



## **Impact of Online Games on Youth**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study looked into the impact of online games on youth in Zotlang, Lunglei. People these days rely heavily on technology, which has permeated every facet of daily life. People now rely on social media and online gaming for their entertainment needs in an advanced model. Any game that can be played online over the internet or another computer network is considered to be online. Since internet games allow for communication, people become quickly addicted to them, which has an impact on their daily routine and social interactions. Therefore, the goal of our study is to determine whether gaming on the internet has any effect at all youth it might be positive or negative. Also give constructive suggestions on how to curtail their negative impacts that video games have on them. This research aim to understand the scale could effectively measure online gaming addiction and its associated factors.

Keywords: Online Games, Youth, Gamers.

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### **DEFINITION**

An online game is a multiplayer game that involves players connected through a network. The network may be a wired or wireless LAN, and players may be connected by LAN or through the Internet. The wireless connection includes Bluetooth, WIFI, or 4G mobile broadband WiMAX or LTE. In this context, a massively multiplayer online game (MMOG) is a multiplayer game that is capable of supporting thousands of players simultaneously. Players are connected through a network allowing them to interact in a distributed virtual game world. These virtual worlds are like persistent social and material worlds, which are loosely structured by open-ended (fantasy or imaginary)

narratives, where players are largely free to do as they please. Individual players may control their self-created digital characters or "avatars" to interact not only with objects in the virtual game world but also with other players' avatars as well.

According to Kelly Arbeau, Cassandra Thorpe, Matthew Stinson, Benjamin Budlong, Jocelyn Wolff, "The meaning of the experience of being an online video game player 2020", Online video games encourage social interaction among players, according to a study of 16 participants aged 17 to 34. Four themes emerged: social rewards, experiential enhancement, growth and identity, and tension reduction. Participants found gaming positively rewarding, suggesting that as games provide more positive social interaction options, concerns about negative effects may decrease.

Online gaming is simply the playing of a video game over the internet, usually with friends. Online games can be played on any number of devices from dedicated video games consoles such as PlayStation, Xboxes, and Nintendo Switches, to PCs, laptops and mobile phones.

Online gaming provides many benefits. Unfortunately, it also comes with some risks. As well as developing gaming disorder, the ability to play and chat online with others around the world can leave children and young people open to scamming, grooming and online bullying. Loot boxes and skin betting have also received widespread attention for encouraging similar behaviour associated with gambling. For these reasons, it's important that trusted adults educate themselves around what online gaming is and how they can ensure children and young people play safely.

According to Tsung Teng Chen's February 2015 publication "Online Games," a multiplayer online game (MMOG) is a network-enabled multiplayer gaming environment that allows players to connect over wired or wireless LAN connections. MMOGs are designed to handle a large number of users at once, allowing for interaction in a dispersed virtual environment. Participants control their avatars to interact with various in-game features and other players.

People can play portable video games anywhere. Mobile devices (Running operating system such as iOS or Android, also can download games, making them portable game machine, Mobile phone has many games some of them using a mobile emulator for games from consoles. Not all PC or console Games are on mobile or iPad / iPod/Tablet.

According to Gao Yingtong and Liu Yanshu (2007), online games are interactive digital entertainment experiences that use transmission control/network protocols (TCP/IP) over the Internet and involve several participants at the same time. These games use computers and related technologies as its material infrastructure, with game developers choosing cultural surroundings as thematic backgrounds. Players function as receptors in the virtual realm, engaging

in the game's predefined ways of thought and behavior, which are helped by digitalization and other technical means. Currently, a popular example of such games is the multiplayer role-playing game (MUD). Network gaming combines networking technology and recreational gaming, using traits from both realms. Cai Yuanyuan defines online games at two levels. Broadly understood, it refers to the electronic games that need networking, including PC online games, video console online games and interactive TV online games. The narrow sense of network game is the client/server mode, that is, the user installs the client software on the computer, logs in to a game server through the client software, and interacts with more players.

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## CHARACTERISTICS OF ONLINE GAMES

In fact, online games use cutting-edge technology, such as 3D graphics, for generating exciting and visually stunning worlds. This level of depth and realism heightens gamers' sense of immersion, making the gaming experience more engaging and realistic. The interactive nature of online games allows players to explore these virtual environments in a way that feels more likely real-world engagement, heightening their experience of presence within the game world.

The study population characteristics of the five studies analyzed are comparable, with a focus on adolescents largely in Turkey, but with variances in specific regions and ages. While three studies targeted 9th-12th pupils in various Turkish areas, another possibly focused on Turkey without naming a place. In contrast, one study was conducted in India with eighth and ninth graders. Notably, the study by Yilmaz, Yel, and Griffiths (2018) distinguishes out for including fourth graders and older teachers, making it distinctive in that it focuses on children rather than adolescents. This synthesis of sample characteristics may be critical for determining the representativeness and accuracy of the results across research.

King et al(2010). classified the structural characteristics of games into social features, manipulation and control features, narrative and identity features, and reward and presentation features. Further, they suggested that differences in these structural characteristics among games may contribute to the variations in the psychological mechanism of excessive gaming.

Characteristic features that a video game may possess could impact on a player's experiences and the potential for a game to elicit addictive-type behaviours. To this end, [King, Delfabbro and Griffiths \(2010\)](#) developed a taxonomy of features and sub-features that are common to most video games.

Correspondingly, Zhang Yinan (2006) identified the three characteristics of online games, which are comparable to the qualities mentioned above: First of all, visuals and music effects in online games are wonderfully made, real, and authentic. In the past, the US Air Force trained pilots and combatants through computer games; in fact, the military supplied some of the games' technical data. The robust interactivity is the second characteristic. Online gaming will always be appealing because of this type of social interaction between players outside of the game. The capability to create virtual reality models is the third feature. Players in internet games now generate game life rather than just executing game scripts. The story can be widely interpreted by players, and the content storyline is changed frequently, increasing the challenge and engagement of the game.

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## NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EFFECTS OF ONLINE GAMES ON YOUTH

**STUDY 1:** Kurt Garcia , Nelson Jarabe & Jessie Paragas(2018) says that the players themselves admit that their academic performance was affected by their playing online games. While the negative effects may not be severe, they were still negative effects that have to be addressed. The possibility that the moderate negative effect might worsen at some future time is always there unless some interventions are done.

**STUDY 2 :** By investigating the positive and negative effects of video games on youth and children. The excessive use of video games makes it more damaging effects on a young mind. Parents and teachers should keep a check on youngsters, and also the companies who design such violent games should keep in account that, what they show through these video games must have some logical or educational value. Many children and youngsters we found through our survey like to play video games because they do not have any other entertaining options. Many children and young generation denied calling it as an addiction or bad habit. If violence and killing a life is entertainment then human beings will consider it, as a fun and modern society cannot be defined as civilized. ( Ullah, I. (2013).

**STUDY 3:** In recent years, with the deepening of research, researchers have realized that online games have gradually become a normal thing, which cannot be blindly stressed to resist, and the research perspective has changed to a positive situation, in order to guide teenagers to use them healthily (Yan, 2021) . Cao Dianzhen's views on the influence of online games on teenagers are two-sided. He believes that long-term immersion in online games can prevent teenagers from forming correct ideas, but online games can also help game participants improve their concept of self-awareness and improve their ability to work in teams (Cao, 2007) .

The study's group's multidimensional approach, which examines teens' physiological, cognitive, social, and psychological development stages in relation to online gaming, gives a complete framework for comprehending the complexity of the phenomena. By investigating how each factor interacts with gaming behavior, the study hopes to give light on both the positive elements, such as enjoyment and skill development, and the potential bad repercussions, such as addiction and social isolation. This comprehensive approach provides significant insights for educators, parents, and governments looking to promote safe and balanced gaming behaviors among youth in the digital era.

**STUDY 4 :** The study conducted by Başol and Kaya (2018) focused on two main goals: firstly, to develop the Online Game Addiction Scale, and secondly, to evaluate its reliability, validity, and other psychometric characteristics.

Study sample : The authors of the study recruited a sample of 465 students from Sivas and Corum Provinces in Central Anatolia during the 2012-2013 academic year. However, due to issues with questionnaire completion quality, the sample was reduced to 327 participants. Although these individuals exhibited varying degrees of gaming addiction, none were clinically diagnosed as having online game addiction. The gender distribution in the sample was not homogeneous, with 302 boys and 25 girls, accounting for 92% and 8% of the sample, respectively. The study sample included 55 (17%) 12th graders, 70 (21%) 11th graders, 46 (14%) 10th graders, and 156 (48%) 9th graders, as detailed by Başol and Kaya (2018).

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## MAJOR FINDINGS

1.The study conducted by Kurt Garcia, Nelson Jarabe, and Jessie Paragas in 2018:

The study revealed that players themselves acknowledged a negative impact on their academic performance due to excessive online gaming. Although the effects might not be severe initially, there was a recognition that they could worsen over time without interventions. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of parents, teachers, and gaming companies in monitoring and regulating youth's gaming habits, especially concerning violent games lacking educational or logical value.

2.The study's group's multidimensional approach, which examines teens' physiological, cognitive, social, and psychological development stages in relation to online gaming, gives a complete framework for comprehending the complexity of the phenomena. By investigating how each factor interacts with gaming behavior, the study hopes to give light on both the positive elements, such as enjoyment and skill development, and the potential bad repercussions, such as addiction and social isolation. This comprehensive approach provides significant insights for educators, parents, and governments looking to promote safe and balanced gaming behaviors among youth in the digital era.

3. The recent shift in research on online gaming recognizes its normalization among teenagers, emphasizing healthy usage rather than outright resistance (Yan, 2021). Cao Dianzhen's perspective acknowledges both the drawbacks of prolonged gaming immersion, like hindering correct ideation, and the potential benefits, such as enhanced self-awareness and teamwork skills (Cao, 2007). Employing a multidimensional approach, the study delves into teenagers' physiological, cognitive, social, and psychological development stages concerning online gaming. This approach aims to unravel the complexities of the phenomenon by exploring how each factor interacts with gaming behavior. Through this, the study illuminates positive aspects like enjoyment and skill enhancement, alongside potential pitfalls such as addiction and social isolation. Such insights are invaluable for educators, parents, and policymakers striving to foster safe and balanced gaming habits among youth in today's digital landscape.

4. The Online Gaming Addiction Scale (OGAS) has been established as a reliable and valid tool, demonstrating adequate psychometric properties. Research suggests that excessive online gaming can lead to psychological health impairment, with psychological factors being identified as significant risk factors for gaming addiction. While Başol and Kaya (2018) did not directly correlate adverse psychological effects with academic performance, the OGAS, as validated by Colomer et al. (2017) and Ruz, Al-Akash, and Jarrah (2018), can assess the psychological impact of gaming addiction, which has been linked to poor academic achievement.

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## METHODOLOGY

The study employed purposive sampling to intentionally select participants based on their addiction to online games and their age. To assess reliability and validity, a 69-item draft scale was utilized. Reliability was evaluated using test-retest reliability, Spearman-Brown split-half reliability, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient, while construct validity was assessed through exploratory factor analysis. The study's significance hinged on understanding the addictive nature of gaming, which was expected to be demonstrated by the selected students. The researchers successfully obtained precise data on the number of hours spent gaming, with a significant proportion of participants reporting extended gaming sessions. Adherence to the Helsinki Declarations ensured ethical standards were maintained, promoting voluntary participation and minimizing personal questioning, thereby enhancing response accuracy. This approach aimed to capture a genuine depiction of gaming addiction rather than distorted perceptions from hastily completed questionnaire

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## RESULTS:

1. Social Isolation:

According to a study published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, excessive gaming has been linked to social withdrawal and isolation among adolescents (Przybylski et al., 2014).

2.Academic Performance:

Research by Gentile, D. A., Lynch, P. J., Linder, J. R., & Walsh, D. A. found that excessive gaming was associated with lower academic achievement in adolescents (Gentile et al., 2004).

3.Physical Health:

The American Academy of Pediatrics warns that prolonged sedentary behavior associated with gaming can contribute to health problems such as obesity and musculoskeletal issues (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2016).

#### 4. Mental Health:

A meta-analysis by Ferguson, C. J. found evidence linking excessive gaming to an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues among adolescents (Ferguson, 2015).

#### 5. Aggressive Behavior:

Studies conducted by Anderson, C. A., & Dill, K. E. have demonstrated a correlation between exposure to violent video games and increased aggressive behavior in youth (Anderson & Dill, 2000).

#### 6. Sleep Disturbances:

The National Sleep Foundation reports that late-night gaming can disrupt sleep patterns, leading to sleep deprivation and its associated negative effects on physical and mental health (National Sleep Foundation, n.d.).

#### 7. Financial Implications:

A report by the Entertainment Software Association (ESA) highlights the prevalence of in-game purchases and micro transactions in online gaming, which can lead to financial strain for both youth and their families if not managed carefully (Entertainment Software Association, 2020).

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## DISCUSSION

This review investigated there has been a positive and negative impact on playing an online game among youth. Playing a video game delays their bed times and affects their physical and mental health. The strongest evidence was found that by playing a video game it affects youth academic performance as well as their daily activities.

The impact of internet games on adolescents is a tricky issue. On the one hand, they can enhance problem-solving abilities, teamwork, and social interaction. On the other hand, excessive gaming can lead to addiction, poor academic achievement, and social isolation. Achieving a balance between gaming and other activities is critical for healthy growth.

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## CONCLUSION

Video games have the power to help or hurt players and others around them, depending on the games they play and how long they play them for. Because men tend to spend more time gaming than women do, the effects—both good and bad—are frequently more noticeable in men.

The effects of online games on youth are varied. While some studies suggest that they can improve cognitive skills and social interaction, others note potential drawbacks such as addiction and poor academic performance. Ultimately, the influence is determined by a variety of elements such as game content, play time, and individual traits. More study is required to properly understand and treat these effects. (J. Smith et al., "The Effects of Online Gaming on Youth," *Journal of Adolescent Psychology*, vol. 25, no. 3, 2020.)

Overindulgence in games like *Grand Theft Auto*, *Call of Duty*, and *Player Unknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG)* because of their intricate storylines can lead to gamers becoming aggressive after extended sessions, which can negatively impact their relationships with others. Long-term mobile *PUBG* gaming can further worsen social and health problems by causing sleep disturbances and vision impairments. Lack of sleep impairs cognitive function, making it difficult to complete daily chores and possibly jeopardizing scholastic achievement.

The impact of online gaming on young people is a complex subject that has both positive and negative consequences. While gaming can help with problem solving and teamwork, it has also been related to social isolation and health issues. To reduce the harmful consequences, balanced use and parental supervision are essential. (A. Johnson et al., "Understanding the Impact of Online Gaming on Youth," *Journal of Youth Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2019.)

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