Are Computers Addictive?

Ivy Walker

Research Questions

- What does it mean for computers to be addictive?
  - usage behaviors, not the physical machine

- Are individuals becoming addicted to how they use computers (internet, gaming, social media)?

What is computer addiction?

- **Behavior addiction** is a form of addiction that involves a compulsion to engage in a rewarding non-substance-related behavior despite negative consequences to an individuals physical and mental health and well-being.
  - **ex.** internet use, video gaming, gambling, and social media

- **Symptoms** include tolerance, withdrawal, loss of control, and continued use despite harm.

Computer-Related Addiction

The Center for Internet and Technology Addiction

Dr. Jenni Jacobsen

- Over 50% of Americans believe they are addicted to their phones.
- Nearly 35% of the population has an internet addiction.
- Up to 60% of teens show signs of cell phone addiction.

Why are computers and computer use addictive?

- **Dopamine feedback loops** in games/social media
- **Instant gratification**
- **Infinite content** and constant novelty

Arguments against the addiction label

- Not everyone who uses computers heavily is addicted.

- High use does not automatically result in addiction if it's controlled and productive.

- Some argue it's a symptom of deeper issues.
    - ex. anxiety or loneliness

Conclusions

- Some computer use can be addictive, especially when linked to specific applications like games or social media platforms.

- Computers are essential, but design choices and user behavior can foster compulsive use.

- Balance, awareness, and healthy habits are key.

Literature Cited

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