# ADDICTION OF VIDEO GAMES AMONG YOUNG ADULTS:

# AN INTERVENTION

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## ABSTRACT

Addiction is an endless issue with psychological, biological and environmental factors affecting one's development and livelihood. Bigger portion of addiction and fixation comes from heredity (APA). As addiction is a condition in which one involves himself or herself in the consumption of substance abuse or any other kind of behavior (Like Gambling and Internet addiction), which is being rewarded, affectively resulting in the fixed stimulus more than once, regardless of unfavorable outcomes. Until now, the spread of drug abuse has been relatively inescapable. Now-a-days common drugs like marijuana is easily available. The aim of this research was to assess the level of gaming addiction among male and female individuals within the different age groups of 18-22, 22-26, 26-30 and 30+. The results showed a significant gaming addiction in males rather than females. The research also encompasses the intervention plan for the individuals who's the prior subject of matter in the gaming addiction criteria. The reason for gaming addiction could be plenty of free time, to avoid or escape a stressful situation or any other personal problem. With the inclusion of the intervention plan, the individuals plan to reduce or eliminate the addiction problem to the limit which does not harm the one-self or others for instance.
**Keywords**:- gaming addiction, intervention.

## INTRODUCTION

Addiction is an endless issue with psychological, biological and environmental factors affecting one's development and livelihood. Bigger portion of addiction and fixation comes from heredity (APA). As addiction is a condition in which one involves himself or herself in the consumption of substance abuse or any other kind of behaviour (Like Gambling and Internet addiction), which is being rewarded, affectively resulting in the fixed stimulus more than once, regardless of unfavourable outcomes. Until now, the spread of drug abuse has been relatively inescapable. Now-a-days common drugs like marijuana is easily available.

Addiction can be simplified as an aroused tendency to re-use the drug or behaviour, potentially impacted by mental (e.g., strain, history of psychic trauma), social (e.g., family or companions'

utilization of a substance), and environmental elements (e.g., availability of a substance, low cost) which can prompt habitual utilization leading to psychological changes with long use (Bavelier, 2012).

Definitions, even when are created by scientific concerns, are not value free. They are implanted in a conceptual view of the phenomenon and hence are legitimately part of that hypothetical approach. In this manner it should not be surprising that the definition of addiction varies and changes as science develops and evolves with time (McCrady, 2013).

We practice the term "addiction" in acknowledgment of the way that people can create fixation to certain type of products and events, for example, food or sexual activity or betting, in addition to general substances, for example, liquor, cocaine, tobacco and internet. The biological changes which takes place during this fixation in an individual's mind and body can apparently be understood by us. The changes happening in the brain involve modifications in cortical (pre-frontal cortex) and sub-cortical (limbic system) areas including the neuro-circuitry of reward, motivation, retention, drive control and opinion/judgement. This can prompt sensational increments in desires for a drug or behaviour, and hindrances in the capacity to effectively control this drive, regardless of the information and experience of numerous outcomes associated with the addictive conduct. Substance use and addictive behaviour have a considerable probability of being joined by psychological health conditions, for example, depression and anxiety or other pre-existing concerns (APA).

When it comes to addiction how no one can forget about Internet in recent years. The internet has exploded to become a daily part of our lives. It has turned into an indivisible element of our daily life, and has inflated the speed and accuracy of executing simple day-to-day tasks. Improper utilization of Internet causes numerous physical and psychological issues, for example, anxiety, exhaustion, social separation (isolation), depression and so on. Negative outcomes of this modern-day disorder which is known as Internet Addiction (IA) in people has influenced the general public (Haghighi, 2013).

Over use of internet has led people into gaming habits which intern has become an addiction amongst the internet users. People have started their new interest in video gaming as well, which is becoming the new problem in the general society. The addiction stay disconnected from society to some extent. One reason that these people don't get the assistance they require is because of this isolation, which usually goes unobserved by other people. Like every other addiction, video game

addiction crosses every single traditional limit (e.g., culture, sex, ethnicity, and so on) (Vammen, 2007).

Individuals with such fixation endanger their academic or job functioning on account of the measure of time they spend playing video games. Such individuals even encounter symptoms of withdrawal when kept from gaming (APA).

*Internet gaming in DSM-5*

Addiction to gaming is depicted in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), which is used by psychological health experts to analyse mental disorders. There was not adequate evidence to decide if the condition is a specific mental issue or the best criteria to order it at the time the DSM-5 was distributed in 2013. In any case, it recognized internet gaming disorder in the segment suggesting conditions for further research, alongside caffeine use disorder and different conditions.

The DSM-5 notes that gaming must cause "momentous impairment or distress" in a few parts of an individual's life. This proposed condition is restricted to gaming and does consider issues with general utilization of the internet, online based betting, or use of social media or smartphones. The proposed symptoms of internet gaming disorder include:

-Distraction with gaming.

-Withdrawal symptoms when gaming is taken away or impractical (bitterness, nervousness, irritability).

-Resilience, the need to invest more time gaming to satisfy the desire.

-Failure to cut down playing, unsuccessful attempts to stop gaming.

-Surrendering other activities, loss of enthusiasm for previously enjoyed activities because of gaming.

-Proceeding to gaming regardless of issues.

-Misleading relatives or others about the amount of time spent on gaming.

-The use of gaming to assuage negative states of mind, for example, guilt or sadness.

-Hazard, having endangered or lost an occupation or relationship because of gaming.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The researcher has studied 11 research articles from the journals which are related to the topic of the presentwork that is Video gaming addiction among adults: An intervention and these researches are arranged from latest to the oldest (year wise). Sussman et.al. (2018) have highlighted the fact that there has been significant increment in accessibility and use of digital technologies, including the Internet, computer games, smartphones and social media.Štavljanin (2017) analysed whether distinctive classifications of primary motivation can influence the product placements effects and whether players' attitudes towards product placement varies, depending upon the primary motivation.Vella (2016) classified the relationship between video games with positive well-being by looking at the social setting of play and its effect on the player's experience utilizing self-determination theory (SDT) and social capital theory (SCT). The study demonstrated that playing with others was related to greater feelings of relatedness in respect to playing alone, while those playing alone experienced more prominent autonomy and nearness.Ahmed Inam (2013)classified his study in Information Technology, Computer Science and Media Entertainmentcomputer games being most prevalent and popular type of media entertainment. In the result of the research paper it has been concluded that due to the major attractive force towards video games, positive and negative effects goes side by side.Griffiths (2012) demonstrated in his study that gaming habit has turned into an interesting and expanding topic of research.Wang (2011) focused his research among the University students according to which a large portion of the students are having issues with mental health and studies due to online gaming; and some of them are having awful relationship with loved ones, however, some of them have a good relationship with their guardians. According to Weinstein (2010) video gaming addiction or ambitious utilization of computer and video games may interfere with day to day life.Rooij (2010) affirms the existence of a little group of addicted online video gamers (3%), representing around 1.5% of all children with age group of 13– 16 years in the Netherlands. In spite of the fact that these gamers report addiction like problems, relationships with reduced psychosocial health were less evident. Beckham (20019) talked about the danger of video gaming which can be outlined into single word: fixation. Virtual pleasures like computer games, TV, and artificial intelligence are sublime when it is done in moderation. The issue with video gaming is that unless it is controlled or constrained by a third party, it's both chemically and mentally addictive.Anderson (2006) concluded in his research the effects of video games into positives and negatives. In children it has been considered as the "training wheels" for computer literacy. On the other half it has been observed that violent games increase physiological arousal and cognition aggression. Griffithset.al.(2006)classified in their study that excessive Internet usage can result in neurotic and behavioural changes.

**Rationale of the Study**

The research has been conducted on two different variables i.e., 'Addiction and Video Games'. The researcher wanted to find out the combined effect of both the variables on the mental well-being. To the best knowledge of the researcher there are few researches done in this area may be because it is one of the latest entries in the field of Psychology and mental health. So, it becomes necessary to study the addiction of video games. Taking these variables together will help people to know the ill-effects of Video games and it's addiction. Thus, this research is an attempt to explore the effects of these combined variables in the India. This study would also be beneficial for further researches on the topic and working more in the same direction will also generate awareness regarding the video gaming addiction in young adults and it's intervention plans. If video gaming actually affects an individual's life and overall growth in a negative direction people should be much more aware of this as an addiction and should be working on the intervention plan for it.

Although, the researcher could not find any Indian based research work on the due topic as per his best knowledge. The researcher was addicted to video games when he was in class 10, due to which it had affected his academics and personal life. The researcher also noticed significant negative changes in his brother who use to spend minimum of five hours a day in gaming which affected his academics and his relationship with his mother. And this motivated the researcher to take up addiction of video gaming as his research topic.

## METHODOLOGY

**Hypothesis 1:** Video games addiction will lead to mental health issues.

**Hypothesis 2**: Intervention plan will be effective in dealing with mental health issues of individuals with addiction of video games.

**Objective:** To plan an intervention for individuals with addiction of video games.

**Variables**:

Independent Variable: Video Games, Intervention
Dependent Variable: Mental Health

**Sample**:

Purposive sampling

Sample size: 40

102 people had responded and participated in the survey of Video Gaming Addiction, out of which 40 people were found to be addicted to Video gaming Addiction. Of the 40 respondents, all of them agreed to undergo the intervention plan.

**Operational Definition of addiction:** An individual who spends time playing video games, either online or offline, with a minimum duration of 3 to 4 hours at a stretch and playing the it in multiple patches.

Age limit: (18-30 years)

**Tool**:

 Gaming Addiction Survey (2009).

*About the tool:* The following survey was published by a research study at the Iowa State University directed by Douglas Gentile, PhD. The study incorporated an 11-item pathological gaming scale for obsessive gaming.Since there is no clear standard for how to measure pathological gaming or how to score symptoms check-list of pathological gaming, subjects were permitted to respond "yes" or "no" to each symptom.

If the respondent answered "yes" to at least six of these questions, at that point the subject is in all likelihood have a video gaming addiction. "Video gaming addiction" and "Internet addiction" are not yet official medical diagnoses with standardized criteria. Behaviours turn towards becoming "addictions" when they disturb the real life, for example, school or work place, real-life relationships, and activities of everyday living.

**Inclusive Criteria**

Those who scored 6 out of 11 in the questions.

**INTERVENTION**

An intervention can encourage somebody to look for help for alcohol or substance abuse, or other addictive behaviour. It's challenging to help a friend or family member battling with addiction. Sometimes a direct, heart to heart discussion can start the way to recovery. Although when it comes down to addiction, the individual with the issue struggles to see it and recognize it. A more focussed approach is often required. One may need to unite with others and make a move through a formal intervention.

(Mayo Clinic)

**Intervention**

An intervention is a cautiously planned process that might be done by family and friends, in discussion with a specialist or expert, for example, an authorized addiction counsellor or directed by an intervention professional (interventionist). During the intervention, these individuals meet the addiction counsellor and request him or her to accept the treatment.

(Mayo Clinic)

**Intervention**

The researcher used some of the techniques from Behaviour Modification to develop the intervention plan which was executed with 40 individuals (36 males and 4 females). These individuals were willing and cooperative for intervention.

Behaviour Modification is the process of changing or altering a behaviour of an individual using various techniques which are based on the principles of learning. It is used to increase desirable behaviour using rewards, and decrease undesirable behaviour using negative reinforcement.

The undesirable behaviour in the present intervention was excessive video gaming whereas the desirable behaviour was spending time productively, like spending time with family, grounding, and developing new skills (like drawing and craft for creativity).

The intervention was done through telephonic conversation and e-mai. It was successful because the individuals understood they had the need to terminate the addiction especially with the help of self-help and self-empowering technique.

**The rewards:**

(a) Primary reward: spending the money saved by not playing video games on eatables.

(b) Self reward: patting own's back for successfully achieving the target each day.

(c) Investment of money saved: For example, good and fancy stationary.

**Negative Reinforcements:**

(a) No gaming at all the next day if the daily target is not achieved (self-discipline).

(b) Extra reduction in the time spent on gaming, for example, instead of playing game in the alloted time slot of three and half hours, next day to be reduced to two and half hours.

**Procedure:**

(a) Consent for the participation in the intervention plan.

(b) Willingness to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

(c) Psycho-education about behaviour modification technique.

**Duration:**

(a) The individuals followed the intervention plan for twenty one days, time enough to develop new neuronal pathway in the brain for habit development.

(b) The researcher was in regular contact with each individual through phone and e-mail and feedback and guidance were regularly exchanged.

**Final result:**

Out of the forty, who participated in the intervention plan, eight still remained addicted to video gaming though for a lesser time duration even after one month. They reported that though they were able to reduce the time spent on playing games still they were not able to reduce it fully. One-on-one intervention may have helped them better.

## RESULT & DISCUSSION

The result of the present work has been presented in three tables with their explanation below each table.

**Table 1.0**

Pre-Intervention

| Males | 79 |
|---|---|
| Females | 23 |

The total number of individuals were 102, to whom the questionnaire was provided. Out of 102 (79 males and 23 females) 40 individuals stood out with video gaming addiction.

**Table 1.1**

Participants of Intervention

| Males | 36 |
|---|---|
| Females | 4 |
| Total | 40 |

All the forty individuals were ready to follow the intervention plan. (36 males, 4 females). After an intervention plan of 21 days, the individuals were once again asked to fill out the same questionnaire to check the change in their behaviour regarding the addiction.

**Table 1.2**

Further Intervention required

| Males | 8 |
|---|---|
| Females | 0 |

It turned out, that the number of individuals addicted to video gaming has decreased to a very certain limit in both the gender's. Out of 36 males, only 8 males were still addicted to video gaming with lesser time spent on video gaming. And out of 4 females all of them have limited their video gaming habit and have achieved control over it.

**Graph 1.0**
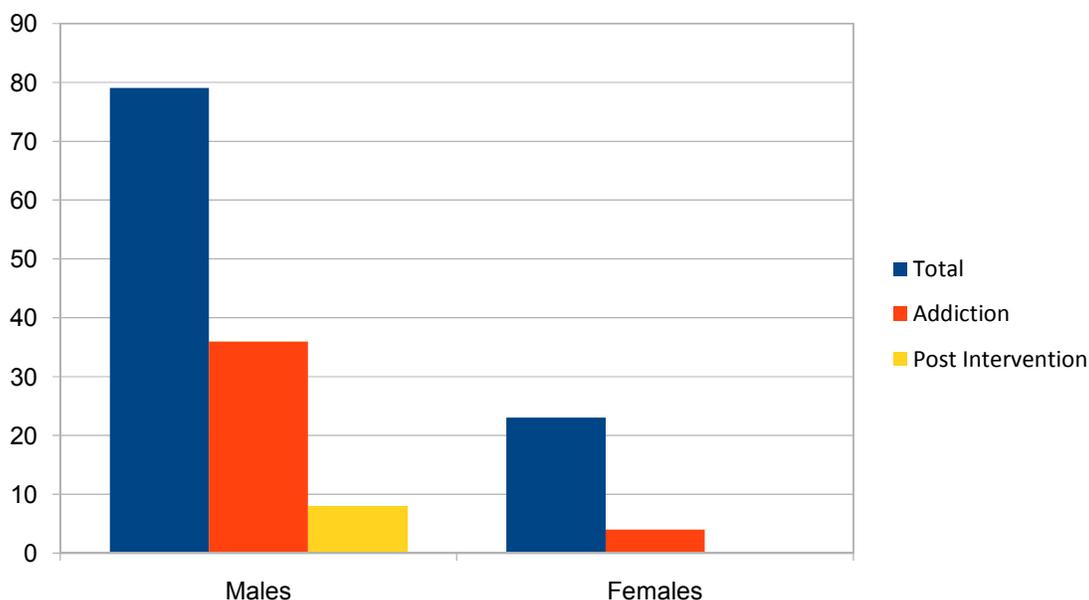


Graphical presentation of the complete intervention program wherein blue bar represents the total number of participants who had filled the questionnaire, red bar represents the individuals who were found to be addictive to video games and participated in the intervention, and yellow represents the who were not able to completely reduced the addiction.

Because the research topic is still new to the field, it came out to be very difficult for the researcher to directly find the researches involved in it, as the researcher concluded the result to the best of his knowledge.

<u>Following are the researches that support the present dissertation:</u>

**Rooij** (2010) discussed about how gamers report addiction as the problem, which is affecting the relationships of the individuals, with reduced psychosocial health.

**Griffiths & Widyanto** (2006) have classified in their research that excessive internet usage and video gaming can result in neurotic and behavioural changes, which affects the behaviour of an individual very drastically with time.

Other researches mentioned in the Review of Literature indirectly support the present research indirectly.

Statement from one of the individuals,"This whole intervention plan about video gaming addiction was a success for me. In these 21 days of practise, I have actually controlled my video gaming behaviour." All of this intervention plan turned out to be very successful for all the subjects, as majority of them have come good out of it by the end.

**Limitations:**

(a) Time limitation due to busy schedule of under Graduate Program.

(b) One-on-one intervention would have given better results, in comparison to distance intervention.

**Implications:**

(a) The present work is one step closer to creating an awareness regarding Video Gaming Addiction and how people can bring themselves out of this addiction with self-help techniques.

(b) The intervention plan presented is helpful for changing old habits and developing new habits.

**Conclusion**

The present work has been completed in two semesters, the fifth semester was devoted to introduction and review of literature and sixth semester was devoted to data collection and result analysis.

This division between these two semesters has helped the researcher get a better understanding about research work and the hardship it entails. This dissertation has also helped developed patience

and perseverance along with paying attention to details in the researcher. Moreover, researcher feels like there is an urgent need of for such kind of research and intervention amongst the youngsters.

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## APPENDIX

1. Link to the Gaming Addiction Survey. https://temeculaca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/136/Take-the-Gaming-Addiction-Survey-PDF?bidId=

Gaming Addiction Survey

| 1. | Over time, have you been spending much more time playing video games, learning about video game playing, or planning the next opportunity to play? |
|---|---|
| 2. | Do you need to spend more time and money on video games in order to feel the same amount of excitement as other activities in your life? |
| 3. | Have you tried to play video games for shorter durations of times but have been unsuccessful? |
| 4. | Do you become restless or irritable when you attempt to cut down or stop playing video games? |
| 5. | Have you played video games as a way to escape problems or negative feelings? |
| 6. | Have you lied to family or friends about how much you play video games? |
| 7. | Have you ever stolen a video game from a store or a friend, or stolen money to buy a video game? |
| 8. | Do you sometimes skip household chores in order to play more video games? |
| 9. | Do you sometimes skip homework or work in order to play more video games? |
| 10. | Have you ever done poorly on a school assignment, test, or work assignment because you have spent so much time playing video games? |
| 11. | Have you ever needed friends or family to give you extra money because you have spent too much of your own money on video games, software, or game Internet fees? |