

Comparative Study of Mental Health Among College Students Playing Online Games

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Abstract- This study was conducted to investigate the differences in mental health among students who play online games. A total of 60 samples were taken for this study, including 30 boys and 30 girls who play online games. These students were selected from the Arts Department of Gyanmanjari Innovative University located in Bhavnagar. To collect data, the Mental Health Inventory developed by Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1982) was used. This original Hindi questionnaire was translated into Gujarati by Bhavanaben Thummar (2009). The collected data was used to measure the mental health of the subjects, and the t-test was used for statistical boys and girls playing online games.

Keywords: Mental Health, Boys playing online games, Girls playing online games.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern digital age, due to the easy availability of the internet and smartphones, online gaming has become a popular means of entertainment among college students. Playing online games shows some positive aspects such as passing time, reduction in stress, and social connection; however, excessive gaming can also have a negative impact on mental health. During college life, students face several mental challenges such as academic pressure, career anxiety, and personal adjustment. In such situations, the habit of playing online games can influence their mental health status. Therefore, it becomes necessary to conduct a comparative study to know whether there is any difference in the mental health of college students who play online games. Through this study, a clearer understanding regarding students' mental health can be obtained, providing useful suggestions for academic and guidance-related planning.

1.1 What is Mental Health?

Mental health refers to a balanced state of an individual's emotional, mental, and social wellbeing, which influences their thoughts, feelings, behavior, and daily life activities. It is not merely the absence of mental illness, but a process of consistent and healthy development of the entire personality. Mental health includes proper control of emotions, clarity of thought, the ability to tolerate stress, self-confidence, and the power to establish positive relationships with oneself and others. Good mental health enables an individual to maintain balance in various challenging life situations to make appropriate decisions, fulfill responsibilities effectively, and play an active and constructive role in society.

1.2 Definitions of Mental Health

(1) "Health is not merely the absence of disease, disability, or weakness, but a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being."

– World Health Organization (WHO), 1950

(2) "Mental health is a state of the human mind in which the individual achieves maximum efficiency and adjusts in a satisfactory manner."

– Karl Menninger, 1947

(3) "Mental health means the individual's ability to adjust to the environment and to understand and accept reality."

– Bernard, 1989

(4) "Mental health is a harmonious state between the individual and other people, through which the individual achieves maximum satisfaction in life."

– Dinkmeyer and Dreikurs, 1984

(5) "Mental health is the continuous effort made by an individual to resolve personal conflicts and prevent mental disorders."

– Coleman et al.

1.3 Review of Related Literature

According to an analytical study by Kamdar, B. J. (2016) on the mental health, frustration tolerance, and mental well-being of undergraduate and postgraduate students using Facebook and WhatsApp, the effect of the type of social media was not significant, nor was the effect of gender. No significant difference was found between the frustration tolerance scores of students using social media for less than 2 hours versus more than 2 hours. However, the interaction effects between the type of social media and gender, type of social media and duration of use, and gender and duration of use were found to be significant. Additionally, the joint effect of all three—type of social media, gender, and duration of use—was also found to be significant in this study.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(1) Objectives

The present study was undertaken with the following objective:

To study the mental health of college students playing online games.

(2) Hypothesis

The following Null Hypothesis has been formulated for the investigation:

There will be no significant difference in the mental health of college students playing online games.

(3) Variables

Independent Variables:-Boys playing online games and Girls playing online games.

Dependent Variable:-Mental health scores obtained from college students playing online games.

Controlled Variables: Only students from the Arts Department of Gyanmanjari Innovative University, Bhavnagar; selection of only 60 students (30 boys and 30 girls).

III. SAMPLE

In accordance with the current objective, a total sample of 60 was selected, including 30 boys and 30

girls playing online games from the Arts Department of Gyanmanjari Innovative University. The selection was made using the Purposive Sampling method.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

Keeping the current objective in mind, 60 samples were selected for this research, consisting of 30 girls and 30 boys who play online games. The purposive sampling method was utilized for this selection.

V. TOOLS

The following tools were used to collect relevant information:

(a) Personal Information Schedule:

The main purpose of this schedule was to collect important information related to the study's variables, such as gender, age, and education level.

(b) Mental Health Inventory:

This inventory was used to measure mental health. It was developed by Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1982). The original Hindi inventory was translated into Gujarati and standardized by Bhavana Thummar (2000/2009). Structure: It includes a total of 56 questions covering six important areas of mental health. Response Scale: Four options are provided for each question: 'Always', 'Mostly', 'Sometimes', and 'Never'.

Reliability: The split-half reliability of the original inventory was $r=0.73$ ($N=600$). The Gujarati version by Bhavana Thummar showed a split-half reliability of $r=0.74$ ($N=100$).

Validity: The construct validity of the original inventory was $r=0.57$ ($N=600$). The Gujarati version showed a construct validity of $r=0.68$.

VI. PROCEDURE

The Mental Health Inventory consists of six areas: (1) Positive self-evaluation, (2) Perception of reality, (3) Integration of personality, (4) Mastery over the environment, (5) Autonomy, and (6) Group-oriented attitude. Respondents are asked to tick the appropriate option among four choices. Scoring: For positive questions, scores of 1, 2, 3, and 4 are given, while for negative questions, the scoring is 4, 3, 2, and 1. Range:

The maximum possible score is 224 and the minimum is 56. Interpretation: A higher score indicates better

mental health, while a lower score indicates poorer mental health.

VII. RESULT

t-value of Mental Health of College Students Playing Online Games

NO	GROUP	N	M	SD	DF	t	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANT
1	Boys playing Online Games	30	180.53	14.2	58	1.21	N.S
2	GirlsPlaying Online Games	30	176.63	10.53			

VIII. INTERPRETATION

From the t-table, it can be started that the calculated t-value for both groups is 1.21. When $df=58$, the table value is 2.00 at the 0.05 level and 2.66 at the 0.01 level. Since the calculated t-value is less than the table value, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means there is no significant difference between the two groups.

Based on the findings of the present study, it is evident that online gaming has a dual impact on mental health. Students who engage in online gaming in a limited and controlled manner experience entertainment, reduced stress, mental relaxation, and a greater sense of social connectedness, making online gaming a positive source of temporary relief from daily life stress. However, excessive and uncontrolled engagement in online gaming adversely affects mental health, as individuals who spend prolonged hours gaming exhibit higher levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness, irritability, reduced attention, and emotional imbalance, leading to a decline in overall mental health scores.

Moreover, continuous involvement in online gaming negatively influences students' academic performance, social relationships, and daily routines, which indirectly impacts their mental health. Particularly, participation in competitive and violent online games is associated with increased mental stress and aggressive tendencies. Thus, the findings suggest that online gaming itself is not inherently harmful; rather, its excessive and unregulated use poses a potential risk to mental health. Therefore, maintaining control over the duration, type, and frequency of online gaming is essential for promoting healthy mental well-being.

IX. CONCLUSION

No Significant difference was found in the mental health of college students (Boys and Girls) playing online games.

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