INTRODUCTION

In the 21\textsuperscript{th} century, Internet has swiftly entered in the life of the mankind. It took less than ten years in spreading it all over the world. It has not only become the source of the vast information but the easiest and the most rapid source of communication. With the help of Internet, one can explore the world while sitting in the comfort of their own home. Since its inception in the last quarter of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Internet has been very important and powerful feature in the field of information. The use of internet has expanded with the passage of time and included many areas such as research, government, education, entertainment, industry and business etc. in it. Internet is also known as information superhighway as it opened the floodgates of information to the common man.

The whole process of information handling has been changed in recent years with the help of computers and internet. Internet connects various sources of information irrespective of their locations. It has also taken the responsibility of organizing, storing, retrieval and dissemination of information. Accessing the valuable information scattered in different parts of the world is possible with the help of internet. There are wide varieties of services available on the Internet i.e. electronic mail, shopping opportunities, online libraries and journals, social networking sites, multimedia display, interactive collaboration, breaking news etc. Invention, use and proliferation of internet has been one of the major shifts that the world has witnessed in the last two decades (Mulla and Chandrashekar, 2006).

1.1 Internet use

Internet technologies have touched almost each and every sphere of human life, be it the business community, social community or the academic community. By providing access to information at one click while sitting at home, whether in rural or in urban sector, Internet has become the greatest equalizer. Usage of internet has increased dramatically due to the advancement and development of technology. Now-a-days more user friendly computer technologies, cheaper and user friendly softwares are easily available to the people. Internet is a worldwide channel of communication and universal network to which individual computers or networks could plug into cyber world. In 1960 U.S Department of Defence established internet for military purposes. Since then, with the continual improvement and advancement of internet technology has provided an extraordinary level of public accessibility to a wide range of forms of communication i.e. Facebook, Twitter, whatsapp, e-mail and so forth (Kadli, Kumbar and Kanamadi, 2012). As the usage of the Internet is growing rapidly each year, Internet addiction has become a problem among some users.
There is an emerging public health concern over the increase in Internet usage, particularly among students (Shinde and Patel, 2014).

During the last two decades, the way we live and the way we work has changed due to the developments in the communication and information industries (Unsal, Ruzgar and Ruzgar, 2008). The reason behind this is the wide distribution of computers, whereby communication among people takes place in virtual space, better known as cyberspace. This cyberspace has appeared as a new environment which is basically different from the real world we live in, as it has linked people all over the world, increase efficiency in learning. Cyberspace is being used for acquiring and disseminating information for further development of mankind (Kim, 2008). Internet users in world are increasing day by day. Overall percentage of internet users are much higher in Asia as compared to all over the world.

**Internet Users in the World by Regions - 2017 Q2**

![Internet Users in the World by Regions - 2017 Q2](Image)

Source: Internet World Stats - www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm  
Basis: 3,835,498,274 Internet users in June 30, 2017  
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**Figure 1.1: Distribution of percentage of Internet users in different continents**

As shown in figure 49.8% of internet users are from Asia, which is almost half as compared to other half of the world.17% of internet users are from Europe, 10.2% from Latin America, 8.3% from North America and 3.8% and 0.7% from Middle East and Australia respectively.

The Internet has brought the world so close together today, by its positive aspects such as conducting research, performing business transactions and communications, accessing library journals, and communicating with social relations, etc. Unfortunately, the Internet is often misused by some groups of individuals. Some individuals tend to get obsessed in the midst of getting exposed and familiarized with the Internet (Sukunesan, 1999). Young (1998) thinks that it could be hazardous to someone’s mental and physical health if Internet is being used excessively. The Internet has positive aspects including informative, convenient, resourcefulness and recreation, but for the addicts, these benefits become detriments (Kim,
A great majority of the respondents in Pakistan study (84%) reported that Internet is helpful for worldwide communication; 74% experienced improvement in their reading, writing and information processing skills by using the Internet (Shuhail and Bergees, 2006). Kaye and Johnson (2004) stated that Internet users are more actively involved and engaged in using the Internet because of its interactivity. Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) used their Internet usage scale and identified five different motivations for using the Internet namely; interpersonal utility, time pass, information seeking, convenience, and entertainment. Roy (2009) found out that Internet users experienced self-development, wide range of exposure, relaxation and leisure, and higher global exchange of information and views.

Modern technology has experienced vast expansion in recent years, leading to its extensive use by people from all generations. For a generation of young people, technology has assumed a substantial stake in their social and educational lives. The vast majority of adolescents have access to computers, the Internet, cell phones, video games, and many other forms of modern technology. With the increased role of modern technology, adolescents’ lives has come the increased concern about how children might be affected. Technology is changing process and content to the extent that children today are immersed in a world that abounds with information. The increasing amount of time children spend on modern technology has raised questions about the use of the technology (Simuforosa, 2013).

While technology is often described as the most important influence upon society, it remains a subject, which has undergone little study. Recognizing that technology lies at the very heart of modern society, this study wishes to investigate its impact on adolescents. Technological advancement is one of the most essential factors for teenagers in many societies. Due to the enormous development of technologies, this era can also be called the Age of Technology. With the purpose of serving in the social, educational, and employment world, technology is becoming the most essential tool. Social network sites, online games, video-sharing sites and gadgets, such as iPods and mobile phones are now fixtures of youth culture (UNICEF, 2011). They have so permeated young lives that it is hard to believe that less than a decade ago, these technologies barely existed. Modern technologies have altered how youth socialize and learn which raises a new set of issues that educators, parents, and policy makers should consider. The drawback of excessive usage of electronic gadgets is that they can weaken people’s memory. Students of the new generation seem to have problems with writing complete sentences or spelling words because of frequent use of text messages (Simuforosa, 2013). Adolescents are exposed to computer games, television or other technological devices, which detracts the quality of sleep adolescents experience and will lead to poor academic
performance, as their day functioning gets affected. These findings seem to be congruent with Zavodny (2006) who asserted that adolescents’ increased use of modern technology has been accompanied by a decrease in the amount of sleep and increase in attention difficulties and poorer academic achievement.

In recent years, there has been a spectacular increase in the use of information and communication technologies (ICT). The Internet has gone from being a limited tool used by groups of scientists and academics to a resource for the general population and, especially, for young people (Gallagher, 2005; Holtz and Appel, 2011). Studies show, Internet usage rates of more than 90% in teenagers, primarily for the purpose of online communication – communication in real time through the Internet (Gross, Juvonen and Gable, 2002; Valkenburg and Peter, 2007; Eijnden, Meerkerk, Vermulst, Spijkerman and Engels 2008). The young generation now uses electronic tools more than ever to communicate with their peers (Baso, 2008). Just because these cyber children are equipped with technology does not necessarily mean that they can use it with equal maturity (Myers, McCaw and Hemphill, 2011). While the Internet provides potential advantages for educational institutions in terms of the students’ access to knowledge and information previously inaccessible, it also proves to have some adverse effects such as wasting time or antisocial behavior (Hazelhurst, Johnson and Sanders, 2011). Excessive Internet use brings with it unfavorable academic, social and psychological consequences as well as the risk of Internet addiction. Favorable aspects of the internet can be described as a "meeting point of people across the globe having the same understanding, freedom of expression, comfort to ease frustrations" ability to communicate with people sharing same interests, abilities and values (Ling, Ramadass, Altaher and Arjuman, 2011).

Children and adolescents are the most frequent and widespread users of technology, and they constitute the largest group exposed to the side effects of technology as they have yet to complete their development process (Watson, 2005; Brey, 2006; Xiong, 2011). Because adolescence is a period of accelerated personality development and psychological maturation, adolescent individuals are more vulnerable to harmful effects of addictive agents (Heino, Lintonen and Rimpela 2004). Researchers state that despite the Internet being a necessity of our time and contributing significantly and positively to adolescents’ lives, it can pose a significant threat (Ceyhan, 2008) because adolescents are more vulnerable to the effects of online relationships, online exploitation, and other possible adverse effects of cyber relationships (Wolak, Mitchell, and Finkelhor, 2003).

Internet is a multipurpose tool with numerous potentials. It enables students to communicate
with different students all over the world and thus share each other’s ideas, knowledge, experiences, and cultures. It enhances skills and capabilities of students, which assists them in their studies and in professional life. The academic landscape in education sector has been comprehensively transformed by the recent advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Consequently, the teaching and learning processes along with educational programs and pedagogy of instruction are being restructured, reformed to meet the expectations of a whole new breed of students entering the Universities. ICT applications in education sector can greatly enhance the quality of education. The learners, through multifaceted ICT applications, can control the content, time and pace of learning. It is also one of the greatest recent advancement in the world of information technology and has become a useful instrument that has fostered the process of making the world a global village. This is a universal fact that the use of Internet has a great impact on the student’s academic career (Devi and Roy 2012).

The internet offers two main benefits: communication and information (Warren, Brunner, Mair and Barnet, 1998). Internet usage has the potential to improve the quality of education. It has been reported that computer based learning can increase understanding of theoretical and critical concepts (Laurillard, 1992). The popularity of the Internet as a teaching learning tool increased with the introduction of the web browser, which uses a hypertext concept (Ciglaric and Vidmar, 1998). With text, graphical images, video, audio, and animated objects, it became easily distributed over the Internet. The value of the Internet for educational purposes is enhanced as it brings about positive changes to teachers and instructors, who teach students to learn, work, communicate, and play (Charp, 2000). At the same time several studies have revealed that students use Internet for non-academic purposes. The rapid addiction of students to the Internet is becoming an issue that the Institutions and Managements should be ready to address as the internet is posing an unhealthy risk to students’ careers, academics and personal social lives (Caldwell and Cunningham, 2010). More so, the hosts of Singles sites, Music’s, social sites, videos sites and others have been distractive paradigms to most students that are pleasurably inclined towards such sites. These sites affect not only the productive life of students in terms of academics but cause distraction to them (Cetin and Ceyhan, 2014).

Today, the educational sector in India has been deeply influenced by the arrival of Internet and computer in India and it is changing how knowledge is imparted to the students. That is why Internet offers a new medium of communication that enables Indian students to gain access to large amount of information on any subject or topic. Internet service has not
reached all over the India and even the network speed in urban areas is not par with rest of the world. Internet use has both positive and negative aspects. The positive consequences of Internet use include enhanced self-confidence, increased frequency of communication with family and friends, and feelings of empowerment and the negative consequences of internet include cyber bullying, obesity, decline in physical fitness, decline in academic achievement (Clark, Frith and Demi , 2004).

Surely many studies recommended increase the use of Internet among students and teachers and called it “the information medium of the future”. But, students are also facing certain psychosocial problems after using Internet. Therefore it would be essential to discuss about good and bad aspects of how this medium influences the life of students, what effects it has on their social behavior, academic life and what the upcoming will look like. One more negative aspect of the Internet use is Internet addiction as well as online threats and risks such as acquaintance with sexual contents and online victimization containing cyber bullying, harassment and sexual solicitation. It was also found that some students are psychologically dependent on the Internet and they feel unpleasant, anxiety, depression, and emptiness during or after using it (Singh, 2014).

A series of problems resulting from the misuse of Internet accompanying the excessive use of Internet, arouse attentions of researchers all over the world (Kraut , Kiesler , Bonka , Cummings , Helgeson, Crawford, 2002; Pratarelli, Browne, 2002; Young, 1996). Developmental stressors, coupled with free access to Internet services, may contribute to adolescents’ vulnerability to Internet behavior dependence (Kandell 1998; Goel , Subramanyam and Kamath, 2013). Research indicates that Internet addiction is often associated with other forms of mental distress such as depression, impulse control disorder, and low self-esteem (Young and Rogers 1998). In the Western countries and in South East Asian countries, several studies have focused on Internet behavior patterns in adolescents (Siomos , Dafouli , Braimiotis , Mouzas and Angelopoulos, 1998; Ghassemzadeh , Shahraray and Moradi, 2008; Canbaz , Sunter , Peksen and Canbaz, 2009; Cao and Su, 007). However, there is a paucity of such studies in India. The present study aims to investigate the use of internet in relation to gender, perceived social support, computer anxiety, interpersonal relationships, academic achievement and internet self-efficacy among adolescents.

1.2 Gender

The term ‘gender’ will be used according to the description of McGregor and Bazi (2001): "Whereas the sex of an individual is biologically determined, gender refers to the socially constructed definition of females and males and the relationship between them. Gender is
culture-specific and also varies over time. It determines the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to women and men in society, in both public and private life”. Oxford dictionary mentions that the word gender has been used since the 14th century as a grammatical term, referring to classes of noun designated as masculine, feminine, or neuter in some languages. The sense ‘the state of being male or female’ has also been used since the 14th century, but this did not become common until the mid 20th century. Although the words gender and sex both have the sense ‘the state of being male or female,’ they are typically used in slightly different ways: sex tends to refer to biological differences, while gender refers to cultural or social ones. In nutshell, gender is a matter of culture; it refers to social classification into masculine and feminine. Gender as a concept focuses initially on how social factors not bodies determine people’s behaviour. Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is characterized by rapid physical, biological and hormonal changes resulting in to psychosocial, behavioural and sexual maturation between the ages of 10-19 years in an individual. It is also a stage when young people extend relationships beyond their parents and family. It is a time of intense influence of peers, and the outside world in the society. A desire to experiment and explore can manifest in a range of behaviours. Adolescents as they mature cognitively, the mental functioning process becomes analytic, capable of abstract thinking leading to articulation and independent ideology (Beniwal, 2015).

As early as in the 1960s, technology is known as being biased towards the interest and styles of men. Women look at computers and see them mere as machines, thus considering computers as masculine. This issue is being discussed by many researchers and it is seen as evidence that culture shapes the way a woman is brought up. Therefore, woman basically has this phenomenon that they do not belong to technology. For instance, many researchers indicate that parents, teachers and software manufacturers tend to give girls clues that computer science is not for them, thus it affects the feeling of girls towards information technology (Bimber, 2000). Heimrath and Goulding (2001) argued that women feel their presence in computer science programs as a minority that can lead to feelings of out-of-place and unwelcome. As a result, previously women stayed away from any form of technology. Nowadays, however women are being exposed to these technologies. Internet access has become available either at home or work and women, young and old, have increased their online usage on internet.

According to Crocco, Cramer and Meier (2008) girls and boys have relatively equal interest in computers as far as in middle schools. However, Kim, Lehto and Marrison (2007) reported
that men and women use the Internet differently for different purposes. The gap in internet usage is labelled as ‘the digital divide’ and it has been the subject of many scholarly debates. Shashaani (1993) revealed that gender differences in internet usage exist because men tend to be more interested in computers than women.

However, according to Kennedy, Wellman and Klement (2003) the digital divide is not simply an issue of accessibility, but is also related to obstacles to internet usage. Many researchers argued that men and women are different due to many factors. One common factor that differentiates a man and a woman is the biological factors (Buss, 1995). According to Kim, Lehto and Marrison (2007) gender differences are noticed in the way how the information is processed and decision making is made in terms of internet usage. Moreover, Bimber (2000) argues that gender differences exist due to socio-economic status, in which men and women may differ in technology adaptation which in return influences computers and Internet access and usage. As such the study on gender differences on internet is still a new dimension especially within the context of information search processes (Kim, Lehto and Morrison, 2007). Moreover, research on internet usage and digital divide focused on just documenting statistical differences in access and use (Kennedy, Wellman and Klement, 2003).

Numerous studies had documented that boys spend more time than girls playing computer and video games (Subrahmanyam, Greenfield and Kraut 2001). Based on early home computer and video game use patterns, it was expected that boys also would spend more time online than girls. Even if girls and boys spent equivalent amounts of time online, previous research (both academic and market based) suggested that they might display gender stereotypical preferences in their choices of Internet activity, i.e., boys might be more likely to spend their time online alone, playing violent online games, while girls might be more likely to spend their time online in social interaction (Subrahmanyam, Greenfield and Kraut, 2001).

A large body of research supports the existence of small, but significant, gender differences (Burman, Bitan, and Booth, 2008). Commonly reported cognitive and psychosocial gender differences include female advantage in language and cooperation and male advantage in visual-spatial reasoning and competitiveness (Bonanno and Kommers, 2005; Hyde, 2005). Such gender differences have generalized to online environments (Lee, 2007; Cooper, 2006). Lee and Chae (2007) observed that, among 10 to 12 year old children, boys were more likely than girls to play online games; girls were more likely than boys to be involved in online communities. Murphy and Beggs (2003) concluded that girls were more positive than boys
regarding the educational utility of the Internet; boys were more positive than girls about the play-value of the Internet. Correspondingly, Papastergiou and Solomonidou (2004) found that boys used the Internet more than girls for entertainment and Web page creation. Colley (2003) noted that girls had a greater work orientation and appreciation for email while boys showed a greater affinity for online games. Cooper (2006) identified increased female, as opposed to male, computer anxiety as persistent over time and across international borders. However, Williams (2006) argued that the notion that technology is more attractive to males than females may not be reasonably applied to Internet technologies for individuals immersed in that technology at home and school from a young age.

Gender differences in childhood Internet use vary, not only in terms of specific applications (e.g., communication versus recreation) but also in relation to individual behavior when using specific applications. Large, Beheshti, and Rahman (2002) collected data on gender differences in collaborative web searching in a sixth grade classroom. Analysis of the search sessions revealed that boys formulated queries comprised of fewer keywords than girls, boys spent less time on individual pages than girls; and boys clicked more hypertext links per minute than girls. Jackson, Zhao, Kolenic, Fitzgerald, Harold and Eye (2008) noted no gender differences in the overall number of websites visited by children but a difference in the category of sites visited. Reportedly, boys visited more pornography websites while girls visited more world/environment websites. In a recent Canadian survey on Internet use, girls tended to prefer social network and music websites while boys gravitate towards sports and games sites.

During the 1990s, improvements in personal computing and network technologies made the Internet more accessible to everyone including females (Turkle, 1997). Teenagers between the ages of 13 and 19 have been identified as the generation with the highest Internet use since the late 1990s (Kraut, Pettson, Lundmark, Kiesler and Mukopadhyay, 1998). Social media are web-based (and increasingly, mobile) services that allow users to connect and interact with friends, acquaintances, and strangers. Examples include social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter, media-sharing sites such as YouTube and Flickr, blogs, and other web-based communication forums. Much of that content is photographs, links, and textual information that social media users post to present an online self (Herring and Kapidzic, 2015).

Several studies have reported gender differences in Internet usage. Studies indicated that the use of computers and the Internet differs between men and women. Weiser (2000) gave an extensive review and executed a study on gender differences in Internet use patterns and
Internet application preferences in a sample of 1190 surveys. He concluded that there were numerous gender differences in preferences for specific Internet applications. Results had shown that men use the Internet mainly for purposes related to entertainment and leisure, whereas women use it primarily for interpersonal communication and educational assistance. Male students are generally considered more experienced in programming and computer games than females and report having had more encouragement from parents and friends previously, in contrast to women who might have been discouraged from using modern technologies (Busch, 1995). Papastergiou and Solomonidou (2005) mention that boys have more opportunities to access the Internet and use the Internet for entertainment and web page creation than girls do, with no other differences in other activities. Similar results were reported by Martin and Schumacher (2000) that males were more likely to be pathological Internet users than females.

1.3 Perceived social support
Perceived social support refers to the perception that the person is cared for, is valued, and is part of a group. Perceived social support has a buffering effect against negative outcomes, perhaps by an interaction with coping behaviors (Asberg, Bowers, Renk, and McKinney, 2008).

The traditional operational definition proposed by House (1981) perceived social support is an interpersonal transaction in which one can rely on others for information, help, and advice. In House’ conceptualization, social support has multiple dimensions. Emotional support is showing others that you care about them, have empathy for their situation/problem, trust and respect them, and even love them. Research shows that this is the most important and often researched form of social support (Carroll and Landry, 2010; Cobb, 1976; Gottlieb, 1983).

Instrumental support is perceived when others provide specific help or assistance to others. This dimension can include taking care of others, helping them complete tasks or activities that need to be done, or lending them money. The third dimension, information support occurs when information is shared with others to help them address a problem, make a decision, or cope with a stressful situation. Information support is conceptually different from instrumental support in that by providing it, the information helps the person help him/herself. Each of these three types of support (emotional, instrumental, and informational) are interrelated and often are linked in complex ways in relationships with others. Individuals need each type of social support to help them feel embedded in a social context and connected to others in a positive way.
While research on social support has expanded rapidly, the social support construct has been plagued by conceptual vagueness. Clarifying the distinctions between social network characteristics and perceived social support is one way of refining the social support construct (Heller and Swindle, 1983). Social networks refer to the social connections provided by the environment and can be assessed in terms of structural and functional dimensions (Marsella and Snyder, 1981). For example, size, density, multiplicity refer to structural network characteristics while network functions include the provision of information, comfort, emotional support, material aid, etc. On the other hand, perceived social support refers to the impact networks have on the individual. If networks provide support, information, and feedback then perceived social support (PSS) can be defined as the extent to which an individual believes that his/her needs for support, information, and feedback are fulfilled (Procidano and Heller, 1983).

While the perception of support depends upon the availability of supportive structures in the environment, perceived support and support provided by networks are not identical. Perceived Social Support probably is influenced by within person factors, including both long standing traits on the one hand, and temporal changes in attitude or mood on the other. Both of these may influence the perception of whether support is available or has been provided. The Perceived Social Support measures the extent to which an individual perceives that his/her needs for support, information, and feedback are fulfilled by friends (PSS-Fr) and by family (PSS-Fa). The distinction between friend support and family support is considered important. Different populations (e.g., different age cohorts) may rely on or benefit from friend or family support to different extents. At a given time, there might be more change in an individual's friend network (e.g., through moving for education or employment) or family network (e.g., through death). Friend relationships are often of relatively shorter duration than family relationships. And, while an individual's social competence probably plays a role in the maintenance of his/her support network (Heller, 1979) this is probably truer for friend relationships than family relationships since some of the latter are, by definition, ours by birth.

Perceived social support in adolescence period is a defensive power to manage with the problems individual practices and illnesses. Social support guards person from the effect of stressful event through supporting individual to change worrying situation. Generally, Internet provides dynamic social support groups to the individuals experiencing insufficient interpersonal relationships in real life. Thus, person can take the emotional risks in imaginary world than real life (Young, 1997). Campbell, Cumming and Hughes (2006) pointed out the
psychological benefits of frequent use of Internet especially online chatting and argued that virtual chat rooms may be used as an opportunity to develop communication skills and social behaviors for the person experiencing social anxiety and problems in face-to-face communication. However, temporary social support by means of Internet might not continue in real life.

The Internet dependents showed more perceived social support than non-Internet dependents. This revealed that the Internet dependents felt more inclined to use the Internet to search for the social support that they were lacking in their conventional face-to-face relationships with their family and friends. Ofosu (2001) noted that among females, fewer Internet dependents and more non-Internet dependents were found, while among male participants the situation was reversed. The majority of the participants asserted that their Internet-based social interactions were worse and less meaningful than their real life interactions however ten percent reported that their on-line interactions were better and more meaningful than their real life social interactions. Almost eighty five percent participants expressed that they preferred their off-line interactions to their Internet-based interactions. The researcher claimed that there was a strong association between Internet-dependence and dissociation. The respondents’ lack of social support from friends and family in the real life was the factor of their dependence on the Internet where they expected perceived social support for compensation of the missing social support in their real life. Internet-dependents exhibited more shyness and were more conscious of self-esteem than non-Internet dependents. Internet dependents expressed significantly more social loneliness than family or romantic loneliness as compared to non-Internet dependents. The male participants were more intended to be Internet dependent than female participants (Ali, 2011).

However, the notion of perceived social support has now changed due to the widespread use of internet (Joinson, 1998). As a result, studies began to examine the relationship between Internet usage and perceived social support among youth (Qiu Leung and Tov, 2012).

1.4 Anxiety

Anxiety is an acquirable or conditioned drive which functions to motivate avoidance responding (Mowrer, 2003). Therefore, the avoidance response is assumed to be reinforced by a reduction in anxiety. Fear is a conditioned response to pain. If one experiences pain in a specific situation, the stimuli associated with that situation acquires the ability to evoke the same emotional reaction that the pain originally elicited (Miller, 1992). Anxiety is a general term for several disorders that cause nervousness, fear, apprehension, and worrying. These disorders affect how we feel and behave, and they can manifest real physical symptoms. Mild
anxiety is vague and unsettling, while severe anxiety can be extremely debilitating, having a serious impact on daily life. People often experience a general state of worry or fear before confronting something challenging such as a test, examination, recital, or interview. These feelings are easily justified and considered normal. Anxiety is considered a problem when symptoms interfere with a person's ability to sleep or otherwise function. Generally speaking, anxiety occurs when a reaction is out of proportion with what might be normally expected in a situation.

Every one sometimes experiences anxiety in one form or another and in varying degrees. It involves a pattern of physiological and psychological reactions like feeling of stress and emotions. As such, anxiety can seriously inhibit the ability of concentration and dealing with things in a more positive may. It is considered as an unpleasant state evoking avoided behaviours and defences. It can also be defined as a specific emotion necessary for an individual to prepare himself for potential danger and threatening situations. Many researchers found that anxiety is still unclear and not easy to define in simple sentences (Brown, 2007).

Spielberger (1966) also defined anxiety as: “The subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system”.

Anxiety could be defined as feeling of frustration, nervousness, worry and discomfort of using applications on the internet. The feelings associated with anxiety are based on work related overload and stress (Ganster, 1991).

1.4.1 Computer anxiety

Now a day the world is changing rapidly with the technological advancement. So students must cater with the needs of the society. Information Technology is the most developing science. So the students must know the application of the Information Technology in daily life. This awareness depends upon the use of computer among the higher secondary students. The issue of student's computer anxiety may have far reaching effects when it comes to decisions as to how use of computer is integrated into the classroom. It is believed that if they possess less computer anxiety, then there may be a chance for them to make use of computer easily (Vinaithbeerthan and Johnson, 2009).

There are many definitions of computer anxiety, and researchers have not agreed upon a standardized one. Herdman (1983) defined computer anxiety as emotional fear, apprehension, and phobia felt by individuals towards interactions with computers or when they think about using computers. Howard and Smith (1986) defined computer anxiety as “the tendency of a particular person to experience a level of uneasiness over his or her impending use of a
computer”. Selwyn (1997) stated that computer anxiety is a feeling of unease or apprehension an individual experiences in anticipation of or while using computer technology that is disproportionate to the threat the technology presents resulting in computer avoidance, excessive caution with computers, negative remarks about computers; and minimizing the use of computers and related technology. Beckers, Wicherts, and Schmidt (2007) concluded that computer anxiety appears to harbour components of trait anxiety that will negatively influence the success of treatments that are solely focused on teaching computer users the complexities of various applications.

Maurer (1994) defined computer anxiety as the fear and apprehension felt by an individual when considering the utilization of computer technology or when actually using it. Chua, Chen, and Wong (1999) also defined computer anxiety as a fear of computers when using one or fearing the possibility of using it when needed. According to these definitions, computer anxiety is characterized as an affective (to some extent emotional) response. It is different from negative attitudes toward computers that entail personal beliefs and feelings about computers rather than one’s emotional reaction towards using computers (Sam, Othman and Nordin, 2005).

Computer anxiety has been conceptualized as a multi-dimensional construct. According to Torkzadeh and Angula (1992), there are three major dimensions of computer anxiety as psychological, operational, and sociological. To be more concrete, psychological dimension includes attitudes toward computers, self-efficacy, personality types, avoidance, and self-perceptions. Operational dimension usually results from computer courses, teachers, nature of computers, the extent of experiences with the computer, and owning a personal computer. Sociological dimension is related to factors of age, gender, nationality, socio-economic status, and the field of study.

Computers have made a dramatic impact on the contemporary society. Computers to a significant degree affect almost all aspects of our lives. It is even difficult to imagine a job or a task that we can complete without using computers. Of course, the field of education is no exception. Computers are used increasingly in teaching and learning processes within all subject areas at all levels of schooling. Although some students are enthusiastic about computers, others may be apprehensive or reluctant (Arani, 2001; Doyle, Stamouli, and Huggard, 2005). However, whether they feel comfortable or anxious regarding the role and use of computers in their lives, all students must be familiar with and even competent in using computers because this technology dominates all avenues of our societal as well as personal life. However, getting such a competence may not be easy for many reasons. It is predicted that the more people use computers
in their daily lives, the higher number of people will face difficulties with computers (Beckers and Schmidt, 2001). Among other factors, computer anxiety may be a serious barrier against learning how to use computers effectively. On the other hand, although it has been studied for a long period of time, there is no clear-cut consensus regarding the definition and full scope of computer anxiety.

Researchers have proposed that lower computer anxiety and higher computer self-efficacy may be important factors in learning computer skills and employing them efficiently. On the other hand, some students may feel confused or even lost when they encounter computers as a result of negative perceptions of their own personal capabilities. This phenomenon, which is two-faceted with both negative and positive ends, is directly related to the concept of self-efficacy. The amount of mental efforts that students make for acquiring computer skills or performing computer-related tasks may interact with their perceived self-efficacy in the computing field (Karsten and Roth, 1998). If they think that they know enough or they can learn how to use computers easily, their anxiety may be low; alternatively, when they know little or think that it is difficult to learn/use computers, they may be more anxious (Sam, Othman, Nordin, 2005).

Webster and Martocchio (1992) demonstrated that computer self-efficacy has been positively related to performance during computer training. Zhang and Espinoza (1998), on the other hand, found that the less confident a student feels about computer skills, the more he/she desires to learn about computer technology. Harrington, McElroy, and Morrow (1990) supported that a high level of computer anxiety has been negatively related to learning computer skills. Torkzadeh and Angula (1992) suggested that students with higher level of computer anxiety exhibited more resistance to the use of computers. There are also studies reporting that males on average have better computer self-efficacy and computer anxiety than females (McIlroy, Bunting, Tierney, and Gordon, 2001). Several studies have even investigated female students’ choice of courses and careers, and self-efficacy turned out to be a crucial predictor: Females had significantly lower self-efficacy than males in math related areas including computer science (Hackett, 1985). However, controlling for computer experience, males and females had similar interest toward computers (Badagliacco, 1990).

Recently it has been suggested that the contemporary male and female students alike are more pragmatic so that there may not be differences between genders and generalizations in terms of computers. Shaw and Giacquinta (2000) reported that two commonly held beliefs, that older students show more resistance than younger students toward computing for academic purposes and that males are more interested and skilled in the use of computers than females, are no longer accurate.
1.5 Interpersonal relationships

An interpersonal relationship is an association between two or more people. It may be based on inference, love, solidarity, regular business interactions, or some other type of social commitment. Interpersonal relationships are formed in the context of social, cultural and other influences. The context can vary from family or kinship relations, friendship, marriage, relations with associates, work, clubs, neighbourhoods, and places of worship. Before the existence of Homo sapiens, our primates had long before established their norms of social behaviour; tendency to be social, to form attachments, and helping others. Together with the role of sexual reproduction, they passed these to the future generations. These characteristics laid the foundation for our tendency to form and maintain personal relationships (Wright 1999).

Over the past decade, technological advances have reached all segments of the population across the globe. The 20th century was epitomized by youth staying connected through face-to-face interaction or the use of the landline telephones. Social networks thought of as a set of people in which support is exchanged or relationships that are important to an individual typically managed through interpersonal or conventional telephone contact. However, the growth in Internet access and software availability as well as advancements of cell phones, combined with a population of youth who have grown up exposed to this technology, has resulted in social networks being replaced online and through telecommunications (Hinduja and Patchin, 2008). The youth of today use technology such as the Internet more than any other method through which to communicate and socialize. Recent studies have shown that communication technology is increasing exponentially with each generation and is becoming a mainstay within our society (Mishna, McLuckie, and Saini, 2009).

Relationship refers generally to one-to-one social units, i.e. parent and child, teacher and student, employer and employee, or doctor and patient. The internet is the latest in a series of technological breakthroughs in interpersonal communication, following the telegraph, telephone, radio, and television. It combines innovative features of its predecessors, such as bridging great distances and reaching a mass audience. It is interactive: Like the telephone and the telegraph (and unlike radio or television), people can overcome great distances to communicate with others almost instantaneously. Earlier technologies, from printing to the telegraph have brought big changes over time. But the social changes over the coming decades are likely to be much more extensive, and to happen much faster, than any in the past, because the technologies driving them are continuing to develop at a breakneck pace.
More importantly, they look as if together they will be as pervasive and ubiquitous as electricity” (Manasian, 2003).

It is interactive: Like the telephone and the telegraph (and unlike radio or television), people can overcome great distances to communicate with others almost instantaneously. It is a mass medium: Like radio and television (and unlike the telephone or telegraph), content and advertising can reach millions of people at the same time. Although some welcome it as a panacea while others fear it as a curse, all would agree that it is quite capable of transforming society. The main reason people use the Internet is to communicate with other people over e-mail--- and the principal reason why people send e-mail messages to others is to maintain interpersonal relationships (Hampton and Wellman 2001, Howard et al. 2001, McKenna and Bargh 2000, Stafford , Kline and Dimmick, 1999).

In recent years interest has grown in the extent to which Internet is used in social relationships (Haythornthwaite and Wellman, 2002). Surveys indicate that the most frequent use of the Internet is for communication purposes and that computer-mediated communication facilitates not only the maintenance of social ties but also the formation of new relationships among individuals (McKenna, Green, and Gleason, 2002; Parks and Floyd, 1996). Adolescence is a stage characterized by critical developmental changes in the social and physical realm. As children enter their teenage years, they interact less frequently with their parents, and peer relationships take on greater importance. Peers act as emotional confidants, providing each other with advice and guidance, serving also as models of behavior and attitudes (Giordano, 2003). Furthermore, adolescents are a segment of the population who are early adopters of information and communication technologies, and are actively involved in adopting the Internet (Kiesler, Zdaniuk, Lundmark and Kraut, 2000). Studies show that the use of the Internet by adolescents is mainly for social purposes Through the Internet, adolescents meet new friends, communicate after school hours, exchange gossip and information about homework, and provide and receive social support (Gross, Juvonen and Gable, 2002; Lenhart, Raine and Oliver, 2001).

Over the past 15 years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of young people with access to the Internet and a proliferation of Internet programs that young people use for entertainment and social interaction. These changes have raised concerns that some adolescents or emerging adults may be using the Internet so extensively that it interferes with face-to-face interaction or other aspects of daily living. In fact, some scholars have termed such extensive use as Internet addiction, which seems to endanger especially adolescents and emerging adults (Griffiths, Davies and Chappell, 2004; Tsai and Lin, 2003; Wan and Chiou,
Adolescents report that friends are their most important sources of social support, even more than their family (Brown and Larson, 2009). Because it seems that Internet usage can widen and strengthen the contact of young people with friends and peers, the online communication of youths can have a strong developmental impact. The past decades have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of youths using the Internet, especially for communicating with peers. Online activity can widen and strengthen the social networks of adolescents and emerging adults (Subrahmanyam and Smahel, 2011), but it also increases the risk of Internet addiction. Current research revealed that young people use the Internet more frequently than people in older age categories (Lupac and Sladek, 2008) and are in higher need of peer social inclusion and support (Brown and Larson, 2009). At the same time, since adolescence is crucial for the formation of lifestyles, misuse of the Internet during this stage of life can be more harmful than in later periods (Heino, Lintonen and Rimpela, 2004).

Youths tend to use the Internet mostly for maintaining and enriching their social circles. This corresponds to the developmental need of youths to establish relations with peers, and it seems that the Internet is just a tool for addressing this need. Furthermore, the concept that Internet usage leads youngsters to social isolation (Kraut, Kisler, Bonka, Xummings, Helgeson and Crawford, 1998) was not confirmed, as those who did not report having any online friends recorded the fewest number of friends. These results are congruent with other research (Valkenburg and Peter, 2007).

No one today disputes that the Internet is likely to have a significant impact on social life; but there remains substantial disagreement as to the nature and value of this impact. Several scholars have contended that Internet communication is an impoverished and sterile form of social exchange compared to traditional face-to-face interactions, and will therefore produce negative outcomes (loneliness and depression) for its users as well as weaken neighborhood and community ties. Media reporting of the effects of Internet use over the years has consistently emphasized this negative view (McKenna and Bargh 2000). Research on the social effects of the Internet been more contentious than its effect on close relationships, such as those with family and friends. Two studies that received considerable media attention were the HomeNet project by Kraut, Kisler, Bonka, Xummings, Helgeson and Crawford (1998) and the large-scale survey reported by Nie and Erbring 2000 and Nie 2001). Both reports concluded that Internet use led to negative outcomes for the individual user, such as increase in depression and loneliness, and neglect of existing close relationships. Nie (2001) has responded to his critics by arguing that time is a limited commodity, so that the hours spent on the Internet must come at a cost to other activities. “We would expect that
all those spending more than the average of 10 hours a week on the Internet would report substantially fewer hours socializing with family members, friends, and neighbors. It is simply a matter of time”. However, in the Nie and Erbring (2000) results, the real and substantial decrease associated with heavy Internet use was in watching television and reading newspapers, not in social interaction with friends and family.

The Internet has unique, even transformational qualities as a communication channel, including relative anonymity and the ability to easily link with others who have similar interests, values, and beliefs. Despite past media headlines to the contrary, the Internet does not make its users depressed or lonely, and it does not seem to be a threat to community life quite the opposite, in fact. If anything, the Internet, mainly through e-mail, has facilitated communication and thus close ties between family and friends, especially those too far away to visit in person on a regular basis. The Internet can be fertile territory for the formation of new relationships as well, especially those based on shared values and interests as opposed to attractiveness and physical appearance as is the norm in the off-line world (Hatfield and Sprecher 1986). And in any event, when these Internet-formed relationships get close enough (i.e., when sufficient trust has been established), people tend to bring them into their “real world” that is, the traditional face-to-face and telephone interaction sphere. This means nearly all of the typical person’s close friends will be in touch with them in “real life” on the phone or in person and not so much over the Internet, which gives the lie to the media stereotype of the Internet as drawing people away from their “real-life” friends.

Social networking has become common in today’s society, especially among adolescents and young adults, and continues to grow in popularity. These activities occur among people who already know each other personally as well as those who have never met in person. Personal interaction is and has always been an important function of the human experience. Prior to the technological revolution and creation of personal computers and cell phones, relationships were typically developed and maintained by means of face-to-face interaction and verbal or written communication. With the development of the Information Age, characterized by the ability for people to freely and conveniently access and exchange information through technology, the way in which our society interacts with one another has continued to transform (Drussel, 2012).

Internet access has changed people’s lives, especially for communication with each other. The Internet communication, taking Facebook for example, provides adolescents with opportunities to maintain the existing interpersonal relationships as well as to develop new friendships, according to a report by Mesch and Talmud (2006). Suwannatthachote and
Tantrarungroj (2012) also indicated that students communicate with friends for both academic and social discussions on Internet. Interpersonal relationships are a network in which people share themselves and trust the value of mutual interaction. The positive interpersonal relationships provide people with opportunities to support others and receive others’ supports on social works and individual emotion, and further to form a cordial atmosphere of intimacy and mutual caring (Snell and Janney, 2000).

Peers refer to people within the same age, similar social identity and close social proximity. Children are associated with a stronger peer group influence at their infant stage through to adolescent. Peers broaden their circle of socialization influence to people outside of their family as they become more exposed to other agents of socialization such as media and schools. The interaction between peers adds to their socialization and becomes part of their social skills and this enables them to relate with people in a superior position. Interaction between peers decreases as they grow in age and tends to be autonomous. Their experience and lessons learned becomes a basic rule for more complex strategies used for leadership, cooperation, dominance, negotiation, and compromise. Peer group relationships become extremely important as they learn how to navigate the complexities of group interaction without adult guidance. Peer group socialization is linked to puberty and their relationship with others in life. As an agent of socialization, peer group develops a social tie that extends to adulthood (Hamburger and Vinitzky, 2010).

This is because they learn and practice together things that seem unusual, such as interaction with the opposite sex, development of friendship between and to be liked by others as well as making choices. Technological system supporting social media services such as internet and computer provides a reliable platform for online interaction and socialization. The quality of a technological system considering its reliability, convenience, ease of use and system flexibility is a significant predictor of user satisfaction and behavioral intention to interact via online social networking site (Liu and Marchewka, Lu and Yu, 2005).

Social media was created for social interaction and it is serving its purpose fully. It has enabled the communication, faster, cheaper and anytime, anywhere. This very feature, which seems to be useful, is becoming a problem in interpersonal communication. People are virtually connected all the time with updated status on social media sites. But over obsession of update in virtual world is leading to ‘no communication’ in real world. Most of the time netizens are so much engrossed in their virtual communication they hardly find time to talk to those near and dear one who are present in their physical surroundings. In the world of over-communication we are moving away from the real world and living a virtual world of fake
identities and intimacies. Those who are not really using them due to lack of knowledge, access or disinterest find themselves alienated. Not only it is affecting the quantity and quality of communication but it is also affecting the kind of language we are using in our informal and formal written communication. Like on Twitter one can post messages in limited number of characters, netizens have innovated a variety of acronyms. This is affecting the language of present generation in various ways. Students have started using these acronyms in their examination answer sheets and many of them have forgotten the actual words for those (Bala, 2014). Media networking site affects social, emotional and cognitive development of youth accounting for a large portion of their time (Roberts and Dunbar, 2010). The rapid growth of online social networking site represents an alternative communication platform that necessitate for further research (Fox 2007).

1.6 Academic achievement

Academic achievement is defined as the level of individual’s education and/or educational outcomes accomplished successfully, as a result of learning at school. It is usually determined by comparing his or her score on a school test and/or a standardized test with the average score of other people of the same age (Kim 2011).

Numerous studies have shown that owning a home computer and the use of information technology is positively related to academic achievement (Rocheleau 1995; Blanton, Moorman and Hayes, 1997; Subrahmanyam, Greenfield and Kraut 2001). In fact, research shows that that having a home computer is associated with higher test scores in reading, even after controlling for family income and other factors related to reading test scores (Jackson 2008). Jackson’s (2008) study on race, gender, and information technology use found that “for both white and black twelve-year-old boys and girls,’ frequency of computer use was positively associated with grades received and overall GPA. Conversely, these findings also suggested that frequency of playing video games was negatively related to overall achievement”. Empirical studies have also provided evidence of positive associations among internet use, social support and academic achievement (Bargh and Katelyn2004). Increased levels of social support have been shown to translate into higher achievement scores.

But, another study conducted by Metzger (2003) shows some weaknesses of the internet in academic work:

• few centralized information filters relative to the amount of information available
• no explicit editorial review policies to analyze content and verify factual information
• less social and professional pressure to ensure accuracy
• no regulatory policy concerning web-based information
• ease of electronic sabotage and content alteration
• many web sites do not have established reputations that can aid users in assessing the sites’ veracity.
• merging of advertising and information
• professional quality web sites are easy to create and can appear credible, even when they are not.

Modern technology has experienced vast expansion in recent years, leading to its extensive use by people from all generations. For a generation of young people, technology has assumed a substantial stake in their social and educational lives. The vast majority of adolescents have access to computers, the Internet, cell phones, video games, and many other forms of modern technology. With the increased role of modern technology in the adolescents’ lives has come the increased concern about how children might be affected. Technology is changing process and content to the extent that children today are immersed in a world that abounds with information. The increasing amount of time children spend on modern technology has raised questions about the use of the technology (Simuforosa, 2013). The increased use of Social Networking Websites has become an international phenomenon in the past several years. What started out as a hobby for some computer literate people has become a social norm and way of life for people from all over the world (Boyd, 2007). Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities, and showcase their social lives (Boyd, 2007). In the beginning years of personal computers and Internet access, websites were used primarily for information gathering and research. In the past several years, the Internet has become the center of communication between people, as well as being their prime source of entertainment. It has also become the tool used for almost every project or paper that a student will write in high school, and in their later years in college (Alexander and Salas, 2008). In recent studies, adolescents have shown to be the greatest consumers of the Internet, particularly for social interactions (Lin and Subrahmanyam, 2007). Adolescents have become accustomed to this lifestyle much more than older generations have in recent years, as this way of living is all they know (Lewis, 2008). Social networking sites have also been the center of concern for many parents because of safety concerns and/or risks. Other parents just simply do not want their children staring at the computer too long. The risks and dangers of teen Internet usage are constantly flooding television shows, newscasts, and magazines, always warning parents to educate parents on teen Internet behaviors (Tynes, 2007). Academic Achievement assumes primary importance in the context
of an education system aimed at progressive scholastic development of the child and human resources development at the macro level. The scientific rearing and education of a child is monitored on the basis of his academic achievement. Academic achievement is the core of the wider term i.e. educational growth. The importance of academic achievement in one's life cannot be over emphasized. It acts as an emotional tonic. Sound academic records are the pillars on which the entire future personality stands. Academic achievement have always been the center of educational research and despite varied definitions about the aims of education, the academic development of the child continue to be the primary and most important goal of education. Life in general and for a student in particular has become highly competitive. Today there is no place for a mediocre student. There is limited room at the top that too only for the best. The importance of scholastic and academic achievement has raised important questions for educational researchers (Pardhasaradhi and Goel, 2015).

Academic problems caused by Internet addiction include decline in study habits, significant drop in grades, missing classes, increased risk of being placed on academic probation, and poor integration in extracurricular activities. Besides, adolescent Internet addicts often suffer from severe psychological distress, such as depression, anxiety, compulsivity, feeling of self-effacement; fear that life without Internet would be boring, empty, and joyless, as well as feeling of loneliness and social isolation (Akhter, 2013).

Suhail and Bargees (2006) also reported some benefits of Internet access for college students. They indicated that internet usage impacts education in a positive way by increasing communication with classmates and professors, increasing access to libraries and educational databases, and improving study hours and study habits. Despite these benefits of Internet use, researchers have maintained that college students are at particularly high risk for developing internet addiction. Being a student, one can hardly live without exams, assignments, group projects, various extracurricular activities etc. Whether a student can have good academic achievement greatly depends on the student’s health, his/her time management for every school work, as well as how hard he/she works. There are some researches showing that the Internet can distract students from their study (Young, 1998). This could also be explained by the fact that students tend to spend so much time in online activities, which leaves them with little or no time for studies (Griffith, 2000). It can also be clarified by the fact that a student loses his capacity to concentrate, most probably because of the late night internet sessions (Frangos and Frangos, 2009).

Teenagers of today and that the Internet and computers are necessities if they are going through High school. They need internet and computers to do research / projects for their
assignments. If they don’t have computer they will get behind in this information age. Internet addiction among teenagers is not specially targeted to the teens themselves, even children in lower grades will require a computer to search their assignments, but it all leads to one thing computer dependency. After all, today’s teens have literally grown up with the Internet and what may be considered “too much time online” (Anwar, 2014). Other findings point to a relationship between technology use and academic performance, although causal relationships have been difficult to establish. Several studies show that the presence of educational resources in the home, including computers, is a strong predictor of academic success in mathematics and science (Blanton, Moorman, Hayes and Warner, 1997; Cole, 1996; Rocheleau, 1995).

The Internet is seen as the most dynamic mass media in present century. Its interactive nature has attracted adolescents from all walks of life. Unlike its predecessors like the TV and radio, the Internet is also a storehouse of knowledge providing access to huge pile of information. The number of adolescents independently using the Internet for self-directed activities is continually increasing. It became evident that through the adolescent’s engagement with the Internet they have developed an in-depth understanding of the different uses of the tool for different purposes. The Internet is also an inseparable part of today’s education system. Nowadays the adolescent students increasingly depends on the Internet for their academic purposes (Salman, 2010).

Internet allows adolescent students to broaden their academic experience, access important information and communication with others. This is a universal fact that the use of Internet has a great impact on the student’s academic achievement. The opportunities, which the Internet can offer in the sphere of education, are really unique. Internet is a relatively new channel for students and contains vast quantities of information that vary a great deal regarding its contents, aim, target group, reliability etc. In present days progress in the field of the Internet is bringing about progress in the field of education (Chapman, 2002).

Internet is a very important element of life which cannot be ignored. Internet is used for educational purpose by a large community but unfortunately we have a large community including majority of youth and teenagers who use Internet for only social networking sites (Boyd, 2006). Trusov, Bucklin,and Pauwels (2009) reviewed that the phenomena of social network is quite simple to understand, it is a web based facility which allows individuals to build a profile identity and generate subjective associations and connections among themselves and communicate them at a central location. According to Kuppuswamy and Narayan (2010) social network websites grab attention of the students and then diverts it
towards non-educational and inappropriate actions including useless chatting. On the basis of the above statement we can say that social networking sites may badly affect the academic life and learning experiences of the student. Whereas on the other hand, Liccardi, Ounnas, Pau, Massey, Kinnunen, Lewthwaite, Midy and Sakar (2007) reviewed that the students are socially connected with each other for sharing their daily learning experiences and do conversation on several topics. Tinto (1997) argued that extra-curricular activities and academic activities are not enough to satisfy some students who are suffering by social networking isolation. This shows that social networks are beneficial for the students as it contributes in their learning experiences as well as in their academic life. Trusov, Bucklin, and Pauwels (2009) noted that the Internet is no doubt evolution of technology but specifically social networks are extremely unsafe for teenagers, social networks become hugely common and well known in past few years. According to Cain (2009) social network websites provide ease of connecting people to one another; free of cost and after connecting one can post news, informative material and other things including videos and pictures etc. This free of cost factors fascinate students for communication and data sharing. Cain (2009) stated that although social network websites can be practiced for good determinations but it is usually used for Involvement of digital snapshots and information, exposing securities, and conducting online conversations because many other communities inside social networking websites motivate user for this kind of inappropriate actions. Kuppuswamy and Narayan (2010) explained that the social networks grabs the total attention and concentration of the students and diverts it towards non educational, unethical and inappropriate actions such as useless chatting, time killing by random searching and not doing their jobs. Students and teenagers mostly use social networks for time killing and sake of enjoyment but it has been analyzed that internet use for education purpose and any appropriate task including online tutorials, online lectures and education material downloading is very good but use of internet for only social network is very useless perhaps dangerous.

Social networking sites have brought both good and bad to the present generation. Social networking site has helped many students to acquire knowledge from one another over Internet without necessarily has to meet physically. On the other hand, social networking sites have caused many problems. For instance many students have lost their interest in their studies as they spent most of the time on these sites. What started out as a hobby for some computer literate people has become a social norm and way of life for people from all over
the world (Boyd, 2007). Banquil, & Chua (2009) came up with a conclusion that social networking sites do affect one’s academic performance adversely. It directly causes the gradual drop of grades of students. It directly affects a student’s academic performance if the student invests his time in social networking sites instead of in his studies.

1.7 Self-efficacy
The concept of “self-efficacy” refers to an individual learner’s beliefs, expectations and perceived confidence in his/her capability to perform a task (Bandura, 1993, 1996). These beliefs pertain to optimistic attitudes about being able to cope with a variety of challenging situations or tasks (Schwarzer, Mueller and Greenglass, 1999). Self-efficacy affects students’ choices of processing learning activities, how much effort they will devote, and how long they will sustain effort in dealing with difficult situations (Bong and Clark, 1999; Klassen, 2002). According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is one’s belief in his/her capacity to perform a specific task. Individuals may define their skills and capabilities in order to perform certain actions or activities.

1.7.1 Internet self-efficacy
Internet self-efficacy refers to “the belief in one’s capability to organize and execute Internet actions required to produce given attainments” (Eastin and LaRose, 2000). Previous internet experience is positively related to internet self-efficacy (Eastin and LaRose, 2000). Males are generally found to have higher internet skills than females. User attitude and computer anxiety are both found influential to internet self-efficacy. People with high attitudes toward computers have higher internet self-efficacy, compared to those with low attitudes toward computers. Training is helpful in the improvement of learners’ internet self-efficacy, especially for those with higher attitudes toward computers, and those with low computer anxiety. (Torkzadeh, Chang and Demirhan, 2006; Torkzadeh and Van Dyke, 2002).

Various studies have investigated the relationship between internet self-efficacy and student satisfaction. Studies from Rodriguez Robles (2006) and Puzziferro (2008) showed that internet self-efficacy is not predictive of student satisfaction in web-based learning environments. With the dearth of literature regarding student satisfaction, a wider net was cast. There is more research regarding the correlation between internet self-efficacy and performance, which is in turn related to student satisfaction. Lim (2001) found that internet experiences in a class have a positive correlation with student satisfaction. Joo, Bong and Choi (2000) and Thompson, Meriac, and Cope (2002) pointed out that internet self-efficacy positively predicted students’ performance. Students with high internet self-efficacy have better information searching skills and learn better than those with low internet self-efficacy.
Tsai and Tsai, 2003). On the other hand, some have found internet self-efficacy as a poor predictor for student success in an online course (DeTure, 2004). Direct research examining the relationship between internet self-efficacy and students' satisfaction suggests there is no relationship, but the number of studies is small. Examinations of the relationship between internet self-efficacy and student performance are mixed. More studies are needed to verify the correlation between Internet self-efficacy and student satisfaction.

The Internet has been widely applied as a learning tool, fully integrated within a wider learning context. Under these circumstances, the concept of Internet self-efficacy was proposed and it has been found that high Internet self-efficacy has a positive influence on one’s expectation concerning learning performance in online contexts (Compeau and Higgins, 1995). Social cognitive theory suggests that the learning ability and beliefs of students influence learning performance, and self-efficacy can be used to predict learning performance (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Lane et al., 2004; Zimmerman, 1997). Thus, students with a higher degree of self-efficacy demonstrate better learning performance (Tsai and Tsai, 2003; Wang and Wu, 2008). Due to the various characteristics associated with online learning environments, the learning performance of students can be influenced by student-perceived Internet self-efficacy (Compeau, Higgins and Huff, 1999; Isman and Çelikli, 2009).

It is commonly believed that online learning performance can be improved if students are confident in their ability to learn computer skills or if they are willing to spend time learning such skills.

Students’ perceptions of Internet self-efficacy and their ability to perform learning tasks influence their learning performance (Salanova, Grau, Cifre, and Llorens, 2000). Teo (2009) found that, teachers’ self-efficacy influences how technology is being used in their classes. Wang and Newlin (2002) indicated that self-efficacy is closely related to a learner’s desire to take online courses, thereby influencing learning performance. Liaw (2002) showed that the Internet self-efficacy of college student’s influences learning performance, and as Internet self-efficacy increases, motivation to use the Internet increases, as does learning performance. Tsai and Tsai (2003) also indicate that students with higher Internet self-efficacy perform better than those with low Internet self-efficacy in the web-based learning task. Nevertheless, Hasan (2003) argued that computer self-efficacy might change when encountering learning difficulties.

Aşkar and Davenport (2009) reported that the computer skills of students influence self-efficacy in programming. Generally, males and females reacted differently regarding Internet self-efficacy and attitudes toward computers (Peng, Tsai and Wu, 2006). Liu and Chang
(2010), who investigated how gender influences student blogging, found no significant difference between male and female students. A number of studies have indicated that males have a more positive attitude toward the Internet than females (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Wu and Tsai, 2006). However, Dabaj (2009) found that female students have a more positive attitude toward technology than male students. Previous research has reported that the males had more positive attitudes, more confidence, and more competencies than the females in using computers and participated more in technology-related work (Fountain, 2000). Federico (2001) stated that college students of both genders in various grades show different levels of learning performance in the web-based course. According to Mitra, LaFrance, and McCullough (2001), when studying computer-related subjects, males and females have different attitudes toward computer use. Sullivan (2001) noted that there were significant differences among male and female college students’ experiences in online learning environment, regarding the flexibility, face-to-face interaction, shy and quiet students, self-discipline.

Durndell and Haag (2002) showed that males had a more positive attitude toward computer-based learning than females. That is, female students had a less positive attitude toward computer use, and used computers for a shorter duration than male students. Moreover, females demonstrated lower computer self-efficacy and higher anxiety than males (Durndell and Haag, 2002; Jackson, Ervin, Gardner and Schmit, 2001). However, Busch’s study (1995) revealed that no gender differences were found in computer attitudes or self-efficacy regarding simple computer tasks. Park (2009) found strong evidence that ‘e-learning self-efficacy’ predicted perceived ease of use of e-learning systems. Thus, we would expect that students with higher levels of ISE would perceive VLEs and other online learning tools as easier to use. They should therefore have more positive attitudes towards them, and ultimately higher levels of use. Importantly, there is evidence that training can increase ISE (Torkzadeh and Van Dyke 2002). Given the findings outlined above, it is expected that increased ISE should lead to increased use of online services.

These ideas are very relevant to the Higher Education context. It may be the case that students who are reluctant to take full advantage of e-learning activities, are reluctant because they have low levels of ISE. There are indications that constructs related to ISE do influence attitudes and behavioural intentions towards use of e-learning. For example, Liang, Wu, and Tsai (2011) found that ISE was associated with positive attitudes towards web-based learning programs in nurses. Hartshorne and Ajjan (2009) found that levels of self-efficacy around use of Web 2.0 applications influenced students’ perceived behavioural control, which in turn
had a positive influence on behavioural intentions to use such tools to supplement in class learning. In the past, self-efficacy has been an important issue in educational research. For example, teachers’ self-efficacy, affecting their teaching performance and students’ learning, has been a topic of much research for approximately 25 years (Ho and Hau 2004 and Labone 2004). Also, students’ self-efficacy, which can be used to effectively predict their academic performance, has also been largely investigated (Lane, Lane and Kyprianou 2004). While students may have increasing opportunities to learn by utilizing the Internet in Web-based instruction, their self-efficacy regarding the Internet, which may have profound impact on their learning outcomes, should become an important research topic for educators and researchers.

The Internet self-efficacy indicates Web users’ self-perceived confidence and expectations of using the Internet. It has been proposed that learners with high efficacy expectations may have a greater chance of success in computer and Internet-related tasks (Oliver and Shapiro 1993; Tsai and Tsai 2003). Consequently, students’ self-efficacy in utilizing technology-related (such as computer and the Internet) tasks has received growing attention among educational researchers (Tsai and Tsai 2003; Durndell, Haag and Laithwaite 2000; Liaw 2002). Among these relevant studies, students’ computer self-efficacy has been investigated, but Internet self-efficacy is a relatively new issue for researchers. Hence, the current study also investigated students’ Internet self-efficacy levels and its gender differences.