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A Study to Assess the Effectiveness of Internet Gaming Disorder Awareness Programme Among School Children at a Selected School, Indore, Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract

Background:
The increasing use of the internet and mobile devices among school-aged children has resulted in the emergence of *Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD)* as a behavioral health concern. Excessive gaming affects physical health, academic performance, and social relationships. Early educational interventions can help increase awareness and reduce the risk of addiction.

Objectives:

1. To assess the pre-test knowledge regarding internet gaming disorder among school children.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the awareness programme on internet gaming disorder.
3. To find an association between post-test knowledge scores and selected demographic variables.

Methodology:
A **quasi-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design** was adopted. The study was conducted among 100 school children aged 13–17 years at a selected school in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. Samples were selected using **simple random sampling**. A structured knowledge questionnaire was used to collect data. After the pre-test, a structured awareness programme including video presentation, discussion, and leaflet distribution was implemented. Post-test was conducted after 7 days. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results:
The mean pre-test knowledge score was **10.85 ± 2.64**, while the mean post-test score was **18.52 ± 3.12**. The **mean difference was 7.67**, and the **t-value (12.47)** was found to be statistically significant at $p < 0.001$. The findings revealed that the awareness programme significantly improved the knowledge of students regarding internet gaming disorder. No significant association was found between post-test knowledge and demographic variables such as age, gender, or type of device used.

Conclusion:
The structured awareness programme was effective in improving the knowledge of school children regarding the negative effects of excessive gaming and preventive strategies for IGD. Educational interventions should be integrated into school health education to promote responsible digital behavior.

Keywords: Internet Gaming Disorder, Awareness Programme, School Children, Behavioral Addiction, Digital Health

Introduction

The digital era has transformed entertainment, education, and communication, but excessive exposure to online gaming has raised new public health challenges. *Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD)* has been recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2019) as a behavioral addiction characterized by impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming over other activities, and continuation of gaming despite negative consequences.

In India, the rapid growth of affordable smartphones and internet access has led to a surge in online gaming among youth. According to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI, 2023), nearly 67% of adolescents spend more than three hours daily on gaming platforms. Such behaviors can cause academic decline, poor sleep, aggression, and social withdrawal.

School children, being in a formative stage of development, are particularly vulnerable. Awareness and preventive education can help modify unhealthy gaming habits and promote balanced digital lifestyles. This study, therefore, aimed to assess the effectiveness of a structured awareness programme on Internet Gaming Disorder among school children in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

Need for the Study

The increasing prevalence of problematic gaming behavior among Indian adolescents calls for early preventive strategies. Research shows that nearly **8–10% of adolescents** exhibit symptoms of gaming addiction (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). Excessive gaming is associated with poor academic performance, aggression, obesity, and disrupted family relationships.

A study by Choi et al. (2018) in South Korea found that students with internet gaming addiction scored lower in school performance and exhibited higher levels of depression and anxiety. Similar trends are emerging in India. Despite this, awareness about IGD and its management remains limited among school children.

Hence, the current study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of an awareness programme in enhancing knowledge and promoting preventive attitudes toward Internet Gaming Disorder.

Objectives

1. To assess the pre-test knowledge regarding Internet Gaming Disorder among school children.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of an awareness programme on Internet Gaming Disorder.
3. To find the association between post-test knowledge scores and selected demographic variables.

Hypotheses

- **H_1:** There will be a significant difference between pre-test and post-test knowledge scores regarding Internet Gaming Disorder among school children.
- **H_2:** There will be a significant association between post-test knowledge scores and selected demographic variables.

Methodology

Research Approach: Quantitative evaluative approach
Research Design: One-group pretest–posttest design
Setting: Selected school, Indore, Madhya Pradesh
Population: School children aged 13–17 years
Sample Size: 100 students
Sampling Technique: Simple random sampling

Tool Used:

A structured knowledge questionnaire was developed by the researcher, validated by experts, and tested for reliability (r = 0.86). It included 25 multiple-choice items covering:

- Meaning and definition of IGD
- Causes and risk factors
- Signs and symptoms
- Physical and psychological impacts
- Preventive and management strategies

Intervention:
A 45-minute structured awareness programme was conducted using PowerPoint presentation, short video, and leaflet distribution. The programme covered the definition, causes, ill effects, and preventive strategies of IGD.

Data Collection Procedure:

- **Day 1:** Pre-test knowledge assessment
- **Day 2:** Implementation of awareness programme
- **Day 7:** Post-test using the same questionnaire

Data Analysis:

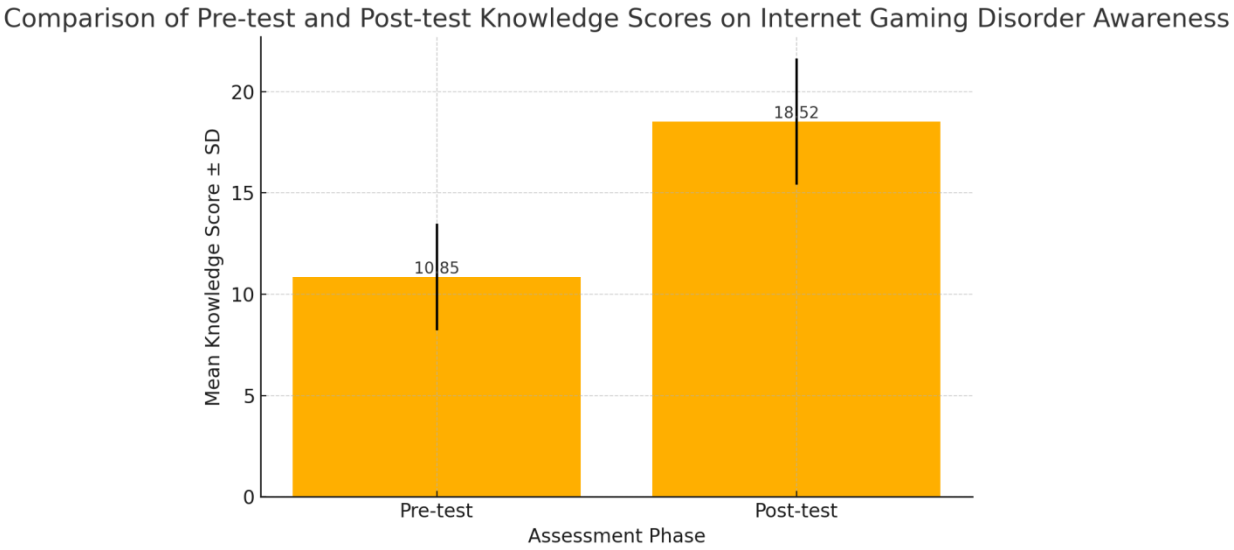
Data were analyzed using SPSS software.

- Descriptive statistics: Frequency, percentage, mean, and SD
- Inferential statistics: Paired t-test for effectiveness, chi-square test for associations.

Results

Variable	Mean ± SD	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Pre-test Knowledge Score	10.85 ± 2.64	7.67	12.47	< 0.001
Post-test Knowledge Score	18.52 ± 3.12			

Interpretation:
The calculated *t-value (12.47)* was greater than the table value ($p < 0.001$), indicating a highly significant improvement in knowledge after the awareness programme.



Association:
No significant association was found between post-test knowledge and demographic variables such as age, gender, class, or type of gaming device used ($p > 0.05$).

Discussion

The findings reveal that the structured awareness programme significantly improved students' knowledge about Internet Gaming Disorder. This supports similar studies conducted internationally and nationally.

A study by Pontes et al. (2019) in Portugal showed that psychoeducation interventions effectively reduced gaming hours and increased awareness among adolescents. Similarly, Bhatia & Singh (2021) found that educational sessions significantly improved awareness of gaming addiction among Indian school students.

The present study confirms that knowledge-based interventions can serve as a preventive tool to combat digital addiction in the early stages.

Conclusion

The structured awareness programme was effective in enhancing knowledge regarding Internet Gaming Disorder among school children. Schools and parents should collaborate to monitor screen time, encourage outdoor activities, and conduct regular digital wellness sessions.

Recommendations

1. Conduct similar studies with larger sample sizes across different regions.
2. Include behavioral assessment along with knowledge evaluation.
3. Implement awareness programmes as part of school health curricula.
4. Organize parent–teacher workshops to promote responsible gaming habits at home.

Limitations

- The study was limited to one school in Indore.
- Short follow-up period.
- Self-reported data may include response bias.

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