Pros and Cons of Internet Usage between Saudi and Egyptian Teenagers In Relation To Internet Addiction

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Abstract: *Nowadays, internet is becoming an integral part of the daily life of the teenagers whom are the most users of internet at home or school. Many studies stated that the users of the internet should be aware of its positive and negative effects on health status. This study **aims** to identify teenagers' opinions about pros and cons of Internet Usage in relation to internet addiction. A convenient **sample** of 668 teenagers who were recruited from intermediate and secondary school from two countries, 331 teenagers from kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and 337 from Arab Republic of Egypt (ARE) were selected using a descriptive correlation design. Two **tools** were used for data collection: the first one was a questionnaire sheet including participant's students' socio-demographic data and their opinions about pros and cons of internet usage; the second was internet addiction test (IAT) by Young (1998). **Results** showed that teenager's opinion of internet pros, the highest percentage in both Saudi and Egyptian teenagers was to improve their general knowledge, it was 32% and 48.7% respectively, and the second was the developing sport activity, 13.6% for Saudi and 31.4% for Egyptian. While the high teenager's opinion of internet cons went to the moral corruption; it was 34.4% for Saudi and 59.1% for Egyptian. About internet addiction, nearly half of Saudi and Egyptian students had mild and moderate internet addiction (47.7%, 45.3%, and 44.2%, 46.3%) respectively. While severe IA was (0.9%) in Saudi one compared to (0.3%) in Egyptian teenagers. Statistically no significant relation was found between both groups in relation to internet addiction level, p=0.296. A statistically significant relation was found between both groups in relation to their opinions about pros and cons of Internet Usage where P = <0.001, while no statistically significant relation were found in both Saudi and Egyptian teenagers' opinions about pros and cons of internet usage in relation to the level of internet addiction except in cons of the internet in the Saudi group (P =0.017). The study **concluded** that the majority of Egyptian teenagers were aware about pros and cons of internet usage compared to the Saudi one with statistical significant differences but nearly both groups were equal in internet addiction level. The researchers **recommended**increasingthe facilities of sport and recreational activities through special programs to attract teenagers and fill their leisure time, andfurther studies to be conducted in this field on larger sample size for both genders to identify the other factors related to internet addiction among teenagers.*
Keywords: Pros and Cons of Internet Usage, Saudi and Egyptian Teenagers, Internet Addiction

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Abbreviations:
EIU= Excessive Internet Use
IA=Internet Addiction
KSA= Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
ARE=Arab Republic of Egypt
IAT =Internet Addiction Test
IQR=lnterquartile Range

I. Introduction

Today the Internet is a revolution in information technology, the Internet use is a part of human's life, and around 40% of the world population has an internet connection today[1,2]. Internet use is changing how the people to socialize, study, work, shop, and search for jobs and spend their leisure time. Teenagers spend a lot of time daily using electronic media such as television, radio, computers, and cellphones[3,4,5]. It may make their lives difference through play, learning, doing homework and social relationships with others. The internet may be a key source of attraction for adolescence and young people through videogames. It is a role model effect on their identities [6]. Therefore, it is necessary to be aware of its positive and negative effects on teenager's psycho-social status [7, 8].

The positive influences of the internet use on teenagers have been less studied and usually concerned with educational purpose through improving their cognitive skills[8, 9].The schools use the internet as a tool for creative and cognitive work for students to enhance learning process and communication with others[10]. Also the internet has positively effect on improving their psychosocial status. It provides an opportunity for self-disclosure and identity experimentation [11, 12, 13]. Thus, moderate internet uses improvetheir self-conceptualization, entertains, and may also be used as coping mechanism with stress[14, 15, 16].

Excessive internet use (EIU) is associated with unfavorable physical, mental and social health as well as learning and behavioral difficulties for teenagers[17]. A lot of studies found that EIU has a negative influence on their communications, educational achievements, and their daily activities such as homework, indoor and outdoor games,[18, 8, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24].

Many studies conducted in several countries all over the world to identify effect of EIU on children's mental health status, brain development, physical and social development, andmusculoskeletal health[3, 25, 26, 27]. The study of Tan, et al. [28] showed that problematic internet use and depression have partial effect on sleep disturbance. So they recommended that the clinicians and policy makers will use these results to put the proper prevention and intervention efforts. However, the literature review showed there is a lack of studies on this area in Arabic countries.

Currently most teenagers in Arab countries have easy access to internet though cell phone at any time and placein their daily activities as playing games, doing school work and chatting with friends. Therefore, this study is different from other previous studies in that it is one of the important studies conducted in governmental intermediate and secondary school in Saudi Arabia and Egypt to identifythe pros and cons of internet usage between Saudi and Egyptian teenagers in relation to Internet Addiction.

II. Material And Methods

Design: A descriptive correlation design was used.

Study location: The study was conducted in 4 intermediate and secondary schools at 4 urban cities, Jeddah and El-Dammam Cities in Saudi Arabia and El Zagazig and EL-Mansoura Cities in Egypt.

Sample: a convenient sample of 668 teenagers from both countries, 331 from Saudi settings and 337 from Egypt.

Tools: Two tools were used for data collection: the first one was a questionnaire sheet including participant's students' socio-demographic data and their opinions about pros and cons of internet usage; the second was the scale of internet addiction test (IAT), Young[29].

Procedure methodology:
- The validity of the first tool was ascertained by a jury of five experts in the nursing field while the second was valid according to Young&Hawi[29, 30].
- A pilot study was carried out on 5 students from each school and excluded from the study sample.
- An approval of ethical considerations was obtained from the Institution Review Board (IRB)and an informed consent was obtained from students.
- An explanation of the study aim and how to complete all parts of the questionnaire was introduced to the students, then the questionnaire was distributed to students during school activity hours, an informed consent was obtained from them, the questionnaires were collected at the end of school duty day. After collection of the questionnaire from the students, checking had been done to ensure that all parts were completed, and then it was coded.
- Data was organized, revised, stored, tabulated and analyzed, using descriptive and inferential statistics with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 21.0. A significant p value of less than 0.05 was consideredfor Chi-square test.
- Internet addiction scoring for the second tool: A twenty questions related to internet addiction scored by a five Likert scale. The total grades of those questions were 100 points and categorized as a levels:
• Normal (0-30 points)
• Mild (31-49 points)
• Moderate (50-79 points)
• Severe internet addiction level from (80-100 points).

Ethical considerations:
An approval of ethical considerations was obtained from the Institution Review Board (IRB) of Doctor Soliman Fakeeh Hospital, and an informed consent was obtained from students after the aim of the study was explained and they were informed that their participation is voluntarily. They were assured that the personal information kept confidential as the personal information weren't being linked directly with the results. Also to

maintain the confidentiality of gathered data, it was collected anonymously and a code was assigned to each questionnaire sheet. The results were being uses for publications and education.

III. Results

Table 1: Students' socio-demographic data:
Table no (1) shows that the Median (IQR) of age was 16 for Saudi and 15 for Egyptian students. Also the majority of Saudi students were male 82.8 %, and 25.4% of them were in 2nd intermediate level, while Egyptian females were 59.1%, and 39.2% of them in 3rd secondary level.

#	Saudi Arabia N= 331		Egypt N= 337	
	No. %		No. %	
Age in yrs.				
Median (IQR)	16.0		15.0	
Gender				
Male	274	82.8	138	40.9
Female	57	17.2	199	59.1
Academic level				
1ST intermediate	12	3.6	31	9.2
2nd intermediate	84	25.4	76	22.6
3rd intermediate	51	15.4	73	21.7
1st secondary	69	20.8	16	4.7
2nd secondary	77	23.3	9	2.7
3rd secondary	38	11.5	132	39.2

Table 2: Saudi and Egyptian Teenagers' opinions about Pros of Internet Usage
Table no (2) shows that the teenager opinions of internet pros of both Saudi and Egyptian the highest percentage was to improve their general knowledge, it was 32% and 48.7% respectively. The second was the developing sport activity it was 13.6% for Saudi and 31.4% for Egyptian. The third was perform social communication, it was 30.5% for Saudi and 11.6% for Egyptian

Teenagers / Pros of internet usage	Saudi No (n=331)%	Egyptian No (n=337)%
Improve general knowledge	106(32.0)	164(48.7)
Developing sport activity	45(13.6)	106(31.4)
Perform social communication	101(30.5)	39(11.6)
Spending a leisure time	3(0.9)	3(0.8)
Achieving school works	3(0.9)	1(0.3)
Shopping	20(6.0)	6(1.8)
knowing the news	9(2.7)	1(0.3)
Improving English language	5(1.5)	0.00

Table 3: Saudi and Egyptian teenagers' opinions about cons of internet usage
Table (3) shows that the teenager opinions of internet pros of both Saudi and Egyptian, the high Teenager's opinion of internet cons went to the moral corruption, it was 34.4% for Saudi and 59.1% for Egyptian, the second was the increase of the backwardness of society, and it was 17.8% for Saudi and 18.9% for Egyptian. Third was laziness and lack of concentration, it was 5.9% for Saudi and 17.8% for Egyptian.

Teenagers / Cons of internet usage:	Saudi No (n=331)%	Egyptian No (n=337)%
Moral corruption	114(34.4)	199(59.1)
Increase the backwardness of society	59(17.8)	64(18.9)
Irresponsibility	35(10.6)	20(5.9)
Poor communicate with parents and my family	9(2.7)	4(1.2)
Loss of time	28(8.5)	6(1.8)
One of Stealing methods	6(1.8)	0.00
Weakness of faith	6(1.8)	35(10.6)
Laziness and lack of concentration	20(5.9)	59(17.8)

Table 4: Correlation of teenager's opinions of pros and cons of internet usage
Table 4 shows that, a statistically significant relation was found between both groups in relation to their opinions of pros and cons of internet usage.

Students opinions / internet uses	Saudi no(n= 331)%	Egyptian no(n=337)%	Chi-square & p value

| Pros			
yes	245(74)	226(67)	**Chi-square** = 18.381
No	86(26)	111 (33)	P = <0.001
Cons			
Yes	231(69.8)	274(81.3)	**Chi-square** = 16.932
No	100(30.2)	63(18.7)	P =< 0.001

Figure 1: Saudi and Egyptian teenager's opinions about pros of internet usage
Figure (1) display that the teenager opinions of internet pros of both Saudi and Egyptian, the Saudi Teenager's opinion of internet pros was 26% know while 74% do not know, while the Egyptian was 33% and 67% respectively.
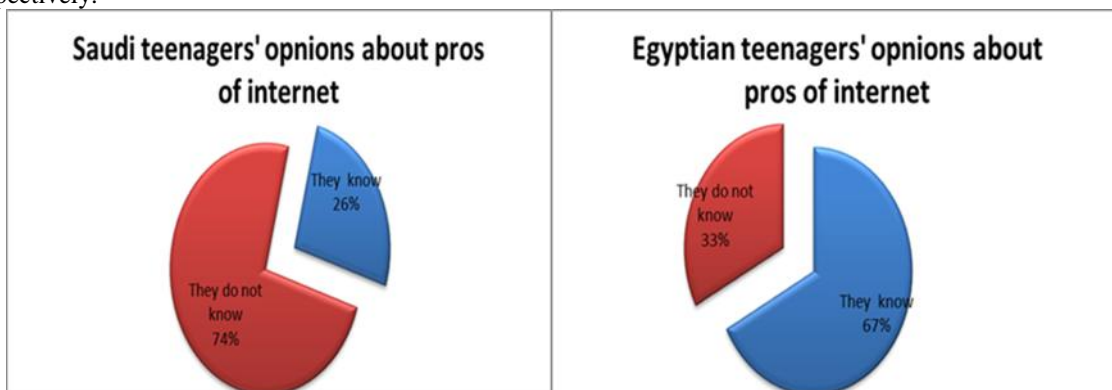
Figure 2: Saudi and Egyptian teenager's opinions about cons of internet usage
Figures (2) shows that the teenager opinions of internet cons of both Saudi and Egyptian, the Saudi Teenager's opinion of internet cons was 70% know while 30% do not know, while the Egyptian was 81 and 19 respectively.
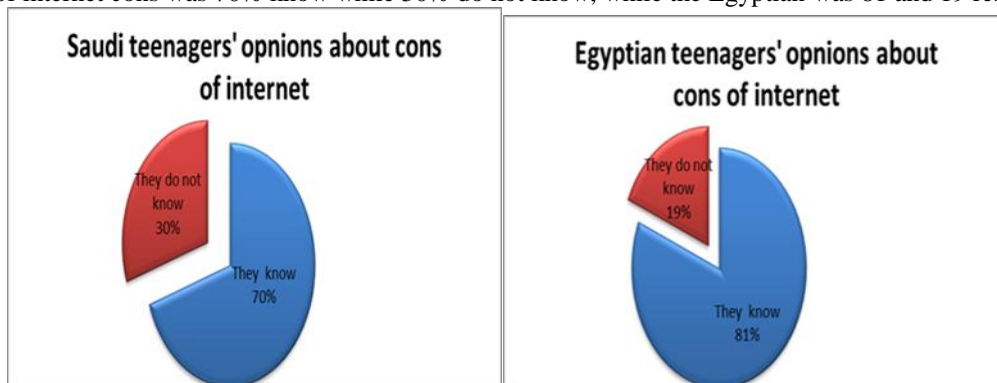

Table 5: levels of internet addiction among Saudi and Egyptian teenagers
Table (5) shows nearly half of Saudi and Egyptian students had mild and moderate internet addiction (47.7%, 45.3%, and 43.9%, 46.3%) respectively. While severe IA was (0.9%) in Saudi one compared to (0.3%) in Egyptian students. Statistically no significant relation was found between both groups in relation to internet addiction.

Level of IA Teenagers' nationality	Internet addiction level (n= 337)				Test statistic & P value
	Normal	**Mild**	**Moderate**	**Severe**	
Saudi students	20(6.1)	158(47.7)	150(45.3)	3(0.9)	P =0.296
Egyptian students	32(9.5)	148(43.9)	156(46.3)	1(0.3)	

Table 6: Association of Saudi teenagers' opinion about internet usage and their level of Internet Addiction
Table (6) shows that there is no statistical significant relation in pros of teenagers' opinion about internet usage and their level of Internet Addiction in both groups, while a significant relation was found in the cons (P =0.017) of both groups.

Level of IA Teenagers' opinions	Addiction level (n= 331)				Test statistic & P value
	Normal	**Mild**	**Moderate**	**Severe**	

Opinions about internet usage					
Pros					
cons	9(2.7)	70(21.1)	70(21.1)	2(0.6)	P =0.526
	11(3.3)	88(26.6)	80(24.2)	1(0.3)	P =0.017
Total	20(6.1)	158(47.7)	150(45.3)	3(0.9)	

Table 7: Association between Egyptian teenagers' opinions about internet usage and their level of Internet Addiction

Table (7) shows that no statistical significant relation was found in relation to the association between Egyptian teenagers' opinions about internet usage and their level of Internet addiction.

Level of IA	Internet addiction level (n= 337)				Test statistic & P value
Teenagers' opinions	Normal	Mild	Moderate	Severe	
Teenagers' opinions about internet usage					
Pros	12(3.57)	63(18.7)	39(27.6)	0(0.0)	P =0.992
cons	20(5.9)	85(25.2)	117(34.7)	1(0.3)	P =0.926
Total	32(9.5)	148(43.9)	156(46.3)	1(0.3)	

IV. Discussion

Many studies stated that the users of the internet should be aware of its positive and negative effects on their health status, so this study aims to identify teenagers' opinions about pros and cons of EIU in relation to internet addiction. According to the data of the current study, the Median and the interquartile range of age in Saudi students were 16 for Saudi compared to15 in the Egyptian. The majority of Saudi students were males 82.8%, while was females 59.1% in the Egyptian.

Regarding the teenager opinions of internet pros, both Saudi and Egyptian teenagers showed the highest to the lowest percentage were improving their general knowledge, developing sport activity and performing their social communication. This finding matched with Mills, Tartari, Abdul Qadir, Sandys, and Elkhouly[31, 32, 33, 34, 11,] all of them concluded that the users of the internet mentioned that there are many pros andobjectives for internet usage e.g., communication, academic work, entertainment, building and maintaining friendships, sharing information.Also these findings are consistent with Miliany[35], who stated that the key reason for using the Internet by young Saudi people is mainly for communication and academic purposes and searching for academic information related to studies. Also the study by Karacic and Oreskovic[36], found the primary purpose of Internet use among the participants was entertainment while the secondary purpose was school/work.

The findings of the current study revealed that about one tenth of both groups of teenagers consider spending a leisure time as a pros of using the internet. The findings of Ghasemi, et al [37]andElkhouly. [11], studiesare in contrary with the present study where the majority of teenagers consider the best benefits of using the internet is filling the leisure time.

In addition the present study results showed that the teenager opinions of internet cons of both Saudi and Egyptian few of them reported the internet use effect on their communication with their parents. This result consistent withMiliany[35], who found that large number of the students, indicated that the internet use has decreased the time allocated to communicate with brothers and sisters and the time allocated to interact with family members. This indicates that there was socially significant impact of the use of the internet among Saudi students on family communication.

In the present study results the teenager opinions of internet cons of both Saudi and Egyptian less than one third of them reported the internet use affected on their daily activities and increase their sense of unaccountable.This congruent with Miliany[35], who found that students who EIU negativelyeffect on adolescences' concentration, perception, thinking ability and daily living activities.While in contrast with Ghasemi, et al [37], found most of the adolescents have high levels of social responsibility. Also, most of the respondents have no social isolation, have high academic achievement, employment, social support, and finally, their sense of self-worth is high. So they concluded that no social impairment was found.

In the current study the minority of teenagers stated the negative effect of EUI on their concentration, family relation and social isolation Abdul Qadir [33]2016, found similar results in their study, reporting that the students are aware that misuse of internet can cause negative effects, such as problems with their grades, wasting times, increasing the sense of loneliness, depression and addiction. Also they recognize they have to use it with some control and caution, even restricting the time they allowed to them. Also El-Khouly, [38]2015 and Abdul Qadir,[33] 2016 stated Excessive use of social networking sites affect family cohesion, and increase selfishness, and susceptible to social isolation.

The present study showed that more than one third of Saudi and the majority of Egyptian students stated the negatively effect of EIU on moral aspects. This congruent with El-Khouly, [38] foundEIU influences on the moral aspects and cultural influence, so the teenagers need more effort to select what is consistent with their culture, principles and ethics from the internet information. This results may need more collaboration with parents and teachers to facilitate this selection process of proper websites suitable with our cultures and religious.

In the current study near half of Saudi and Egyptian students had mild and moderate internet addiction (47.7%, 45.3%, and 43.9%, 46.3%) respectively. While severe IA was (0.9%) in Saudi one compared to (0.3%) in Egyptian students. Statistically no significant relation was found between both groups in relation to internet addiction. These finding supported with Alobaid, et al [39], their findings point towards children at high risk for smartphone addiction and internet dependency. Another study in 2016, from the central region of Saudi Arabia reported 48% smart phone addiction among university students [40]. These finding in accordance with Karacic and Oreskovic[36,] who found that the highest level of internet addiction was found among the adolescents aged 15-16 years due to their greater level of independence, their free time and social activities are less controlled by their parents.

The present study shows that there is no significant relation in pros of teenagers' opinion about internet usage and their level of Internet addiction and of both groups, while a significant relation was found in the cons (P =0.017) of both groups. Also it shows that no significant relation was found in relation to the association between Egyptian teenagers' opinions about internet usage and their level of Internet addiction.This agreed with Karacic and Oreskovic[36], their results, showed there is no statistically significant influence of the purpose of Internet use on the level of Internet addiction, while there is a statistically significant influence of the age of adolescents on the level of Internet addiction.

V. Limitation of the study

The only limitation of the current study is using a convenience sampling technique which affects the generalizability of the study results due to specific geographic regions in both countries and data collection was based on self-reported questionnaires which are prone to recall bias.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendations

The majority of Egyptian teenagers were aware about pros and cons of internet usage compared to the Saudi one with statistical significant differences but nearly both groups were equal in internet addiction level.The study **recommended that:**

- Increase facilities of sport and recreational activities through a special program to attract teenagers and fill their leisure time.
- Collaboration between ministries of education, youth and sport, health and social affairs with the teenagers' families throughout an educational program and special websites to early detect, treat and rehabilitate of teenagers' problems related to excessive internet usage.
- Further studies to be conducted in this field on larger sample size for both genders to identify the other factors related to teenagers' internet addiction.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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