User Datagram Protocol (UDP) – used by programs to send short datagram messages.

Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) – messages used for diagnostic or error-generating purposes.

ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS ON THE INTERNET

An Internet Relationship is a relationship between people who have met online, and in many cases know each other only via the Internet.

Online relationships are similar in many ways to pen pal relationships. This relationship can be romantic, platonic, or even based on business affairs. An internet relationship (or online relationship) is generally sustained for a certain amount of time before being titled a relationship, just as in-person relationships. The major difference here is that an internet relationship is sustained via computer or online service, and the individuals in the relationship may or may not ever meet each other in person.

Otherwise, the term is quite broad and can include relationships based upon text, video, audio, or even virtual character. This relationship can be between people in different regions, different

countries, different sides of the world, or even people who reside in the same area but do not communicate in person.

Many types of internet relationships are possible in today's world of technology

Internet dating

Internet dating is very relevant in the lives of many individuals worldwide.[4] A major benefit in the rise of Internet dating is the decrease in prostitution. People no longer need to search on the streets to find casual relationships. They can find them online if that is what they desire.[4] Internet dating websites offer matchmaking services for people to find love or whatever else they may be looking for. The creation of the internet and its progressive innovations have opened up doors for people to meet other people who they may very well have never met otherwise.[4]

Dating website innovations

Although the availability of uploading videos to the internet is not a new innovation, it has been made easier since 2008 thanks to YouTube. YouTube began the surge of video streaming sites in 2005 and within three years, smaller web developers started implementing video sharing on their sites. Internet dating sites have benefitted greatly since the surge in easiness and accessibility of picture and video uploading. Videos and pictures are equally important for most personal profiles. These profiles can be found on sites used for interpersonal relationships other than dating as well. "The body, although graphically absent, does not have to be any less present. Older and less advanced sites usually still allow, and often require, each user to upload a picture. Newer and more advanced sites offer the possibility of streaming media live via the user's profile for the site. The inclusion of videos and pictures has become almost a necessity for sexual social networking sites to maintain the loyalty of their members.It is appealing to internet users to be able to view and share videos, especially when forming relationships or friendships.

Users

According to an article in the New York Times, mediated matchmaking has been around since the mid-1800s.Online dating was made available in the mid-1990s, with the creation of the first dating sites.These dating sites create a space for liberation of sexuality. According to Sam Yagan of OkCupid, "the period between New Year's Day and Valentine's Day is [our] busiest six weeks of the year".Changes that online dating companies have created include not only the increase of pickiness in singles, but the rise in interracial marriages and spread the acceptance of homosexual individuals. Dating sites "are a place where sexual minorities, inter-sexed people and gay people are enjoying a newly found freedom".

Several studies have shown the availability of online dating to produce a greater closeness and intimacy between individuals because it circumvents barriers that face-to face interactions might have. "Participating in personal relationships online allow for almost full freedom from power relations in the offline/real world."

Advantages

According to Joseph Walter's Social Information Processing Theory, computer-mediated communications can work for people. While online interactions take roughly four times longer than face-to-face interactions, this gives users the opportunity to evaluate and the time to think, making sure they say the perfect response. Thus, chronemics is the only verbal clue available to digital communications. With the focus on conversation and not appearance, digital interactions over time will develop higher levels of intimacy than face-to-face interactions.

Social capital researchers have found that "various forms of social capital, including ties with friends and neighbors, are related to indices of psychological well-being, such as self-esteem and satisfaction with life".Then, the use of a social networking service could help to improve the social capital.

More than helping to improve the social capital, the use of a social networking service could help to retain it. For instance, Cummings, Lee and Kraut have shown[27] that communication services like instant messaging "help college students to remain close to their high school friends after they leave home for college".

Disadvantages

The Internet provides the opportunity for misrepresentation, particularly in the early stages of a relationship when commitment is low, and self-presentation and enhancement agendas are paramount.[28] After receiving many complaints about his social networking site Ashley Madison, founder Noel Biderman responded to accusations that his and other similar cyber-dating sites are at fault for the "rising divorce rates and growth in casual dating". Biderman argued that the idea for Ashleymadison.com came to him when he realized the growing number of people on "mainstream dating sites" were married or in a relationship but posing as singles in order to start an affair.

Dangers of internet relationships

An oft-forgotten aspect of online interactions is the possible danger present. The option for an individual to conceal their identity may be harmless in many cases, but it can also lead to extremely dangerous situations. Hidden identities are often used in cases of cyberbullying and cyberstalking. Concealing person's true identity is also a technique that can be used to manipulate their new online friend or lover into convincing them that they are someone completely different. This is something most online predators do in order to prey on victims. Despite the awareness of dangers, Mishna et al. found children and youth to still partake in online relationships with little care or concern for negative effects.[13] Brym and Lenton also claim that "although [their] true identities are usually concealed, they sometimes decide to meet and interact in real life".

Conclusion

Communicating in cyberspace has become a normal part of daily living for many people. On-line behaviour must be considered by physicians as they endeavour to promote all aspects of health. While it is vital that health concerns related to on-line activities do not demonize the Internet, it is equally critical that the risks emerging within this still-novel environment be seriously evaluated and that measures be taken to educate young people about the importance of safe navigation in cyberspace.