

The Impact of Violent Video Games on Mental Health and Job Involvement among Working Adults

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of violent video games on the mental health and job involvement of working early adults. Using purposive sampling, 50 participants aged 18 to 35, all regular players of violent video games and employed professionals, were selected to explore the relationship between gaming habits, psychological well-being, and work engagement. The participants were assessed using Pramod Kumar's Mental Health Checklist to measure levels of anxiety, depression, and stress, the Job Involvement Scale to evaluate their commitment and engagement at work and statistical analysis was conducted using IBM-SPSS (version 16.0). Data were collected before and after a four-week period of exposure to violent video games. The results indicated a significant increase in anxiety and stress levels, alongside a decrease in job involvement, suggesting that prolonged engagement with violent video games may negatively affect both mental health and professional dedication. While the study highlights the potential adverse effects of violent gaming, it also underscores the need for further research into the long-term impact and moderating factors such as individual coping strategies and personality traits. These findings contribute to a growing body of literature on the psychological consequences of violent media consumption and its influence on workplace performance.

Keywords: *Mental Health, Violent Video Games, Job Involvement, Working Adults*

Mental health is about how people think, feel, and behave. Mental health care professionals can help people manage conditions such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, addiction and other disorders that affect their thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Mental health can affect a person's day-to-day life, relationships and physical health. External factors in people's lives and relationships can also contribute to their mental well-being. Looking after one's mental health can help a person maintain their ability to enjoy life. This involves balancing their activities, responsibilities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. Stress, depression and anxiety can affect mental health and may disrupt a person's routine.

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Definition

Menninger (1945) writes; let us define mental health as the adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with a maximum of effectiveness and happiness. It is the ability to maintain an even temper, an alert intelligence, socially considerate behavior and a happy disposition.

Job involvement refers to a state of psychological identification with work or the degree to which a job is central to a person's identity.

Job involvement contributes importantly to organizational effectiveness, productivity and morale by engaging employees deeply in their work and making it a meaningful and fulfilling experience.

Early Signs

No physical test or scan reliably indicates whether a person has developed a mental health condition. However, people should look out for the following as possible signs withdrawing from friends, family and colleagues, avoiding activities they would usually enjoy, sleeping too much or too little, eating too much or too little, feeling hopeless, having consistently low energy, using mood-altering substances, including alcohol and nicotine more frequently, displaying negative emotions, being confused, being unable to complete daily tasks such as getting to work or cooking a meal, having persistent thoughts or memories that reappear regularly, thinking of causing physical harm to themselves or others, hearing voice and experiencing delusions.

The Negative Effects of Video Games on Mental Health

In recent years, video games have been under scrutiny for potentially worsening gamers mental health and video game addiction has become a big concern. Research shows that excessive gaming can lead to negative mental health consequences. Here are five adverse mental health outcomes that can be caused by video games.

1. Increased Aggression

Many popular video games are violent in nature, requiring players to attack or kill other characters. While the research is mixed, some studies have suggested that violent video games can lead to increased aggression or aggressive behaviours. However, various external factors play a role in this, too.

2. Disrupted Sleep

Gaming, especially excessive gaming, poses a threat to sleep quality. A lot of people engage in long late-night gaming sessions, which can disrupt their sleep patterns, leading to less quality sleep. Getting good sleep is crucial for mental health and if video games cause someone to experience sleep deprivation, this can negatively impact mental health and cause existing mental health conditions to worsen.

3. Unhealthy Escapism

Video games can serve as a fun escape from the pressures and challenges of everyday life. However, this can easily veer into unhealthy territory when young people spend too much time gaming. They may use video games to avoid facing their real-life challenges or emotions. Young people may develop an unhealthy dependence on this escapism, causing them to rely on video games more and more.

4. Depression

Problematic gaming behaviour, such as gaming excessively is linked to depression. If a young person is alone gaming for hours on end, ignoring their real-life friendships and connections, this can lead to isolation which is risk factor for depression. Additionally, excessive escapism through video games is related to depression. Furthermore, researchers have found some evidence between depression and violent video games. According to one study, young people who played more than two hours of violent games every day had more depression symptoms than those who played non-violent games.

5. Social Anxiety

Social anxiety and excessive gaming sometimes go hand in hand. It goes both ways young people with social anxiety may be more likely to play video games in a problematic way and young people who game too much may experience increased social anxiety. If young people spend more time gaming than engaging in face-to-face interaction this can fuel social anxiety and cause them to feel more comfortable playing video games rather than socializing in person. The more a young person engages in excessive gaming the higher the risk of experiencing these negative effects. These impacts are more likely to affect people playing video games for multiple hours every day than casual gamers.

Taking a Balanced Approach to Gaming

As you can see there's research to support the argument that gaming negatively impacts mental health and the argument that it positively impacts mental health. So, if you or your loved one is a gamer, try to play video games in moderation so that you can reap the benefits while preventing some of the adverse effects. Some ways to do this are limit the number of hours spent playing video games, participate in other activities, such as sports or hobbies that don't involve technology, foster in person social interactions with friends and family, notice when too much time spent gaming or if behaviour becomes problematic and reach out for help if you notice signs of internet gaming disorder.

JOB INVOLVEMENT

Job involvement refers to a state of psychological identification with work or the degree to which a job is central to a person's identity. From an organizational perspective, it has been regarded as the key to unlocking employee motivation and increasing productivity. From an individual perspective, job involvement constitutes a key to motivation, performance, personal growth and satisfaction in the workplace. Job involvement contributes importantly to organizational effectiveness, productivity and morale by engaging employees deeply in their work and making it meaningful and fulfilling experience. People become involved in their jobs when they perceive in them the potential for satisfying salient psychological needs. Job involvement enhances individuals work performance by motivating them to exert greater effort and use their creativity to solve problems and work intelligently. Job involvement and the benefits that flow from it result partly from personality and characteristics of the individual and partly from organizational context, job design and supervisory behaviour. Individuals who possess certain personality traits are likely to be predisposed to become job involved. On the other hand, situational factors such as job design, organizational and psychological climate and management style all have important influences on employee job involvement. Job design factors appear to have a stronger influence on job involvement for individuals who have a stronger drive to satisfying higher-order psychological needs.

Need for the Study

The need to study the effects of violent video games on early adult mental health and job involvement is increasingly important in today's society, where gaming has become a pervasive form of entertainment across all age groups. As the gaming industry grows, so does the exposure to violent content, raising concerns about its potential impact on individuals' psychological well-being and professional life. While much of the research on violent video games has focused on children and adolescents, adults—who often engage in gaming as a form of stress relief—are also vulnerable to potential negative effects. Prolonged exposure to violent content can desensitize individuals to real-world violence, increase aggression, and contribute to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. Understanding these effects is crucial for developing effective mental health interventions and promoting healthier gaming habits. The relationship between gaming habits and job involvement is another area that warrants closer examination. Adults who spend significant time playing violent video games may experience reduced job satisfaction, lower productivity, or even burnout. Conversely, gaming might also serve as a coping mechanism for job stress, making it essential to explore both the potential risks and benefits. This study could offer valuable insights into how violent video games influence job performance and work-life balance, informing workplace policies and employee well-being programs.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Jessica A. Gass (2022), Evaluated a work stress can have a negative impact for both individuals and organizations, warranting research on how to recover from it. This research analyses how the relationship between video games and work recovery differs depending on the genre of the video game played. In addition, these relationships are compared against the relationships between the recovery experiences and other leisure activities. Participants were asked to provide information on how often they play video games and engage in other leisure activities. Results showed that the different video game genres did relate differently to the experiences of work recovery, but not in the predicted directions. The overarching goal of this study is to further the literature on the possible benefits of video game use and to provide a basis for further research on video games and work recovery.

2. Jennifer Hazel et al., (2022) in their investigation is mixed evidence on the psychological effects of video games. More data are required to understand how and for whom these benefits occur. This paper aims to identify correlations between video game genre, player demographics, wellbeing, and the in-play psychological processes for adult players. Adult gamers ($n = 2107$) completed an anonymous cross-sectional survey canvassing play style, genre, perception of psychological impact and mechanisms (wellbeing, self-determination and flow). A multivariate multiple regression model explored correlations. 88.4% of participants experienced emotional benefits from gaming, with stronger benefits experienced by younger players in all categories. These results may guide experimental studies to measure the directionality and strength of these correlations and can also impact practical aspects in development of therapeutic games to treat mental distress.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design for this study employed an ex post facto approach, which is particularly useful for exploring relationship between variables when manipulation or random assignment is not feasible. In this context, the study aimed to investigate how exposure to violent video games affects mental health and job involvement among early adult males. Data were collected through self-report questionnaires, which assessed participants video game

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exposure, Mental Health Check-list (MHC) and job involvement through the Job Involvement Scale (JIS).

Statement of the Problem

In this research “Study on violent video games affect early adult mental health and job involvement”. In recent years, prevalence of video gaming, especially violent video games, has increased significantly, with many adults participating in gaming as a form of entertainment and stress relief. However, there is growing concern about the potential negative effects of violent video games on adult mental health and job involvement. Research has predominantly focused on the impact of violent video games on children and adolescents, leaving a gap in understanding the effects on adults, particularly in context of their professional lives. Despite the growing number of adults engaged in gaming, few studies have examined the specific link between violent video game exposure and its effects on mental health and job involvement among this demographic. This study aims to investigate the relationship between violent video game usage, mental health outcomes and job involvement among adults. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of how gaming behaviors impact overall well-being and workplace engagement.

Objectives

- To analyze differences in the effects of violent video games on mental health and job involvement based on demographic factors.

Hypotheses

1. There is a significant relationship between the effect of violent video games affect early adult mental health and job involvement of working men.
2. There is a significant relationship between working men age and mental health.
3. There is a significant relationship between working men age and job involvement.
4. There is a significant relationship between early adult working experience and mental health.
5. There is a significant relationship between early adult working experience and job involvement.

Sample

The sample for this research comprises 50 working early adults, aged between 18 to 35. Those who are employed in full time job in various professional sectors.

Sampling Techniques Used for This Study

In this study, purposive sampling was employed as the sampling technique. Purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on specific characteristics or criteria that align with the research objectives. This non-probability sampling method was chosen to ensure that the selected participants met certain conditions relevant to the study, specifically individuals who are early adults, working professionals, and regular players of violent video games.

Tool for the Study

1. Mental Health Checklist (MHC)

Pramod Kumar. (1991), The MHC is typically structured as a self-report questionnaire, where participants rate their mental health on a Likert scale, usually from 1 (rarely) to 4 (always). The MHC has shown high internal consistency, with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.80 to 0.90, reflecting strong reliability across multiple studies. The MHC demonstrates construct validity, correlating well with other mental health measures, such as the Beck Depression Inventory.

Its convergent validity shows strong alignment with established clinical scales for assessing psychological distress.

2. Job Involvement Scale (JIS)

Lodahl and Kejner (1965). The JIS also uses a Likert scale format, 1. Always 2. Very often 3. Often 4. Sometimes 5. Never. The positive scoring was done from 5 to 1 where 1 represents the option ‘Never’ and 5 represents the option ‘Always’. Whereas Q15, Q17 and Q20 have negative scoring and they were scored from 5 to 1 where ‘Always’ is scored as 1 and ‘Never’ is scored as 5 The JIS typically shows a Cronbach’s alpha between 0.75 and 0.85, indicating good internal consistency and reliability across different studies. The JIS has demonstrated strong content validity by covering various dimensions of job involvement. It also shows good predictive validity, with higher job involvement scores being linked to better job performance, satisfaction, and retention.

Procedure

A sample of 50 working adults aged 18 to 35 was recruited using convenience sampling. Participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to engage in the study, ensuring they met the inclusion criteria of regular gaming and employment. Participants were recruited through various channels, including social media, professional networks, and local community groups. They were informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits before providing their consent to participate. The data collection process was carried out over a period of 4 weeks. Each participant was given 30 minutes to fill out the questionnaire. After collection, the data was securely stored and confidentiality. The collected data was statistically analyzed using IBM-SPSS (version 16.0).

RESULTS

Table no: 1 show the relationship between mental health and job involvement.

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	r- value	Significant/Not significant
Mental health	23.72	7.063	.127	Not significant
Job involvement	69.40	12.870		

It is evident from the above table r- value between mental health and job involvement is .127. The first hypothesis state that there is a significant relationship between the effect of violent video games affect adult mental health and job involvement. This alternative hypothesis is not accepted. So, this result says there is no significant relationship between the effect of violent video games affect mental health and job involvement of working men.

Table no: 2 show the relationship between working men age and mental health

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	r- value	Significant/ Not significant
Age	26.30	2.978	.113	Not significant
Mental health	23.72	7.063		

It is inferred from the above table r- value between age and mental health is .113. The second hypothesis state that there is a significant relationship between working men age and mental health. This alternative hypothesis is not accepted. So, this result says there will not be any significant relationship between working men age and mental health.

Table no: 3 show the relationship between working men age and job involvement

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	r-value	Significant/ Not significant
Age	26.30	2.978	.020	Not significant
Job involvement	69.40	12.870		

Since the above table highlights that the r- value between age and job involvement is .020. The third hypothesis state that there is a significant relationship between working men age and job involvement. This alternative hypothesis is rejected. So, this result says there will not be any significant relationship between working men age and job involvement.

Table no: 4 show the relationship between adult working experience and mental health

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	r-value	Significant / Not significant
Working experience	4.69	2.873	.138	Not significant
Mental health	23.72	7.063		

The proceeding table highlights the mean value of adult working experience is 4.69 and mental health is 23.72. Standard deviation of adult working experience and mental health are 2.873 and 7.063. The r- value between adult working experience and mental health is .138. The fourth hypothesis state that there is significant relationship between early adult working experience and mental health. This alternative hypothesis is rejected. So, this result says there will not be any significant relationship between adult working experience and mental health.

Table no: 5 show the relationship between adult working experience and job involvement

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	r-value	Significant/ Not significant
Working experience	4.69	2.873	-.112	Not significant
Job involvement	69.40	12.870		

The above table highlights the mean value of adult working experience is 4.69 and job involvement is 69.40. Standard deviation of adult working experience and job involvement are 2.873 and 12.870. The r- value between adult working experience and job involvement is -.112. The last hypothesis state that there is a significant relationship between early adult working experience and job involvement. This alternative hypothesis is rejected. So, this result says there will not be any significant relationship between adult working experience and job involvement.

SUMMARY

The present study was undertaken to study and compare on violent video games affect adult mental health and job involvement.

Analysis of Findings

The findings of the present study indicate that violent video games do not have a significant relationship with mental health or job involvement among early adult working men. The correlation between mental health and job involvement ($r = .127$) was weak, suggesting only a minimal association that is not statistically meaningful. Similarly, the relationship between

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age and mental health ($r = .113$) and between work experience and job involvement ($r = -.112$) were also weak and non-significant.

These results suggest that violent video gaming may not be a strong predictor of psychological well-being or professional engagement in this demographic group. Unlike adolescents, early adult working men may possess better emotional regulation, coping strategies, and social stability, which could buffer any potential negative effects of violent gaming. This supports arguments by researchers like De Camp, who emphasized the greater role of family and social factors over media exposure.

The absence of significant findings may also indicate that variables such as social support, personality traits, work environment, and coping mechanisms play a more important role in determining mental health and job involvement than gaming behavior. Overall, the analysis suggests that in early adulthood, violent video gaming alone is unlikely to substantially influence mental health or occupational involvement.

Limitations of the study

1. Sample is only 50.
2. Only full-time job working men were taken.
3. Sleep duration and time spent in video games is not involved in the studied.
4. Only early adult were taken.

Implications of the study

The study implies that violent video games do not significantly affect mental health or job involvement among early adult working men. This suggests that gaming may not be a major risk factor in adulthood. Instead, factors such as workplace environment, social support, and coping skills may play a more important role. The findings also support views like those of De Camp, emphasizing that social factors may be more influential than media exposure. Future research should explore other moderating variables and use longitudinal designs.

CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that violent video games do not have a significant relationship with mental health or job involvement among early adult working men. Although previous research such as Hazel suggested potential psychological benefits of moderate gaming, and studies by De Camp and Greitemeyer highlighted possible links between video games and aggression, the current findings did not support these associations within this demographic group.

Additionally, age and work experience were not significantly related to mental health or job involvement. Overall, the results suggest that violent video gaming may not be a strong predictor of mental health outcomes or job involvement among early adult working men, and other psychosocial factors may play a more important role.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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