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THE RELATIONSHIP OF INTERNET ADDICTION WITH FAMILY FUNCTIONING AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG IRANIAN STUDENTS

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Introduction: One salient impact of information technology on students' lives is the ever-increasing use of the Internet. Although there exist many reports in the media regarding the unhealthy Internet use among students, research is still limited .

Objectives: Thus, the purpose of the present study was to examine the relation of internet addiction with family functioning and mental health among students. Two-hundred and eighty students from high school and guidance school were selected by multiple cluster sampling method. They participated in the present study by completing internet addiction questionnaire, family functioning scale and mental health questionnair. The method of this study was descriptive and correlational .in order to analyze the results, descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and inferential statistics (correlations and regression) were used.

Results: The results showed negative significant correlation between internet addiction and some subscale of family function such as assertiveness, entertainment orientation and religious emphasis. Results also indicated positive significant correlation between 3 subscales of family functioning including dissociation, conflicts and authoritarian family style with internet addiction. No significant correlations were found between other subscales and internet addiction. Regarding the relationship between mental health and addiction to Internet, research results indicate a significant positive correlation between overall mental health score and two subscale of depression and somatization with internet addiction.

Conclusions: The results of this study confirmed the negative effects of Internet addiction on mental health and emphasized the importance of family on intensifying internet addiction. Hence in designing treatment programs, family environment must be considered.