



TITLE: The Effect of COVID19

Assessment of internet addiction and violent behavior in children and adolescents before and after COVID-19 lockdown.

Name: fatma said abdeltwab hassan

Affiliation: MD of pediatric medicine, fayoum University, Egypt

Country: Egypt

Email ID: elzahraaelashery@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Background: Internet use has naturally increased to around 2 billion users worldwide, across all age categories, and the trend is rising, most pronounced among kids. This study aimed to ascertain the burden of COVID-19 as an unexpected risk factor for the development of internet addiction, the prevalence of online addiction and aggressive behavior in children and adolescents, and the influence of COVID-19 on such a behavior.

Methods: Five hundreds kids and teenagers between the ages of 8 and 18 were enrolled in this cross-sectional study either at their first appointments at the Fayoum University Outpatient Clinic or *via* an online survey administered using Google Forms in compliance with the eligibility requirements. The survey included questions by socioeconomic status scale, internet addiction test, strengths and difficulties questionnaire, pediatric symptoms checklist, and media violence exposure scale.

Results: Participants average scores for internet addiction showed that 27% had mild addiction, 45% had moderate addiction, and 5% had severe addiction. After the COVID-19 lockdown, signs of child internet addiction appeared in 34% of the participants and increased in 47% of cases, while signs of violence appeared in 26% of the participants and increased in 50% of cases. The participant's average total strength and difficulty was 20.04 ± 10.03 ; 53% of the participants showed substantial total difficulty. The pediatric symptoms checklist showed 48% had internalizing problems, attention problems represented 57%, and externalizing problems represented 58%. The participant's highest proportion of videogame violence exposure was daily violent shots, which varied in frequency from 70% to 79%.

Conclusions: We concluded that internet addiction and behavioral violence among children and adolescents increased after the COVID-19 lockdown. Children and teenagers who were addicted to the internet were typically younger, male, in primary and preparatory school, living in rural areas, and having a moderate socioeconomic standing.

Keywords: Internet Addiction, Violence, Adolescence, COVID-19



BIOGRAPHY

Fatma Said Abd-Eltwab Hassan

Children psychiatrist & Pediatrician



EXPERIENCE

MD. Medical doctorate in Pediatric Psychiatric Thesis

Experienced Pediatrician for 14 years in Ministry of health, health insurance and university hospitals. Passionate about children psychiatry as I am currently a trainee in psychiatry department in reputable hospital. As well my doctorate is focusing on Pediatric Psychiatric .

Presenter Name: fatma said abdeltwab hassan

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Contact number: 002(01024556995)

✉ elzahraaelashery@gmail.com

✉ Fayoum, Egypt.