

Psychological Consequences of Online Gaming on Youth: A Survey of UMT Lahore

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Abstract

Research related to online gaming has gradually increased over the past few years, however minimal research has been able to study the relationship between online games, anxiety, and academic performance. In this research, the discussion is about the psychological consequences of online games on youth. This paper aims at studying the impact of online gaming on the academic performance of youth. Survey method is conducted to get the results of the research. 150 students from UMT university of Lahore were selected to participate in this study. The results of the survey show that 85.3% students of the university who participated in the survey are involved in playing online games. Also, 65% of participants believe that playing violent games makes a person to be more aggressive. The findings of the study indicate that playing online games for longer periods would cause harmful effects on the physical/ mental well-being of the students.

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Key Words: Psychological Consequences, Mental Health, Mental Well-Being, Online Games, Violent Games

Introduction

In today's world it is very hard to know how our lives have changed until we stop for a moment and look around us that how different it is from ten years ago. In the recent years social media has significantly impacted most of our daily lives. People use social media so that they can get connected with their families, friends and get their hands on all the information and entertainment available on the internet. (Landry, 2014). Fast forward to the future social media has become not only a key part of the modern lifestyle, but also a way of earning livelihood for many people and their businesses. Today's world is one that is largely composed of technology. We are surrounded by high definition televisions, Facebook, instagram, twitter, YouTube, internet radio, online video gaming or social media games.

These widely available games may be played on console systems, computer and over the Internet, handheld devices, and various technology toys. (Skoric, Ching, & Neo, 2009) We will be using the term video game in order to refer to electronically controlled games played on any platform using any form of device. The development of computer and electronic games is a great threat for youth and it can lead to psychological disorders and depression in these groups. In previous times, kids used to play with other children, but in today's world children spend most of their free time on computer playing different games as soon as they understand and acquainted with them, while these games fail to create any emotional and human relationship. (Zamani, Chashmi, & Hedayati, 2009) Several recent reports confirm that video games play an important part in the lives of children and adolescents and most the games present online have some sort of violent or negative content in them. Children and youngsters attraction towards the computer games cause many mental, physical and social problems for them. These problems encourage anger, violence, obesity, social isolation, and other physical and mental damages. Many psychologists and mental health professionals have paid greater attention to the effects of these games. Apart of violence, there are also other harmful effects that result from general game playing, such as social isolation, gender stereotyping, vision, poor academic performance, addiction and computer game dependency and other physical health problems. (Zamani, Chashmi, & Hedayati, 2009) One of the most alarming things about playing games is that they play a huge role in interfering and disturbing the players' academic performance, obviously playing games is a much more attractive option for any student rather than doing their homework. (Wright, 2011) Another suggestion related to playing games is that it has a negative effect on children in terms of socializing and adjusting in the society because children who spend most of their time playing games just stay at home with their computers and they have less social interaction with their peers.

Background of the study

The researcher selected this topic keeping in view the popularity social media has gained over the years and the increase in number of active social media users. Talking about social media and the various activities social media provides its users including entertainment, communication with friends and family, infotainment and very popular different type of

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digital/ online gaming facilities; it is very important that we also keep an eye out on the psychological effects of these online games. Online games being a part of an individual's life play an important role in shaping a person's personality and these games also leave a long term impact on an individual.

Researcher chooses survey method for the study because the researcher wanted to know the thinking process and point of view of the individuals involved in playing online games. Survey method is mostly used to collect the views, feelings and opinions of a particular group of people.

Statement Problem

Social media has become a way of life these days and the rise of social media and networking has allowed people to interact in ways we could have never imagined. Most of the people in our society have adopted a much updated lifestyle after the emergence of networking and social media however the influence of social media and its different activities on the lives of youth is undeniably questionable. Similarly online gaming is one of the widely used leisure activities by many people. For some people getting themselves involved in online games can be a stress reliever, challenge, competition, relaxation, enjoyment, social interaction, and even mental escape from the real world but for some people it can be very harmful and leave a negative impact on their life. The people playing these online games can get addicted and there are a number of personality traits that can be related to online games addiction such as low self-esteem, low self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, aggression, and even some physical health problems. The researcher felt the need to determine the impact of online gaming on students' academic performance and to study about other possible harmful effects resulting from general game playing.

Elements

Researcher needs to have a look on some elements of the online games and the effect these games have on students in order to understand the significance of the topic.

Online Games

In order to define the term "online game" it has to be broken down into its basic component "online and game" so that it becomes a lot more easier for understanding these terms. The term online is basically referred to any action or activity that is being done through the internet or by using the internet. In simpler words it means having a connectivity to the internet. While game refers to a pastime activity that causes enjoyment and amusement. So when these two terms are used in combination online games can be defined as an activity that gives enjoyment to the users/ players and it is being played using some sort of internet connection.

Massive Multiplayer Online Games

A massive multiplayer online game is the type of game in which more than one player or a very larger number of players can play the same game and share the gaming share at the same time via use of the internet. These games are generally different from the basic online games because these games have the capacity to let hundred and thousands of individuals play the same game at the same time.

Game Addiction

Game addiction is also referred as gaming disorder or internet gaming disorder. Game addiction is commonly defined as an uncontrollable urge of playing games which is extremely problematic and it also disturbs an individual's ability to perform different life tasks. Gaming addiction is seen very common in the individuals who are mostly fond of playing massive multiplayer online games because of a number of reasons. These reasons include a number of attractions that these multiplayer online games have to offer to the player like these games are extremely interactive, social, and there is a lot of competition in these type of games.

Significance of the Research

The basic aim of this research is to examine the psychological consequences of online/ digital gaming on the students of UMT University. Due to the advancement in technology and communication our youth is becoming more attracted towards the online games. They are unable to completely understand how these online games work and what negative impact these games can leave on a student's life. Most of the online games having some sort of violent or negative

content in them can encourage the emotions of anger, violence, aggression, depression and self-isolation in an individual.

The basic aim of this study is to provide a guideline to readers that how we can once again normalize the concept of offline gaming and socialization and abandon this new form of online gaming. How keeping a little check on the individuals who are involved in playing games can be helpful for them and their mental health. This study will also give the readers a chance to understand that why in the first place people get themselves involved in playing online games.

Objectives of Research

Following are the objectives of the study

- To examine the effects of online games on students.
- To examine how online games influence student's intellectual capacity.
- To calculate the social behaviors of students involved in playing online games.
- To investigate the reason that encourages the players to copy the act being displayed in the game.
- To explore the perception of youth regarding online games.

Literature Review

It is a very common believe that playing computer games for many hours can result in addictive behaviors and consequently the outcomes can be very unfavorable and damaging for the active players, such as irrational spending of money and time on playing games and decrease in healthy leisure activities. (Lee & Peng , 2006) Besides that there are certain other detrimental effects that come from game playing which could harm and damage the psychology of a child and these effects may include poor academic performance, addiction, social isolation, depending on the computer games a lot, physical health problems, eye vision problems, gender stereotyping etc etc.

In the past there have been various research findings on the relationship between academic performance and the time children spend on playing different games considering the fact that most of the games available on the computer net have a notable amount of violent content in them. Some past studies have shown that academic achievement is inversely related to the time students spend on playing games while other studies have not found any significant relationship between the academic performance and the act of game playing by students.

Quite a number of studies have been carried out in order to understand the whole concept of computer game addiction but still there is no standardized definition for it. However many different scholars and researchers have agreed that addiction of any kind is typically concerned with an uncontrollable strong urge and the craving to continue the activity knowing the fact that it will create problem for the person. One of the most popular tools for determining gaming addiction was developed by Brown. His criteria comprised six measures: tolerance: which occurs when people engaged in game playing gradually spend increasing amount of time to achieve certain desired effects; mood modification: which means to engage in playing games as a coping mechanism or to find an escape from the reality; salience: which is generally the time when the act of playing games dominates a person's behavior and thoughts to such an extent that he or she is unable to stop playing games although he or she might want to stop but this change of behavior in the attitude doesn't let the person to act according to their will; conflict: game play that culminates in either internal or external arguments; withdrawal symptoms: irritability, moodiness and so on, that take place when game play is stopped; and relapse and reinstatement: the inability to completely stop playing games. (Skoric, et.al, 2009)

Playing digital games that have violent content in them encourages the person to copy the act being displayed in the game. The person playing the game behaves in an aggressive way and gets rewarded (with points, sound effects, access to new levels of the game, etc.) for doing so. This type of direct participation in the violence through playing digital games may serve to increase aggressive behavior. Video games are created using schedules of reinforcement and punishment that offer goals that are very challenging, yet possible to attain, thus maximizing the player's energy mobilization for gamedirected play. (Dill & Dill, 1998)

There have been several literature reviews and studies that have focused largely on the relationship between problematic gaming and the impact it leaves on the social and psychological activities of the children. The degree of addictive digital game use has been found to be related to personality traits such as low self-esteem, low self-efficacy, anxiety, and aggression and even to clinical symptoms of depression and anxiety disorders.

Some researchers have also pointed out that due to playing digital games continuously for larger period of time a person can suffer from various physical pains such as like; Nintendo thumb and epileptic seizures, joint, muscle, back pains and skin problems also certain eye sight problems.

Some researchers have also feared that because of increased online game involvement people may tend to exchange their ages old close friendships to new internet contacts which they have made through online game playing. This can be extremely problematic because at certain point in our lives we may need our offline friends for supporting us in our physical and mental health. This shift of offline for online contacts can also lead to a series of more long term social consequences such as hindering the development and maintenance of effective social skills. (Kowert, et.al, 2014)

While we are talking so much about the problematic online game playing or digital games it is very important that we take a closer look at why individuals play games or why they get themselves involved in online game playing at the first place. Generally players get themselves involved in playing different sort of online games so that they can find a way to distract themselves from daily life hassles and sometimes it is also possible that they may have started to enjoy the online relations they have built over the time by playing these digital games. Some other reasons due to which individuals play games might involve escape from socializing and personal satisfaction. Most of the times we may have seen males getting more involved in games rather than females because of the fact that males enjoy competition and social interaction more than females do.

Nowadays almost all online games include a chat box which allows the players to communicate with one another. Unfortunately most of the times this tool is used inappropriately. For instance during a battle in an online multiplayer game you may receive hate or abuse from other players because of the players are very competitive there is this temptation in them to start humiliating the losing players beyond limits or reason. This is very dangerous in certain cases where children become the subject of name calling. In other case, it might be possible that the child receives sexual solicitations. This is known as grooming, a phenomenon comparable to online pedophilia. (PICIARELLI, 2017)

According to Catherine Steiner-Adair, a Harvard-affiliated psychologist and author of the best-selling book "The Big Disconnect: Protecting Childhood and Family Relationship in the Digital Age", if kids are allowed to play "Candy Crush" on the way to school, the trip will be quiet, but it's not what kids need. "They need time to daydream, deal with anxieties, process their thoughts and share them with parents, who can provide reassurance."

After going through all these researches there are still some questions that remain with the general public and the scholar community regarding the impact of online digital games on youths mental wellbeing and the long term or short term negative effects these online games can leave on our youth. Pervious researches have not been up to the mark in highlighting the main problem of online gaming addiction and to state that how widespread this problem is becoming day by day. Some other things were not discussed in the previous researches such as the personal information that the players share with one another in their online gaming environment and the risks associated with sharing such sensitive personal information with people you hardly know. In our research we will try and explore the relation between online gaming addiction and the level of personal information or data disclosure that the players experience.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is basically the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. It introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. It is extremely important because it gives the reader the liberty to conceptualize the study in a much broader context. The research study is about the Psychological effects of digital/online games on students, therefore the study applies three kinds of theories to examine the role of media. Uses and gratification theory from communication science (Blumler and Katz), self-determination theory from psychology (Edward Deci and Richard Ryan) and social learning theory (Albert Bandura).

The uses and gratification theory was introduced by Blumler and Katz in 1974, it focuses on the relationship between media and people. The theory claims that the viewer's seek out the media and use the media to satisfy their needs, the media does not effect the viewer's rather it works as a bridge or vehicle to fulfill the viewer's needs.

Self-determination theory by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan was introduced in 1985, it is a theory of motivation which states that people tend to be driven by the need of growth and fulfillment. The self-determination theory proposes that people become self-determined when their needs for competence, connection and autonomy are satisfied.

Social learning theory was introduced by Albert Bandura in 1925, it suggests that people always learn through observation; by observing others behavior, attitude and the outcomes derived by those behavior's. The theory

suggests that children pay very close attention to their surrounding environment and they always tend to copy the behavior they may have observed over a period of time.

Relation with the Theory

The uses and gratification theory relates to the study in such a way that the children, youth use the social media / digital games in order to satisfy their need of playing games online. The students don't need to think about the hassle of going out of their homes and play with their friends rather they can just be at their homes and play online games on computers, mobile phones, ps4 etc. Under the uses and gratification theory human needs are classified into five categories which are cognitive needs, personal integrative, tension free, social integrative and affective needs. The students can very easily fulfill all their needs by playing online games. Moreover, the theory of self-determination elaborates that media uses are active and they consume the media in order to meet particular psychological needs. Therefore, a child may play online games through which he can consider himself to be independent or extremely competent. On the other side the social learning theory is the most important to study the psychological effects of digital games on students. It states that children tend to learn through their observation that what behavior is appropriate and rewarding so that they can copy or mimic that behavior. For example, children play online games and most of the online games have violent content in them. This means that whenever a child plays an aggressive game where he is getting rewarded and earning points for hitting or shooting the opposite person, the child may learn that this aggressive behavior is the most appropriate response in any situation. (Dill & Dill, 1998)

Research Questions

- Do online games leave a negative impact on the minds of youth?
- Do online games disturb the academic performance of students?
- Are online games capable of effecting the physical health of students?
- Has the concept of online games completely taken over the old traditional offline games?

Research Methodology

Research methodology is a systematic way to solve your research problem. It is the science of studying how a research is carried out. Research methodology involves specific techniques that are applied in research process to collect, assemble and evaluate data. It defines the tools that are used to gather the relevant information in your research study. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained. In the present study the researcher has used the survey method in order to collect the data to know about the point of view of youth regarding the issue "Psychological effects of digital/online games on students".

Population

Research population is defined as a collection of individuals that have very similar characteristics. The population of the study will be the youth because it has been observed very much that the youth are mostly involved in playing online games. The population or youth for the study comprises of both male and female students of University of management and technology (UMT) Lahore.

Sample

Sampling is the process through which the researcher selects the people from the specific population so that by considering the sample the researcher may be able to generalize the results on the population from which the researcher had chosen the sample. Simple random sampling is used by the researcher in this study to produce the results.

Sample Size

The sample size that the researcher chose was 150 out of which 143 responses are recorded and analyzed. The age group of the respondents was 15 – 30 years because people in this specific age are more likely to be involved in using social media and online game playing.

Research tool

Researcher designed a questionnaire consisting of a series of different questions in order to gather information from the respondents. Questionnaire is also known as a written form of interview. The questionnaire comprised of some open and closed questions for data collection.

Statistical Analysis

The researcher used Google forms to collect and analyze the statistical result. Frequency and percentage of answers is achieved to clearly explain the results.

Survey Result

Introduction:

Researcher conducted an online survey on the topic "Psychological consequences of online gaming on youth: A survey of UMT Lahore". The online questionnaire that the researcher prepared for the purpose of gathering data on the topic consisted to 17 questions containing 1 open ended question. The survey was conducted because the researcher wanted to know about the perception and the issues that the students have to go through because of online game playing.

With the help of this survey the researcher will be able to educate the students more about the problems they can get themselves involved in by playing online games. Also the researcher can spread awareness about the consequences of long term playing and with the help of this questionnaire the students will be able to analyze their actions regarding online games.

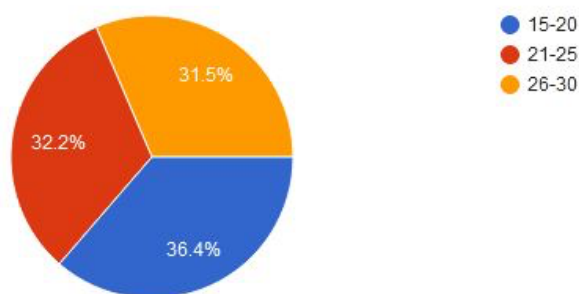
Statistical analysis of survey is done by the researcher for results. Pie charts are used for the presentation of results and brief explanation is given in percentages of the gathered answers.

Research questions analysis is also done and presented in pie charts with explanations of questions related to research query. An overall discussion on result analysis is also created. The gathered data is presented and analyzed in a proper manner to make it easier to understand. Recommendations and conclusion will be helpful for readers to evaluate the whole article and to understand the issue and solutions properly.

Result Presentation

Please select your age

143 responses

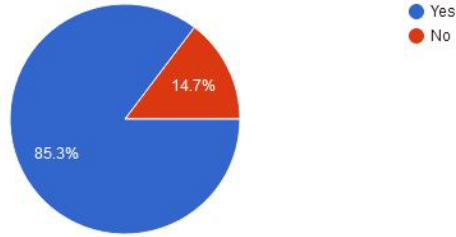


Graph I:

36.4% people from the age group of 15 – 20 years responded the most to this survey as teenagers are most actively involved in games, following them are the 32.2% adults and the remaining 31.5% respondents are from the age group of 26-30 years.

Do you play online games?

143 responses

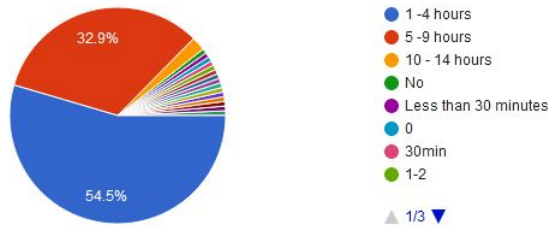


Graph 2:

85.3% individuals said they play games online while 14.7% said that they do not play online games.

How many hours do you spend on playing games?

143 responses

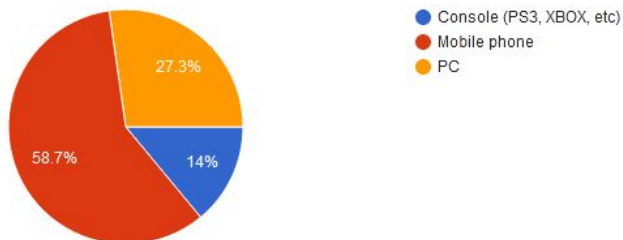


Graph 3:

When the respondents were asked about the time that they spend on playing games 54.5% individuals said that they spend 1-4 hours on games, 32.9% individuals were found to be involved in spending 5 – 9 hours on games, 2.1% people reportedly spent 10 – 14 hours on games. While the remaining individuals were the people who spend a very little limited amount of time on games.

What is your primary mode of gaming?

143 responses

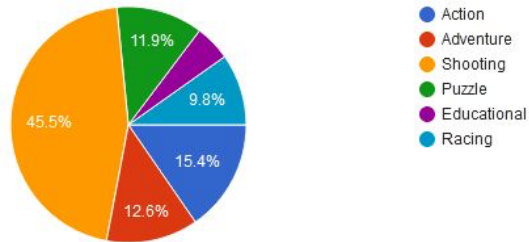


Graph 4:

According to the survey 58.7% individuals play games on their mobile phones, 27.3% individuals use PC for gaming and the remaining 14% play games on consoles (PS3, XBOX,etc)

What game genre do you most prefer playing?

143 responses

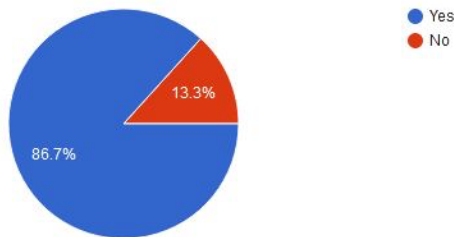


Graph 5:

It can be evidently seen that 45.5% individuals prefer playing shooting games, 15.4% play action games, 12.6% play adventure games, 11.9% play puzzle based games, 9.8% play racing games while the remaining 4.9% individuals play educational games.

Do you think that students spend most of their time playing online games instead of focusing on their homework?

143 responses

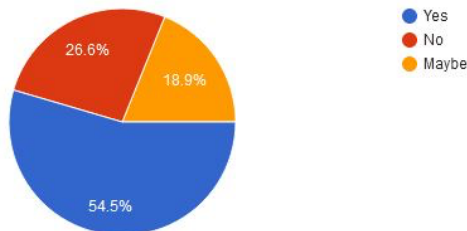


Graph 6:

86.7% students agreed that they spend most of their time playing games instead of completing their homework and focusing on their studies.

Do you often think of games even when you are away from your games console/PC/mobile phone?

143 responses



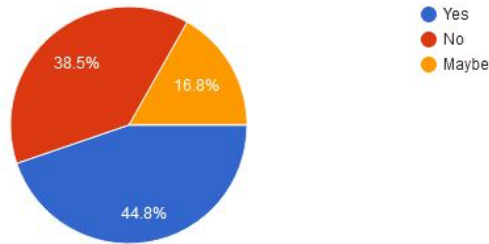
Graph 7:

54.5% respondents agreed that they think about playing games even when they are away from their gaming

devices, 26.6% said that they don't think about games while the remaining 18.9% were not sure to answer yes or not.

Do you find that you have to increase your playing time to get the desired enjoyment?

143 responses

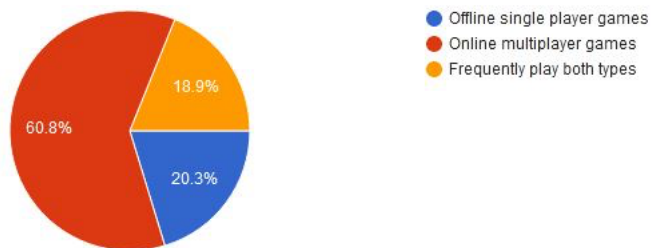


Graph 8:

When asked about the playing time and the amount of satisfaction/ enjoyment associated to it 44.8% individuals agreed that they have to increase their playing time in order to get the desired enjoyment, 38.5% expressed their answer in denial while the 16.8% individuals seem to be agreeing but were not confident to say yes.

Do you primarily play offline single player games or online multiplayer games?

143 responses

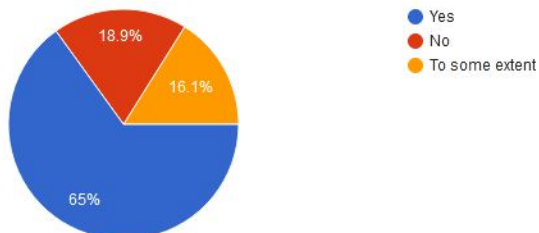


Graph 9:

60.8% individuals said that they play online multiplayer games, 20.3% said that they play offline single player games while 18.9% said that they frequently play both type of games.

Do you think playing games that have violent content in them makes a person more aggressive?

143 responses

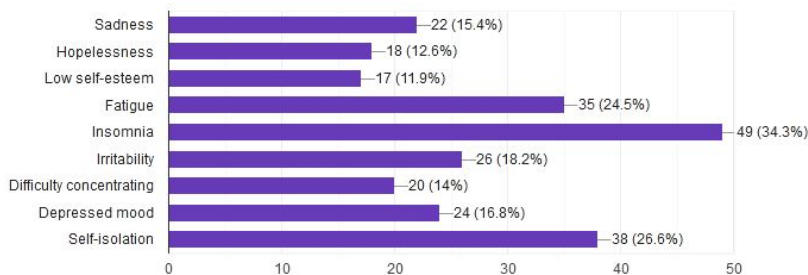


Graph 10:

65% agreed that playing games that have violent content makes a person more aggressive, 18.9% disagreed, while 16.1% agreed to some extent.

Have you found online game play to increase any of the following: (Mark all that apply)

143 responses

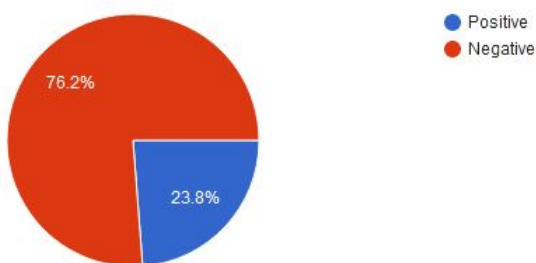


Graph 11:

Most of the respondents observed an increase in insomnia, self-isolation, fatigue, irritability and depression because of playing online games.

Have you found that playing online games has a greater positive or a greater negative effect on your social life and relationships?

143 responses

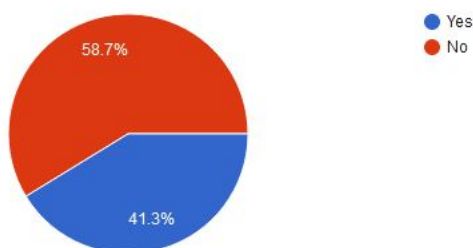


Graph 12:

76.2% individuals agreed that online games leave a negative impact on their social life and relationships while 23.8% said playing online games have a positive effect on their relationships.

Have you developed any significant relationships through online game playing?

143 responses



Graph 13:

41.3% respondents agreed upon developing relationships through online game playing while 58.7% respondents disagreed.

If yes please explain your answer.

19 responses



Graph 14:

When the individuals were asked to explain about the relationships they have developed through online games 19 people submitted their response in which they said that they have made a lot of new friends through games.

If yes please explain your answer.

19 responses

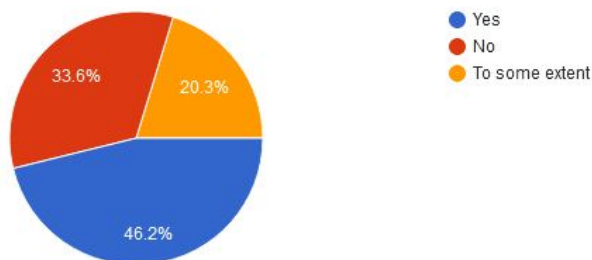


Graph 15:

While some respondents said that they have found true meaning of friendship with the help of online games.

Do you feel that your grades are suffering due to online games?

143 responses

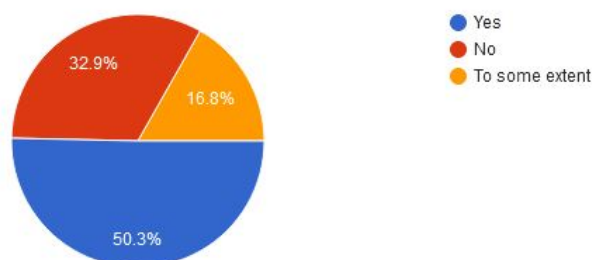


Graph 16:

46.2% individuals agreed that their grades suffer because of online games, 33.6% disagreed while the remaining 20.3% agreed to some extent.

Do you have any problems with sleep since you started playing games?

143 responses

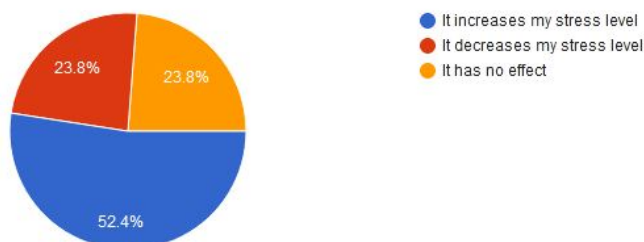


Graph 17:

50.3% individuals agreed that they have developed sleeping disorders since they started playing games, 32.9% disagreed while 16.8% individuals agreed to some extent.

What effect does playing online games have on your level of stress?

143 responses



Graph 18:

52.4% individuals said that playing online games increases their stress level, 23.8% said that games decrease their stress level and the remaining 23.8% said that playing online games does not have any particular effect on their level of stress.

Result Analysis

According to the gathered data and the results of the questionnaire it is very clear that around 85.3% individuals are actively involved in playing games and these individuals are from the age of 15-20 years which means that mostly teenagers are the ones that are frequently involved in playing online games.

Around 54.5% admit that they spend 1-4 hours from their routine on playing online games. While 32.9% said that they spend 5-9 hours on games and there were some 2.1% individuals as well who spend around 10-14 hours on playing games. Through this it can be clearly seen that the number of individuals who spend 1-4 hours on playing games is very high while there are also some exceptional cases where individuals have been analyzed spending around 10-14 hours playing games which is actually a lot of time and the individuals who spend this much time on playing games are generally considered as addictive game players.

Around 58.7% said that they use their mobile phones for playing games, 27.3% individuals play their games on the PC while only 14% individuals use the consoles for playing games. It is very evident from the data gathered that the most popular gadget for playing online games among students is the mobile phone. There are a number of reasons for that firstly mobile phones are the most convenient hand held gadgets which you can carry with you all the time very easily, second mobile phones are much cheaper than PC or consoles games. So most of the students can easily get their hands on mobile phones for the purpose of playing games.

When asked about the genre of games that the students prefer playing 45.5% selected the shooting games, 15.4% action games, 12.6% adventure games and some other basic genre of games that are very common among the game players like puzzle, racing and educational games. Through the data gathered the researcher analyzed that the most played genre among the students was shooting and action games, these type of games have an extreme element of violence in them and students like to play these type of games because of the rewards being offered such as extra points for killing or shooting the opponent team player.

86.7% students were brave enough to admit the fact that they most spend most of their time on playing online games while ignoring their studies. In answer to another question 54.5% agreed that whenever they are away from their gaming devices they still think about playing games, 26.6% disagreed to this question and some 18.9% were not sure that whether they think about games when they are away from their gaming devices or not.

44.8% individuals said that they need to increase the time they spend on playing online games in order to achieve their desired enjoyment or satisfaction, 38.5% said that they don't think so they need to increase the playing time for maximum enjoyment whereas 16.8% agreed to the fact that they need to increase the playing time for more enjoyment but they were not confident enough to say yes so they just said maybe.

According to the data gathered 60.8% mostly play multiplayer online games, 20.3% play single player games and the remaining said that they frequently play both type of games. Here the researcher observed that students are mostly involved in playing multiplayer games because these types of games offer a social and more competitive gaming environment for the students.

When the individuals were asked that do they think that violent content in a game makes the person playing that game more aggressive around 65% agreed, 18.9% disagreed whereas 16.1% agreed to some extent.

The results show that when the respondents were asked about any notable change or increase in problems related to mental and physical health because of playing online games they agreed that they face an increase in sadness, hopelessness, low self-esteem, fatigue, insomnia, irritability, difficulty in concentration, depression and self-isolation.

Then there was another question where the researcher asked the respondents that do online games have a positive or a negative effect on their social life and their relationships. To this question 76.2% said that they believe that playing online games have left a negative impact on their personal relations and social life whereas 23.8% said that they have experienced a positive effect on their relationships because of playing games.

Going further the researcher asked the respondents that whether they have developed any relationships through online game playing to which 41.3% said yes that they do have developed relationships through online games which include many friends while 58.7% said that they haven't developed any relationships through online game playing.

Furthermore individuals were asked that do they feel that their grades are somehow suffering because of playing online games to which 46.2% agreed that their grades are suffering, 33.6% disagreed while the remaining students agreed to some extent.

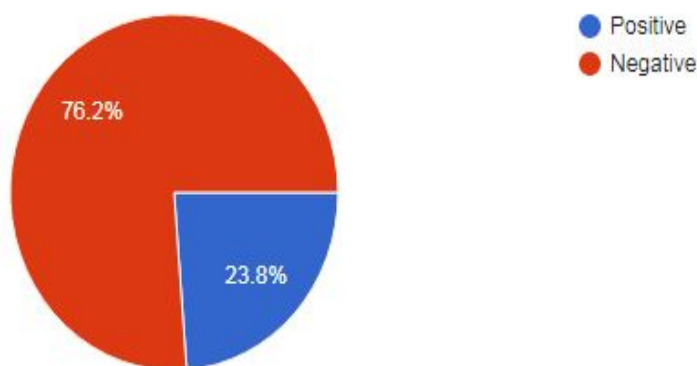
The researcher asked the students that do they feel they have any problems with sleep since they have started playing games majority of 50.3% admitted that they have sleeping problems, 32.9% disagreed and the remaining 16.8% agreed to some extent.

In the end the survey contained a question where the respondents were asked about the effect of online games on their level of stress. A majority of 52.4% expressed that online playing online games increases their stress level, 23.8% said that their stress level decreases when they play games and the remaining respondents said that they do not experience any particular effect on their stress level through online games.

Analysis of Research Questions

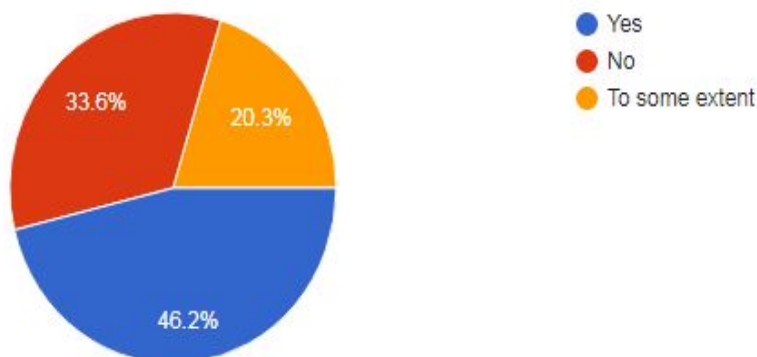
Data analysis proves to be very beneficial because with the help of that the researcher can very easily analyze the answers to research questions. After the researcher gets hold to the results of the questionnaire, analysis of the research questions can be done so that it can be reassured that both the results match.

Do online games leave a negative impact on the minds of youth?



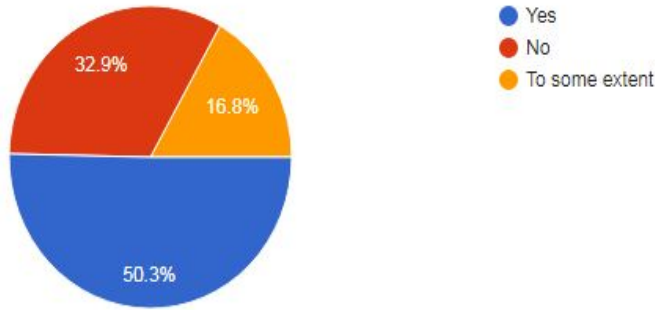
Result showing answer for the first research question are very alarming for the researcher. Online games often leave a negative impact on the minds of the youth which the figure above justifies as the students themselves have admitted to the fact that online games actually leave a more negative impact on their minds instead of a positive one.

Do online games disturb the academic performance of students?



The answer to the question was explained by participant and agreed in majority that online games do play a vital part in disturbing the academic performance of the students and the grades of student also suffer because of these games. When students spend most of their time playing games they often tend to ignore their studies which they don't consider important at the time being but later they suffer a lot because of this extremely harmful gaming addiction.

Are online games capable of effecting the physical health of students?



Majority agreed that online games can surely effect the physical health of the students which may include their eyesight, back problems because of continuously sitting in the same posture on the gaming chair, heart rate problems and blood pressure etc.

Last research question, has the concept of online games completely taken over the old traditional offline games? To which majority of the students replied that they find these online games more interactive and interesting hence they now do not enjoy playing the old traditional games. Some students even said that the new online games provide them a much bigger and more competitive gaming environment.

Discussion

According to the analysis of this research report the most preferable activity of students in their leisure time is playing online games. The data that the researcher gathered for this survey clearly indicates that the students these days generally prefer playing aggressive games that have an alarming amount of violent content in them. Not only boys but these type of games are also liked by girls. With the help of this survey the researcher was able to easily determine the relationship between online games and the psychological effects of these games on university students. The fact that the researcher selected the university students aged between 15-30 years as the respondents of this survey it became much more easier to analyze the results. It's a very obvious that the full time university students have much more flexible work timings and they can easily take out a lot of time for playing games. Mostly students are very much social and they often have big circle of friends with whom they enjoy playing multiplayer games. Multiplayer games give the users the liberty to engage with hundreds and thousands of players from across the whole world at the same time and in the same gaming environment.

The study also emphasizes that by playing games that have violent content in them makes the person playing that game more aggressive in nature. The individuals who play violent games later develop a thinking that if they were being rewarded for shooting, harming or killing their opponent during the game then it might be possible that if they express the similar behavior in real life they may get rewarded for it as well. But in fact this is not at all true, the individuals who get themselves engaged in playing games also observe a prominent change in their life in the form of increased sadness, hopelessness, fear of failure, depression, fear of rejection, self-esteem issues etc.

One of the biggest concerns of this survey was about the interference of online games in an individual's academic performance. Online games are considered as an escape for the students who are often seen struggling with their studies, in the face of online game playing these students find their relief and they consider these games as a better and more attractive option than completing their homework.

Majority of the students who spend most of their time playing games often make online friends through these games and they begin to feel more comfortable with these online friends instead of their real life friends. It is evident that online game playing leaves an extremely negative impact on the social life and relationships of these students. Students become addicted to these and they tend to isolate themselves in their rooms with the gaming devices or gadgets.

Conclusion

This research study aims to find out the psychological effects of online games on students. The researcher wants to

investigate the importance of online games in student's life and the role these games play in their life. The researcher wants to find out how much students are aware about the dangers they can get themselves involved in by engaging in these online games.

Four research questions were developed in this researcher which focus on the negative effects of online gaming on the students and their academic performance. The research also focus on the social relationships and friendships of the students involved in online gaming, whether their personal relations are effected by the games or not.

After getting all the results and analyzing them the research concludes that long term online game playing can have some extremely harmful effects on the life of students, not only life but also can damage their grades. Online games used to be an entertainment activity for students but they are now engaging themselves in these games to such extreme extent that it is becoming harmful for them. As it is said that excess of everything is extremely bad except the knowledge.

This study justifies that individuals involved in problematic online games have a much better and positive connection with their social relationships rather than their family and real life friends. The students involved in problematic online games also experience certain psychological symptoms like hopelessness, low self-esteem, insomnia, fatigue, anxiety, depression and poor academic performance.

Recommendations/ Suggestions

- A detailed study should be done in order to differentiate people who just like playing games from those who are actual online gaming addicts.
- A proper check and balance should be kept on the type of games that the students are playing.
- Government should immediately ban any such game that promotes extremely violent or abusive content.
- Educational institutes should introduce more of educational and informative games for students.
- Traditional forms of games should be encouraged by the society so that children/ students opt for them.
- Research should be carried out on the family of students who are involved in online gaming.
- Detailed research on the students coming from different cultures and playing

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