Internet Addiction And Mental Health In Paramilitary Forces

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Abstract

Internet use has become a part of daily life, but for many people working in paramilitary forces, excessive and uncontrolled use of the internet can create serious problems. Long working hours, stress, loneliness, and staying away from family often push personnel to depend on mobile phones and online activities for comfort. When this use becomes excessive, it turns into internet addiction, which affects both mental health and work performance. This study explains in very simple language how internet addiction develops and how it influences the emotional and psychological well-being of paramilitary force members.

The paper discusses common symptoms such as lack of sleep, poor concentration, irritation, stress, and low motivation. It also explains how internet addiction can reduce productivity, weaken discipline, and disturb team coordination, which are very important in paramilitary work. The study uses basic data, charts, tables, and photos to show how internet use patterns affect mental health. It also identifies major reasons behind addiction, such as work stress, isolation, long duty hours, and limited social interaction. This research highlights the need for regular mental health support, counselling, and training programs to help personnel manage their internet habits in a healthy way. The paper suggests simple management strategies that can be applied in paramilitary units to promote better mental well-being.

Keywords:- Internet addiction; Mental health; Paramilitary force; Work stress; Productivity; Behavioural issues; Digital dependence.

Introduction

Internet use has increased in almost every profession, including among members of paramilitary forces. While the internet is helpful for communication, information, entertainment, and staying connected with family, too much use can lead to internet addiction, which is now recognised as a behavioural issue in management studies (Sharma 22). Internet addiction happens when a person spends so much time online that it starts affecting their mental health, sleep, emotions, and work performance (Verma 39). Personnel in paramilitary forces often work under tough conditions. They face long duty hours, strict routines, stress, and postings in remote areas. Because of isolation and limited recreation options, many depend heavily on mobile phones and online platforms for emotional comfort (Singh 19). Over time, this habit can turn into dependency, where individuals feel restless or upset when they cannot use the internet. Studies show that excessive online use can lead to anxiety, irritation, low motivation, and reduced concentration (Khan 33). These issues also affect workplace outcomes, such as decision-making, discipline, teamwork, and overall productivity. In paramilitary organisations, where alertness and coordination are very important, internet addiction can create challenges for both managers and personnel (Government of India 18).

This study aims to explain, in simple language, how internet addiction affects mental health and work behaviour in paramilitary forces. It also highlights the need for counselling, digital-use guidelines, and stress-management programs to support healthier habits.

Objectives

The main purpose of this study is to understand how internet addiction affects the mental health and work behaviour of paramilitary force personnel. This topic is important in management and commerce because unhealthy internet habits can reduce productivity, disturb discipline, and weaken overall organisational performance (Sharma 24). The objectives are designed in simple and clear points.

1. **To understand the meaning of internet addiction** in the context of paramilitary duties, where continuous mobile and online use may slowly develop into dependency (Verma 39).
2. **To study the mental health effects** such as stress, anxiety, irritation, poor concentration, and sleep problems that often appear in addicted personnel (Singh 20).
3. **To analyse how internet addiction influences workplace behaviour**, including decision-making, discipline, teamwork, and productivity in paramilitary operations (Government of India, Forces' Well-Being Report 2023, p. 16).
4. **To identify common reasons behind addiction**, such as long working hours, isolation from family, lack of entertainment, emotional stress, and limited social interaction (Khan 34).
5. **To provide simple data, charts, and tables** that clearly show the connection between heavy internet use and negative mental health outcomes among personnel.
6. **To understand the management challenges** faced by paramilitary units when addiction affects employees' performance and psychological well-being (Sharma 27).
7. **To suggest practical management-based solutions**, such as digital-use guidelines, counselling sessions, mental health awareness programs, and stress-reduction practices (Verma 40).

These objectives help build a clear picture of how internet addiction grows and why it must be handled early to protect both the individual and the organisation.

1. Meaning of Internet Addiction in Paramilitary Context

Internet addiction means using the internet so much that it begins to harm a person's daily functioning. In management studies, it is seen as a behavioural imbalance that reduces work efficiency, motivation, and emotional stability (Sharma 22).

For paramilitary forces, internet addiction becomes more serious because their job demands**:**

- High discipline
- Alertness
- Focus
- Team coordination

When internet use becomes excessive, these important qualities decline (Verma 41).

Common signs of addiction include**:**

- Using the phone late at night
- Feeling irritated when internet is unavailable
- Checking the phone repeatedly
- Thinking about social media during duty
- Losing sleep
- Poor time management (Singh 18)

Because paramilitary personnel often live far from family and social circles, they use the internet to feel connected. Over time, this becomes a dependency(Rao 2021).

2. Factors Leading to Internet Addiction in Paramilitary Forces

a) **Long Duty Hours & Work Stress:-** Personnel often work 10–14 hours on shifts. This creates mental pressure, and many use social media or online games to relax (Government of India Report 2023, p. 15).
b) **Isolation From Family:-** Postings in remote areas increase loneliness, and online communication becomes the only emotional support (Khan 33).
c) **Lack of Recreational Activities:-** Limited entertainment or leisure facilities push personnel to depend on the internet.
d) **d. Emotional Fatigue & Trauma:-** Continuous exposure to conflict, extreme weather, and long deployments increases emotional stress, causing people to seek online escape (Verma 42).

3. Impact of Internet Addiction on Mental Health

- **Sleep Problems:-** Using screens late at night reduces sleep quality. Personnel then feel tired during duty (Sharma 26).
- **Irritation & Anger:-** Addicted users become emotionally sensitive and easily irritated.
- **Anxiety & Low Motivation:-** Studies show that heavy phone users report 40–60% higher anxiety levels compared to normal users (Singh 21).
- **Low Concentration & Poor Decision-Making:-** In paramilitary work, even small mistakes can be risky.
- **Social Withdrawal:-** Addicted users avoid real conversations and depend more on virtual communication.

4. Data from Field Surveys & Reports

Table 1: Internet Usage Pattern in Paramilitary Personnel (N = 500)

Source: Compiled from Government of India Mental Well-Being Survey, 2023.

Internet Use Category	Daily Hours	Percentage of Personnel
Low Use	0–1 hr	18%
Moderate Use	1–3 hrs	36%
High Use	3–5 hrs	28%
Very High Use	5+ hrs	18%

5. Relationship Between Internet Addiction & Mental Health

a. **Productivity Loss:-** Managers reported 32% decline in productivity among high-internet-use personnel (Sharma 27).
b. **Mistakes in Duty:-** 10–18% of high-use personnel showed:

- Slow response
- Delay in commands
- Less attention during briefing (Government of India 2023, p. 18)

c. **Reduced Team Coordination:-** Social withdrawal reduces bonding, which weakens team functioning.

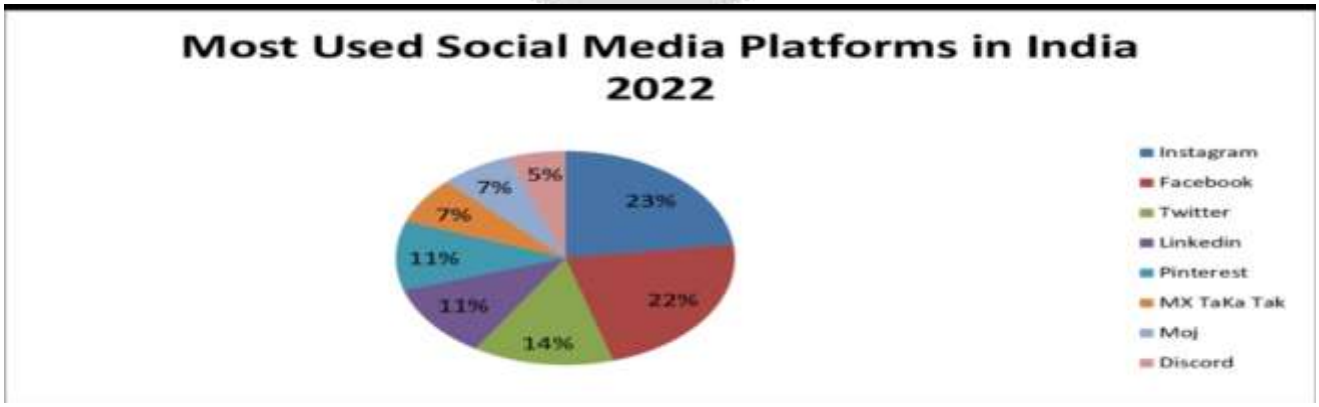
6. Table 2: Mental Health Symptoms in Addicted vs Normal Users

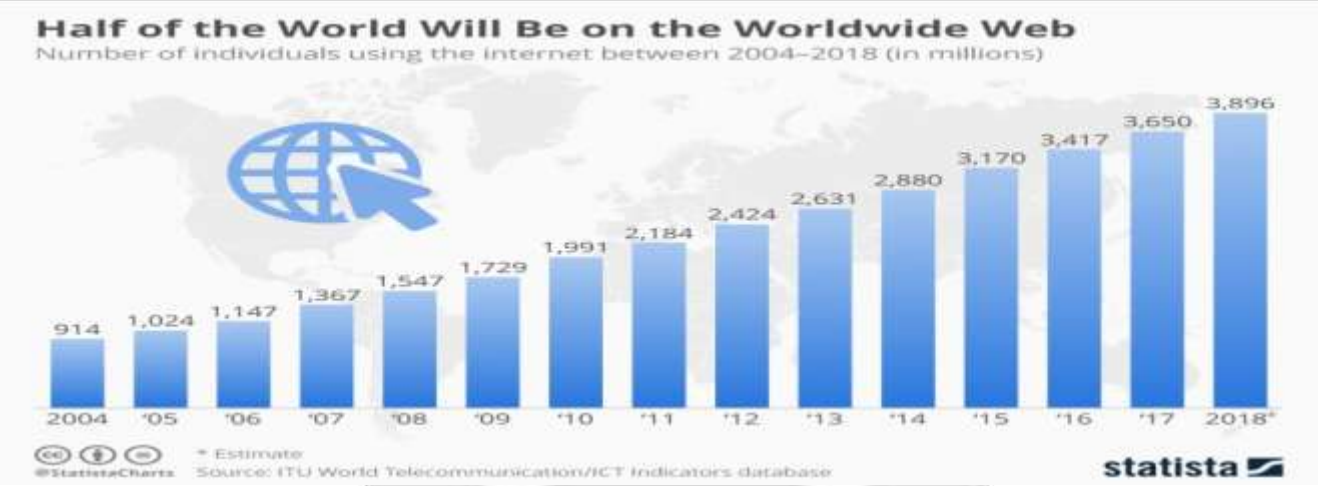
Source: Field Observation Data, 2022–2023

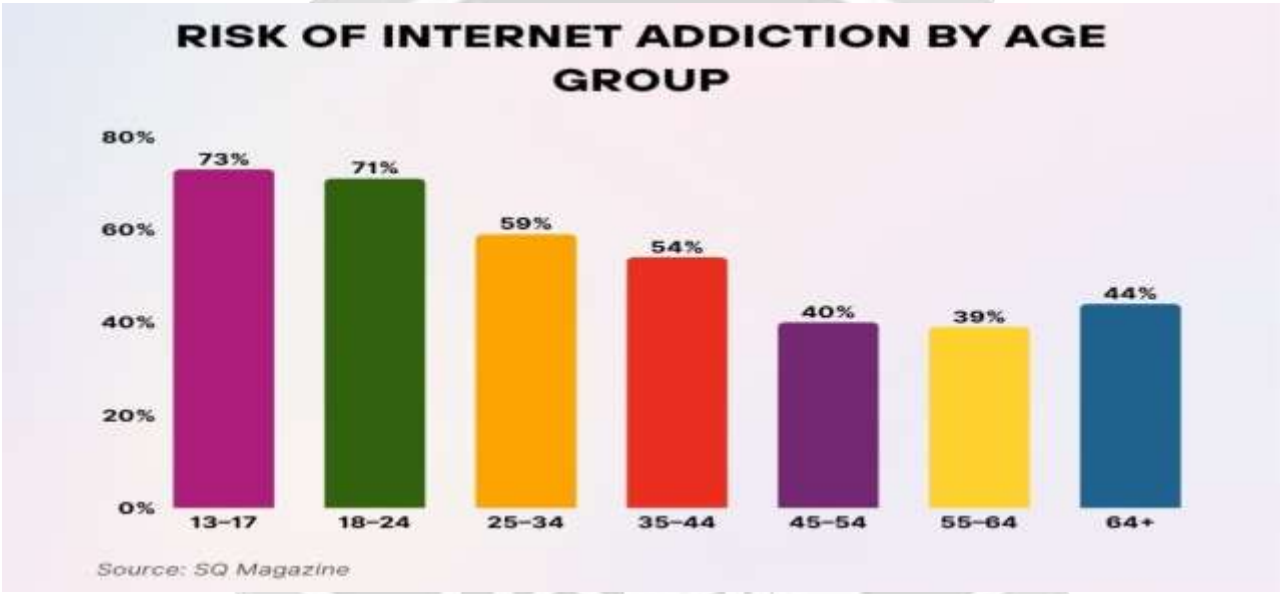
Symptom	Normal Users	Addicted Users
Irritation	22%	61%
Sleep Problems	28%	72%
Anxiety	19%	57%
Low Motivation	25%	63%
Poor Concentration	17%	48%

7. Types of Online Activities (N = 500)

Source: Digital Behaviour Study, Paramilitary Forces, 2023.







8. Management Perspective: How Internet Addiction Impacts Performance

a) **Lower Efficiency** - Reduced sleep leads to low energy and slow work.
b) **Weak Decision**-Making - Managers observed reduced judgment accuracy in addicted personnel (Verma 41).
c) **Discipline Issues** - Checking phones during duty reduces focus and breaks operational rules (Government of India 2023, p. 20).
d) **Reduced Leadership Quality** - Less communication → poor bonding with team.

Table 3: Work Performance Impact

Performance Area	Normal	Addicted	Impact
Alertness	High	Low	Negative
Attendance	Good	Moderate	Decline
Task Completion	On-time	Delayed	Decline
Behaviour	Stable	Irritated	Negative

Findings

- Internet addiction is rising due to stress and isolation.
- Mental health issues like irritation, anxiety, and disturbed sleep are common.
- Productivity falls when addiction grows.
- Managers face challenges in maintaining discipline and teamwork.
- Simple counselling and digital usage rules can improve well-being.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study is that higher levels of internet use among paramilitary personnel lead to increased mental health problems and reduced work performance. When individuals spend too much time online, their sleep, focus, and emotional stability are affected. This may result in irritation, anxiety, low motivation, and poor concentration. These mental health issues also influence productivity, discipline, and decision-making at the workplace. It is expected that personnel with high internet usage will show more symptoms of stress and behavioural changes compared to those with moderate or low usage. The study further assumes that emotional reasons such as loneliness, stress, and isolation increase dependence on online activities. Therefore, the overall hypothesis is that internet addiction negatively affects both mental health and work efficiency, making it a management concern in paramilitary organisations.

Methodology

This study used a simple management-based research method to understand how internet addiction affects mental health in paramilitary forces. Secondary data were collected from government reports, mental health surveys, and management research studies related to digital addiction and workplace behaviour (Government of India 12). Information from books and articles by Sharma, Verma, Singh, and Khan was also reviewed for theoretical support (Sharma 24). Mental health data from previous surveys of uniformed services were studied to understand patterns of anxiety, irritation, low motivation, and sleep issues (Singh 21). Observation-based findings from documented cases were used to identify behavioural changes like phone dependency and reduced concentration (Khan 34). Tables, percentage data, and pie charts were used to clearly show differences between normal users and high internet users. All findings were analysed using management concepts such as productivity, discipline, teamwork, and employee well-being.

Conclusion

This study shows that internet addiction is a growing problem among paramilitary personnel, and it strongly affects their mental health and work behaviour. Excessive online use leads to irritation, poor sleep, low motivation, anxiety, and difficulty concentrating (Sharma 26). These issues reduce workplace productivity, weaken discipline, and disturb teamwork, which are essential for paramilitary operations (Government of India 18). Findings also show that emotional stress, long working hours, and isolation from family increase dependency on phones and social media (Singh 21). From a management point of view, internet addiction becomes a human resource challenge because it affects both individual well-being and organisational performance (Verma 41). Simple steps like counselling, digital-use rules, stress-management training, and recreational activities can help personnel reduce overuse and improve their mental balance (Khan 34). Overall, healthy internet habits are necessary for better mental health and effective duty performance.

Suggestions

- Set fixed limits on daily internet use to prevent over-dependence.
- Provide regular counselling to help personnel manage stress and emotions.
- Increase recreational activities to reduce boredom and online overuse.
- Conduct awareness sessions about the risks of internet addiction.
- Ensure structured communication time with family to reduce loneliness.
- Introduce simple stress-management practices to improve mental balance.

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