**The prevalence of internet addiction and video games among Iraqi people in 2022**

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**Abstract**:

**Background**: Internet Addiction Disorder, in addition to other dependency disorders, seem to affect the pleasure center of the brain. The addictive behavior triggers a release of dopamine to promote the pleasurable experience activating the release of this chemical. Over time, more and more of the activity is needed to induce the same pleasurable response, creating a dependency. That is, if you find online gaming or online shopping a pleasurable activity and you suffer from an addiction to the Internet, you will need to engage in more and more of the behavior to institute the same pleasurable feeling prior to your dependency.

**Methodology**: It is a cross sectional study conducted among 2500 participants (more than 18 years) distributed on all the Iraqi provinces including both males and females. The questionnaire contains demographic questions and an internet addiction special validated questionnaire in Arabic language.

**Results**: 2500 participants from 18 provinces were included with mean age of 35 years. 43% were females and the rest were males. About 87% of them were considered as internet addicts, mostly were females and about 76% were video games addicts (mostly males). There were statistically significant differences between the addiction and the age, occupation, educational level and the socioeconomic status. Baghdad, Najaf, Karbala and Basra have the highest level of addiction for the video games. Only 7% of them considered this behavior as an addiction.

**Conclusion**: Creating an even more problematic interaction is the fact that everything is online nowadays. It’s hard to make a distinction between online and offline worlds. Everything is Internet-based. From ordering food, interacting with friends, playing games, and even watching tv. Adding an additional layer of confusion and distinction is that other digital technology is taking over the world as well – make access to computers even easier.

**Keywords**: Internet addiction; video games; misuse; emotion; Iraq; social isolation