Letter to the Editor Regarding the Article: “Addictive Video Game Use: An Emerging Pediatric Problem?”

Carta ao Editor Relativa ao Artigo: “Dependência de Vídeojogos: Um Problema Pediátrico Emergente?”

Keywords: Behavior, Addictive; Child; Video Games
Palavras-chave: Comportamento Aditivo; Criança; Vídeojogos

Dear Editor/Colleague,

I have read with great interest the manuscript published in this journal by Nogueira and colleagues, regarding gaming disorder (GD) in a convenience sample of 6th-grade students of two public schools in Cascais, Portugal. As pointed out by the authors, Internet gaming disorder is not an official diagnosis in the DSM but one that needs further study.

Nonetheless, in mid-2018, the WHO included the diagnosis of GD in its 11th revision of the ICD-11. Not everyone who engages in gaming has a gaming disorder since it “must be of sufficient severity to result in significant impairment in personal, family, social, educational, occupational or other important areas of functioning.”

However, I was disappointed by several aspects of the paper: (i) Lack of information about the total number of students attending the 6th grade at those two schools. How many engaged in gaming? And what were the social and cultural status of the students? (ii) The authors found 6/152 students with the disorder (i.e. had 5 out of 9 DSM-5 items). But the reader does not get to know if any of these 6 students had a significant living impairment. Furthermore, statistics using such small size groups are usually less accurate. This small group could have been studied for psychological factors and gaming characteristics using other methods (e.g. in-depth interviews). (iii) Why did the authors use two groups to analyse risk factors since each group had the same 152 students (Table 2)? I believe that the 6 students with the addictive use criteria should be removed from the risk behaviour group and the statistics remade, if relevant. (iv) From the analysis of the study design and results the authors cannot prove that addictive video game use is an “emerging problem.”

Literature tells us that only a small percentage of gamers are affected by a disorder. We should never forget that risk without suffering (or in this case unspecified severity) may only work “to enforce more rigid standards of “self-discipline” and “personal responsibility” upon society.”

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https://doi.org/10.20344/amp.12134

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Dear Editor/Colleague,

The authors acknowledge and comment the Letter to the Editor regarding our manuscript: “Addictive Video Game Use: An Emerging Pediatric Problem?”. It is important to share reflections on this videogame (VG) use problem. In fact, the aim of our study was to characterize the VG use in a convenience sample as an exploratory approach to this problem.

However, I was disappointed by several aspects of the paper: (i) Lack of information about the total number of students attending the 6th grade at those two schools. How many engaged in gaming? And what were the social and cultural status of the students? (ii) The authors found 6/152 students with the disorder (i.e. had 5 out of 9 DSM-5 items). But the reader does not get to know if any of these 6 students had a significant living impairment. Furthermore, statistics using such small size groups are usually less accurate. This small group could have been studied for psychological factors and gaming characteristics using other methods (e.g. in-depth interviews). (iii) Why did the authors use two groups to analyse risk factors since each group had the same 152 students (Table 2)? I believe that the 6 students with the addictive use criteria should be removed from the risk behaviour group and the statistics remade, if relevant. (iv) From the analysis of the study design and results the authors cannot prove that addictive video game use is an “emerging problem.”

Literature tells us that only a small percentage of gamers are affected by a disorder. We should never forget that risk without suffering (or in this case unspecified severity) may only work “to enforce more rigid standards of “self-discipline” and “personal responsibility” upon society.”

REFERENCES
Although important to addiction definition, it was not our aim to study living impairment. However, concerning the potential impact we studied the sleeping problems using the Pediatric Daytime Sleepiness Scale and school performance.

We do agree about the interest to study other potential impact variables as we state in the final of the article.

iii) Two groups used in the study

As described in our manuscript the sample is small. We found it important to consider a second group who almost fulfilled the addictive VG criteria showing it is statistically associated with same consequences studied to first group. 

iv) ‘Emerging problem’

We do not state that this is an emergent problem, we made an interrogation that needs more research. As described in our manuscript this condition may not be as stable as predicted by other authors. Besides, we could help other studies to understand better this problem.

We conclude, as in our manuscript, that further studies are needed and it is important to educate our society with concern to this problem.

REFERENCES