

**INTERCULTURAL PEDAGOGY: THEORY AND PRACTICE**

**DOI: 10.24411/2470-1262-2020-10076**

**УДК (UDC) 159.99**

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**For citation: Baghdasaryan Armine A., Akopyan Anna A., (2020).**

**Computer Addiction as Psychological and Pedagogical Problem.**

**Cross-Cultural Studies: Education and Science**

**Vol.5, Issue 2 (2020), pp. 53-58 (in USA)**

**Manuscript received: 18/04/2020**

**Accepted for publication: 15/06/2020**

**The authors have read and approved the final manuscript.**

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**COMPUTER ADDICTION AS PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL  
PROBLEM**

**КОМПЬЮТЕРНАЯ ЗАВИСИМОСТЬ КАК ПСИХОЛОГО-  
ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКАЯ ПРОБЛЕМА**

**Abstract:**

The article analyzes the phenomenon of addiction to computer and the Internet and their negative impact. The term computer addiction came into use in the 1990s as a concept that means a severe psychological problem, as it harms both the psyche of an individual as well as the relationship between the person and the social environment. The authors elaborate on the place computer and Internet occupy in the lives of children, the influences this inflicts on children's lives and how it manifests in children's behavior and interaction with the others in their surroundings. The article discusses the findings of the survey conducted among the children. The survey used the questionnaire designed by K. Gasparyan's and covered 100 students from different educational institutions. Based on the finding, the authors stipulate their recommendations on the issue in question.

**Keywords:** computer addiction, psychological problem, IT technologies, phenomenon of psychological dependence, information and communication technologies

## Introduction

The 21st century is a period of new information and communication technologies, without which it is impossible to imagine the economic and social life in advanced countries. Only a few years ago, there was a need to present the capabilities to the public and to integrate it into governance, public relations, information creation and dissemination, entertainment, education or self-education for making it more systematic and complete. If, mastering these technologies were considered as advantageous professional skills many years ago, today it has become just one of the obligatory requirements a modern person needs to possess. The information world, in all its manifestations, influences the human value system, value orientations and attitudes, goals and desires, the formation of dreams and ideals, and the building of human relationships. All of the above have a profound impact on shaping and developing a person.

In today's technocratic society, many jobs are directly connected to the computer, and naturally, people who spend time a few hours a day in front of the computer for their work cannot be viewed as computer-dependent. In the modern world, it is an integral part of preschool children's lives. Children explore the world through their computers: games, cartoons, pictures, etc. The Internet is a helpful and useful source of information. Pictures of various animals or fairy-tale characters, many questions that interests children, and answer to their "whys" can be found online. Children's attention, thinking, and logic can be developed and enhanced through well-chosen games and tasks. At the same time, the use of computer and the Internet can harm the development of a child's personality. Moreover, IT and Internet technologies significantly expands the possibilities for searching, distributing, and learning educational material. Use of IT technologies, along with its strengths, is also reflected in the symptoms of gambling and internet addiction. to the article attempts to analyze the negative impacts and the addiction to computer and the Internet. In the context of humanistic psychoanalysis, the term 'addiction' means attachment to something that enables one to feel satisfied without making any effort to attain that satisfaction. The term *computer addiction* began to be applied as a severe psychological problem back in the 1990s, as it harms both the psyche and the relationship between the person and the social environment. Two aspects of computer addiction are distinguished: addiction to game (cyberdict) and the Internet (networking).

## Literature Review

According to T. P. Korolenko (1991) "Dependence or addictive behavior is one of the forms of destructive behavior that is causing harm to people and society. Addictive behavior is expressed in the desire to escape from reality by changing your mental state, which is achieved in various ways - pharmacological and non-pharmacological, which is accompanied by the development of subjectively pleasant emotional states". Moreover, he states that the problem of addiction begins when the desire to evade reality, linked to a change in mental state that turns dominant in the consciousness and becomes a central idea, separates the person from reality. Computer addiction is a phenomenon of psychological dependence on the Internet, which in turn manifests itself as a detachment from reality, when the process captivates the subject to such an extent that he or she is unable to function in the real world.

Computer science is based on the perception of the environment, the disruption of the exchange of help when the virtual world is distortedly separated from the real world.

More generally, Internet addiction is characterized as a mental disorder, a sticky desire to connect to the Internet, and the morbid inability to temporarily quit the Internet. Internet addiction is also sometimes referred to as computer addiction or pathological use of the Internet. [6]

K.S. Young identifies five major categories of addiction:

1. Dependence on hypersexual films and communication of this nature
2. Hyper communicative: dependence on online communication with friends
3. Excessive network engagement, which includes addiction to online gaming and online trading
4. Addiction to virtual dating - redundancy of acquaintances and friends on the Internet
5. Information overload, extreme access to the databases. [5]

The following factors can contribute to computer addiction;

- rejection from the family, or too much parental care
- age crisis
- difficulties with peer communication
- incorrect supervision of the child's education and upbringing
- lack of teacher-parent cooperation

Often, children can start spending most of the day in front of the computer independently of their will, which may be due to parents being overloaded, or their carelessness towards children, as well as when parents are a negative example of having computer addiction. All of this has a negative impact on the child's psychological and physiological development. Children begin to exhibit aggressive behavior in their behavior, they become nervous, and their eyesight, hearing, and bone system, mainly the spine, are also affected [2]. Moreover, many parents use the Internet while feeding their children, this promotes to computer addiction in children.

The effects of computer addiction can leave their mark on mental processes (in particular, the child's memory deteriorates, they have difficulties to concentrate, understand and make judgments during school lessons), mental states, personality traits, and interpersonal relationships. Emotional disruptions, the negative tendencies of the developmental process of the incentive field connected with the informational impact are more common.

Computer addiction is endangering the health of children, decreasing immunity, causing fatigue, insomnia, vision impairments, headaches, spinal cord, wrist aches, etc.

Computer addiction has the following symptoms and prerequisites;

- a child spends an excessive amount of time in front of a computer and on the Internet
- a child prefers to sit in front of a computer to any other interaction, for example, family gatherings, or playing with peers
- a child refuses and fails to do his/her duties; to tidy the bedrooms, assist parents in household work, collect the dishes after the dinner, etc.

- when the has to be switched off computer and he/she starts using his/her phone
- the time spent in front of a computer is gradually affecting a child's learning process, the academic performance, and concentration
- when there is no internet connection, a child starts looking for a place where there is an internet connection
- a child is not interested in any interesting book or magazine
- interacting with friends is limited to discussing the next new computer game
- a child with computer addiction finds pleasure in using computer, and he/she often does not wish to stop using it on their own
- sitting in front of a computer gives him/her a sense of happiness
- a child becomes isolated from everyone. He/she often avoids family, social, work or study responsibilities
- a child is characterised by feeling indifferent to the surroundings, narrow circle of friends or lack of friends low communication, tendency to obey, weak emotional connection with family members
- his/her reactions in conflict situations are; feeling insulted, crying, being unable to respond
- a child is incapable to stop using a computer or a computer game, and in case of stopping, shows an excited state of aggression
- a child usually overcomes difficult life situations through confrontation, isolation from family and surroundings, and with various evasive explanations.

According to Moskolenko, computer addiction in a child can lead to the following possible psychological and physical delays; children have much poorer physical and mental health than adults. If parents do not pay attention to this problem, the impact of a computer can have serious negative consequences for a child. [3; p.135]

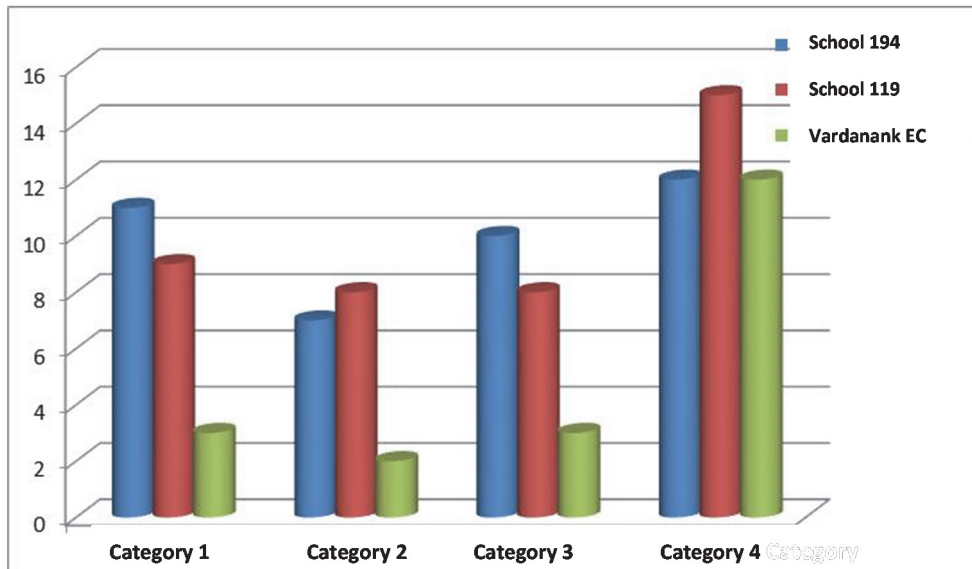
Internet addiction threatens almost everyone, as the virtual domain forces people to use the Internet without taking care of health and personal life.

As R. Davis notes, "for some people the Internet acts as a contributing force to threatening social relationships." [4; p. 95] Moreover, the absence of nonverbal impulses in computer communication allows communicators to devote more cognitive resources to message creation, reception, and exchange processes. In other words, from this point of view cognitive needs related to social anxiety or interpersonal complexes can be mitigated in an online context where people feel more socially confident and effective. Therefore, another prerequisite for online social communication by people with psychological problems is that computer communication allows them to provide extensive cognitive resources and to promote positive self-presentation and interpersonal goals.

According to K.S.Young, unlike other types of leisure like reading a book or watching TV that have certain time limits, the use of Internet is unlimited. [5; p. 671-679]

## Materials and Methods

To test whether children have computer dependency, K. Gasparyan's questionnaire was used. The survey was conducted among 100 students from Yerevan Secondary Schools 194 and 119, and 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade students of Vardanank Educational Complex. The following results have been obtained:



## Results and Discussions

22 children had no risk of computer dependency, 19 had some degree of computer distress, 18 had a high risk of computer dependency, and 41 had a computer dependency.

Based on the surveys, children with computer addiction were found to be predominant in physical and verbal aggression, irritability, and suspicion.

Both aggression and hostility dominated. Students who were not computer-dependent displayed friendliness, diligence, responsibility, and knowledge; they were always active, and they've had everyone's respect and recognition.

Children with computer addiction were incompatible with their desires, abilities, and ambitions, seeking independence from parents, and verbal or physical aggression was the main form of response in conflict situations.

## Conclusion

Thus, it can be concluded that the main prerequisite for computer addiction is the family, in particular parents' indifference on the child. Many parents are unaware of their children's online behavior. Others have banned the use of the Internet, because of the fear of content which their children may encounter online. Neither ignorance nor ban from online activities will help parents to solve their children's problems with the use of Internet. In other words, the primary caregivers of teenagers can perceive the Internet positively or may also be involved with problematic Internet use. As a result, the caregiver serves as a model of the access and use of the Internet: [1]

Today, in the context of humanistic pedagogy, the overarching task of the school and the family must be the development of the comprehensive and harmonious personality of children, and everything in their lives must be directed towards the full development of their personality.

No matter how much we admit the fact of internet addiction, we still cannot imagine our daily lives without internet.

Using computers shall not be forbidden; however, free access to teaching and development programs shall be available. To avoid further complications, a proper attitude towards the computer shall be nurtured in children. A computer and the Internet should become an effective way of organizing the learning process. It should not become the "evil" that drives students away from education, but remains the "assistant" to students with the proper intervention of parents and teachers.

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**Acknowledgements:** *Thanks to the reviewers for their suggestions.*

**Contribution of the author.** The author contributed equality to the present research.