

Study on Influence of Computer Dependence on Characterological Features of Personality in Adolescents

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Abstract: This study investigates the correlation between computer addiction and personality traits, particularly emotionality and communicativeness, in adolescents. Findings indicate that computer-dependent teens display heightened aggression, irresponsibility, and self-centredness, coupled with deficient communication skills. They also exhibit self-criticism, low self-esteem, introversion, and social passivity, turning to virtual reality for communication. The study further distinguishes the associations of computer game addiction and internet addiction with different individual traits. The research underscores the necessity of group work, self-regulation, enhancing interpersonal relationships, and fostering new hobbies as corrective measures. The study concludes that computer addiction is an emergent societal issue requiring comprehensive preventative and corrective strategies by various professionals, including psychologists and educators.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, no average family can function without computers. The interaction with computers is unceasing - at work, at home, and during transport, with the age of usage steadily declining. Despite computer technology playing a pivotal role in our lives, we often fail to recognise our growing dependence on this innovative marvel.

According to O.B.Simatova, the initial addiction to computers forms before an individual truly acknowledges its presence [Simatova O.B. (2006); 133]. This can be attributed to the emotional experiences that technology incites. As an individual begins interacting with a computer, solving various problems, it becomes an integral part of their life, eventually transforming into a 'friend'. It is this bond that often leads to an obsessive dependency, irrespective of the nature of interaction – work-related tasks, gaming, programming, or internet research [Simatova O.B. 2006].

A.E.Voiskunsky theorises computer addiction as a subset of internet addictions, which include information overload, compulsive internet use, dependency on virtual relationships, and others. Conversely, P.Muntyan posits that internet addiction should be classified under computer addictions, alongside dependency on computer games and the computer itself. This latter classification seems more accurate, considering that both internet and gaming addictions contribute to the broader computer addiction, i.e., the irresistible urge to engage with the device for work, play or research [Muntyan P.].

Computer addictions manifest much quicker than other dependencies such as smoking, alcohol, or gambling. As per A.E. Voiskunsky's 'Psychological phenomena of Internet addiction', K. Yang's research reveals that 25% of addicts developed the addiction within six months of starting usage, 58% during the second half of the year, and 17% after a year [Zavalishina O.V. 2012].

"Despite the initial positive aspects of computer addiction, like any other addiction, it eventually leads

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to personal degradation, social status decline, loss of self-identity, worsened psychological state, emergence of aggression and isolation" [Zavalishina O.V. (2012), p.141].

The phenomenon of 'co-dependence' is also observed in computer addiction, where relatives or friends of the addict, aware of their loved one's issue, inadvertently develop a dependency themselves. Consequently, they are unable to provide any psychological support to the primary addict; instead, they inadvertently exacerbate the situation, becoming fully-fledged addicts themselves.

2. METHODS

In conducting the study, methods such as observation, conversation, psychological testing, questioning, and mathematical statistics were utilised. More

specifically, for the empirical examination of the problem, the following tools were employed: Kimberley S. Young's "Internet Addiction Test", L.N. Yuryeva and T.Yu. Bolbot's "Method of Screening Diagnostics of Computer Addiction", the "Personal Differential" (LD) method, R.B. Kettel's "Methodology for Multifactorial Personality Research" (Form C with 105 questions), and the "Methodology for Diagnosing Personality Orientation" by B. Bass (also known as Smekal-Kuchera Questionnaire; Bass Orientation Questionnaire).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of our investigation was to pinpoint alterations in how computer addiction impacts characterological personality traits in younger and older teenagers in the current era.

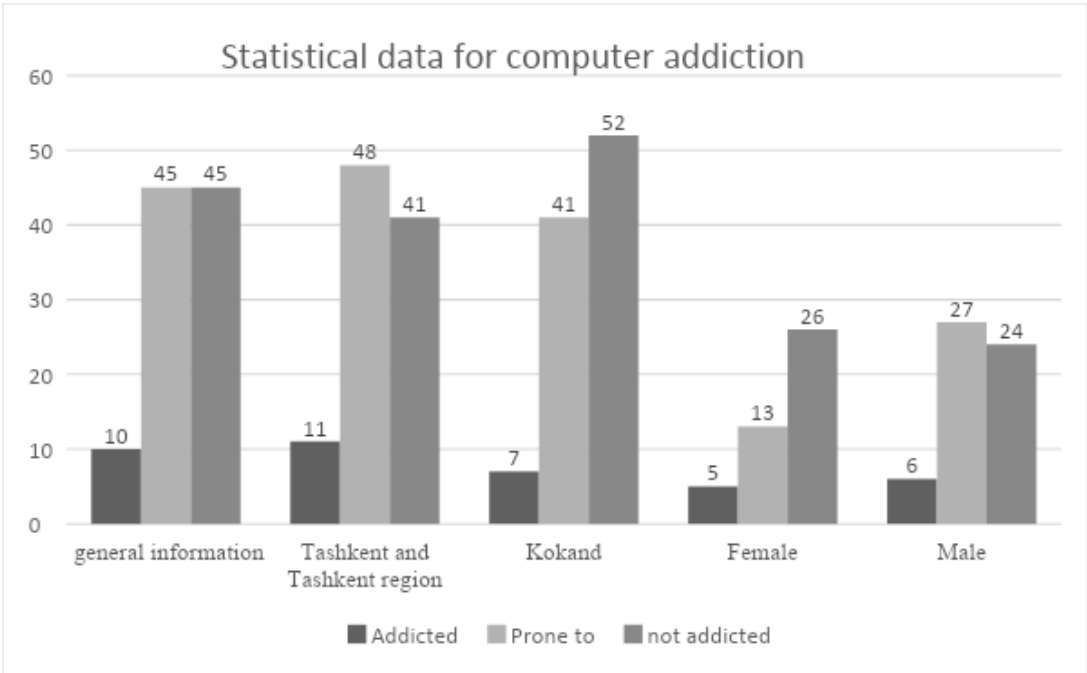


FIGURE 1. Age, gender and regional data on computer addiction

The findings revealed that the majority of the younger and older teenagers scrutinised exhibited a tendency towards computer addiction, with this propensity more prevalent among those residing in the capital than in other regions and districts of the republic. This discrepancy is attributable to urban

children having greater accessibility to information technology than their rural counterparts. Computer addiction is notably more pronounced in older adolescents, likely due to their longer engagement with computer technology. Gender differences are also apparent, with males demonstrating higher computer addiction than

females. This trend is more evident among younger adolescents and less so in the older age group. This can be linked to gender-specific traits, as computer dependency primarily manifests in individuals with diminished communication skills and low emotional intelligence, traits less commonly associated with females according to many social studies. Over time, gender influence may diminish due to the universal adoption of new information technologies and the elevated status bestowed upon teenagers adept at utilising various computer hardware "gadgets".

4. CONCLUSION

Our investigation demonstrated that computer addiction correlates with personality traits such as emotionality and communicativeness. Unlike their peers, computer-dependent younger and older teenagers tend to display traits like aggressiveness, dominance, irresponsibility, disorganisation, self-centeredness, frustration, and a lack of communication skills.

In comparison to their counterparts not susceptible to computer addiction, teenagers who are predisposed to it exhibit a critical self-perception, marked by dissatisfaction with their own behaviour, achievements, and personality traits. In terms of self-confidence, computer-dependent individuals struggle to achieve their goals, control situations, assert themselves, and typically suffer from low self-esteem. In the realm of interpersonal relationships, such individuals often display isolation, introversion, and a passive approach to social interactions. Their inability to establish harmonious interpersonal relationships and to undertake leading activities due to their personality traits propels them into the virtual reality where they find the "safest" way to fulfil their communication needs. Individuals prone to computer addiction are found to be less impacted in terms of their characterological personality traits. Computer game addiction is associated with communicative and emotional traits, while internet addiction is linked to communicative and regulatory characteristics.

Within the plethora of approaches and methodologies available to address the issue of computer addiction, several common trends emerge. These include the utilisation of group correction methods and individual work aimed at improving relationships with family and peers, teaching self-regulation, enhancing coping skills, fostering willpower, elevating self-esteem, and cultivating new life interests. The critical step in the

correction of computer addiction involves the cessation of computer-related activities. Group correction methods primarily focus on enhancing the activity and independence of addicts, fostering personal development and improving relationships with others. Computer addiction is a burgeoning societal issue requiring effective prevention and intervention strategies deployed by psychologists, psychiatrists, teachers, and other professionals.

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