INTERNET GAMING DISORDER AMONG STUDENTS

Abstract

This article is devoted to the problem of internet gaming disorder among students based on the survey attended by N=50 respondents aged from 18 to 21 years old. The study summarizes social and psychological consequences of addictive behavior in the students of Kuban State University (Krasnodar, Russia).

Keywords: gadget addiction, Internet gaming, habit, addictive behavior, diagnostics.

Introduction

The Internet has become an important tool for education, entertainment and information exchange. According to the 40th China Information Network Internet Center, 751 million of Chinese citizens use the Internet, 24% of them are students [1].
The phenomenon of Internet addiction is among the negative social and psychological consequences of the influence of the Internet, which is the subject of scientific debate, depending on the development of information technologies and their availability. Addictive behavior is one of the forms of deviant behavior, characterized by a constant desire for a pleasant subjective emotional state, which is expressed in active change in the mental state. The time spent on games on the Internet increases in young people up to 11 hours a day. Computer games are now viewed as pathological and addictive. In the new version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), game disorder is included in the chapter of mental and behavioral disorders.

Internet gaming is attractive for those who want to escape from the requirements of the social environment. Internet addicts need emotional support, and the perception of the Internet as an environment that can provide this support, helps them achieve what they want, unlike the real social environment. Internet gaming addiction also leads to the formation of various psychological problems that only worsen existing social problems of young people. Using the virtual space, young people often have the illusion of permissiveness or impunity, which has a significant impact on the formation of personality.

Nowadays the importance of Internet addiction research has increased. The Internet gaming disorder has quickly spread, and many researchers, mental health consultants and doctors are giving it serious attention: it has been investigated differently among scientists and mental health professionals. The studies used various methods for identifying Internet gaming disorder (IGD), utilizing numerous terms such as internet dependents, problematic internet users, or pathological internet users, gaming disorder, hazardous gaming.

The researchers found that there is a negative effect of excessive use of the Internet and online computer games: the emergence of physical, psychological, behavioral problems, interpersonal problems, problems with work, etc. [2, c. 619-638]. From a psychopathological viewpoint, this disorder
has common elements with many mental disorders, including personality
disorders, major depression, autism, etc. Excessive use of the Internet is a
typical negative side effect that cannot be ignored [3, c. 621-627].

The literature does not have a clear and uniform agreement on terms used
to solve problems related to excessive gaming [4]. The following terms are
currently being used: Internet addiction, Internet dependence, compulsive use,
problematic Internet use, pathological Internet use, unregulated Internet usage,
Internet Gaming Disorder, Behavioral addiction.

Numerous studies have shown that students with Internet addiction
usually experience physical health problems and show poor educational
performance [5, c. 383-404], aggressive behavior [6, c. 745-761] and problems
with family relationships and social contacts [4, c. 619-638]. Since students have
plenty of free time and constant access to the Internet through a variety of
wireless tools, modern students often spend considerable time surfing the
Internet, and, therefore, they are more likely to be addicted to it [7, c. 63-69]. In
addition, the initial stage of university life is a critical period in the development
of students. First-year students face many changes both in the internal and
external environment [8, c. 137-147]. These changes put them at risk for Internet
gaming addiction. Researchers also believe that loneliness is a decisive factor
when considering Internet gaming addiction [9, c. 97-105]. Furthermore, single
people are more likely to be involved in it: excessive use of the Internet occurs
due to the fact that the Internet provides a wider socialization and various forms
of online communication [10, c. 97-105].

The researchers also found that there is a positive effect of using the
Internet. One of the studies showed that the development of information and
communication technologies increases work efficiency, but at the same time
reduces self-sufficiency, self-confidence and memory, and develops dependence
[11, c. 70-71]. Proper use of the Internet and online games activities, however,
can contribute to the development of students, promoting their socialization and
ego-identity [4, c. 745-761]. Young people can contribute to their knowledge of information technology, perceiving it as a more or less productive tool [12, c. 895-909]. Researchers have also found that when there is a lack of real communication, some people choose the Internet and Virtual reality to meet their needs and gain social support, especially when they need to re-establish social connections and maintain communication due to changes in their environmental conditions [13, c. 164-170]. Many researchers also believe that people often play different roles in online games, which allows adolescents to gain social support and to satisfy various emotional needs [14, c. 459-473]. However, some researchers believe that the relationships formed in such networks are superficial, illusory, and sometimes risky and hostile [15, c. 1-11]. Therefore, there is a clear need to define an appropriate boundary between normal Internet gaming and IGD.

**Current research**

The essence of the experiment is to investigate how the Internet has become important for modern youth. The study includes three stages:

- to diagnose the first signs of Internet addiction using The Kimberly-Young Internet Addiction Test (originally “Internet Addiction Test” - Internet Addiction Test);
- to reveal cyber-bulling problems;
- to summarize the main principles of combating addiction.

**Results and discussion**

The Kimberly-Young Internet Addiction Test is a screening measure to determine Internet addiction (Table 1). This questionnaire includes 17 statements that need to be answered "never or rarely", "sometimes", "often or regularly". We asked 50 respondents aged from 18 to 21 years old to complete the test in order to diagnose the first signs of Internet addiction.
Table 1. The Kimberly-Young Internet Addiction Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. When I use my smartphone, laptop, or tablet, I spend more time with it than I had intended.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I enjoy interacting online more than I do with my romantic partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I’d rather spend time online than doing things around the house.</td>
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<td>4. I feel that the quality of my work or school work has suffered due to the amount of time I spend online.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Friends and family have complained about the amount of time I spend in front of my smartphone, tablet, or laptop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. When asked what I do online, I prefer not to say.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Because of the amount of time I spend online, I am not as productive or attentive in my work or school work than I normally would be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I check my social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.), texts, or emails first, before I get down to work or school work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I don’t like it when people bother me when I’m in front of my smartphone, tablet, or tablet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I’m anxious when I’m separated from my smartphone, tablet, or laptop for any extended period of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I escape from my real life for what I can find and do online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. My life would be a lot less interesting and happy without access to the Internet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I put off doing something else by spending more time than I normally would be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. When at work, home, or school and my smartphone is off or out of reach, I spend a lot of time thinking about what I’m missing out on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I often stay up later at night than I had intended due to doing things online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I’d rather stay home gaming, doing social media, or otherwise spending time online than go out with my friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I’ve tried to cut back on my smartphone, tablet, or laptop use not related to work or school work without success.</td>
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Stage 1. The test results showed that among the participants surveyed no one was diagnosed as addicted. Average addiction was revealed in 30% of the respondents; the level of high addiction was registered in 70% of the subjects (Table 2)

Table 2. Test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet addiction</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No addiction</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average addiction</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High addiction</td>
<td>70%</td>
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Stage 2. At this stage, we decided to conduct another survey to reveal cyber-bulling problems that the participants encounter while surfing the Internet to see if Internet addiction grows into aggression, self-affirmation, the emergence of other forms of addiction (Table 3).

### Table 3. Cyber-bulling self-report test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I'm a cyber bullying victim</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I practice cyber bulling</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have never encountered cyber bullying in my life</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I have encountered cyber bullying before, but I was neither a victim nor a participant</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An anonymous survey showed that there are incidents of bullying among the respondents. Thus, 23% of the respondents confirmed that cyber-bullying occurs in the life of students, however, they are neither participants nor victims. Nevertheless, the low percentage of the respondents (17%) who have not encountered bullying in their lives, shows the scope of the problem. Based on the data obtained, we can conclude that a large number of students need help from the onslaught in the Internet space.

**Recommendations and conclusion**

The analysis of the results allowed us to summarize the following recommendations that might help students with addictive behavior:

- motivate yourself to be offline for several days in a row;
- block access to specific resources of the Network;
- do not chat online on Saturdays and Sundays;
- introduce sensitive, but not harmful to health sanctions for non-compliance with the rules and restrictions;
- saturate your real life with various events (hobbies, communication, physical activity, travel);
• identify the reason for craving for the Internet and eliminate it.

The principles we have put forward help the student in the fight against addiction. The Internet is a good thing that exists in the modern world, but you need to control your behavior in the virtual space. These principles should be applied within three weeks. After the principles come into habit, a person can control his or her addictive behavior.

References


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