

THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF COMPUTER GAMES ON HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY

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Abstract: *The international popularity of computer games includes the notion that they have inspired films, music, literature, and fashion compositions. Computer games play an important role in developing logical thinking, strategic planning, and problem solving. . These games also help in developing analytical skills and improving memory. As computer games become more popular, so do social problems. Issues of gaming addiction, influence on aggressive behavior, and social isolation become the subject of discussion and research. In this case, it is important to use the pros and cons.*

Key words: *Computer games, addiction to computer games, internet, pros and cons of computer games.*

In the last decade, computer games have undergone remarkable changes that have revolutionized not only entertainment but also cultural development. With rapid technological advancement and the expansion of the Internet, games have become an integral part of millions of people's daily lives. In this context, what is the significance of computer games and their impact on society, culture, and new ways of thinking?

Games as Forms of Entertainment: In the early days, games like Pong and Space Invaders emerged with clear markers for all ages. Thus, gaming has evolved from just a pastime to an essential element of social activity. Many multiplayer games bring together players from various corners of the world in a virtual space.

Educational Potential: Computer games also hold significant educational potential. Many games require players to develop logical thinking, strategic planning, and problem-solving skills. For example, puzzle and strategy genres help enhance analytical skills and improve memory.

Impact on Culture: Computer games have become an inseparable part of modern culture. They inspire compositions in films, music, literature, and even fashion. The gaming industry attracts talented artists, musicians, and scriptwriters, representing various cultures.

Technological Advancements: Games often emerge with technological innovations. The quest for better graphics, virtual reality, and immersive gaming experiences drives the development of computer technologies. The results and achievements contribute to enhancing the gaming experience, applying knowledge, and creating advancements in other fields.

Social Issues: As games become more widespread, social issues also arise. Problems such as gaming addiction, the impact on aggressive behavior, and social isolation become subjects of

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discussion and research. In this case, a balanced approach, considering both positive and negative aspects, is crucial.

Today's computer games are not merely a form of entertainment but a vital element of modern culture and technological advancement. They influence our way of thinking, enrich our knowledge, and promote social activity. Understanding the impact of online computer games is essential for actively engaging in the creation of a healthy and diverse culture. However, like any positive phenomenon, there are negative aspects as well. Some games have the potential to negatively affect the minds of the emerging younger generation. Every individual should be able to distinguish between good and bad based on their worldview and strive to avoid negative aspects.

Games are enjoyable, but they also have side effects. Often, computer games depict military actions or battles, which can lead to aggression, irritability, and anger after spending a long time playing. Sometimes, these emotions can significantly affect one's behavior and social relationships. Furthermore, individuals who have previously experienced misfortune or psychological trauma, such as problems at work or school, might be more susceptible to gaming addiction. Virtual reality allows individuals to escape their problems by engaging in tasks that distract them from their real-life issues. You immerse yourself in the game and start to forget about everything in the real world. This leads to the conclusion that while games are not inherently bad, moderation is key. Scholars recommend limiting gameplay to 3-4 hours a day, suggesting that maintaining balance is crucial.

However, there are positive aspects to computer games as well. Consider educational programs, styles, and games. For instance, computer simulators are used for training pilots, doctors, and other professionals. Games are also utilized in early childhood education to develop attention and cognitive skills, with puzzles, mazes, and other types of activities. Additionally, there are programs for creating things, such as music, films/animations, and other games. For example, certain music genres like dubstep, trance, and others might be influenced by the effects of computer games.

Moreover, some games have health benefits. For example, certain games help treat strabismus, with one such game called Diplopia. This game uses contrast in visuals to help users learn to see the world with both eyes. Alabama has also created a game controller that integrates gaming and physical exercise, featuring numerous buttons for running paths. The creators of this project aim to attract not only gamers but also individuals dealing with overweight issues.

To explore the impact of computer games, I conducted a survey among enthusiasts and their friends. The survey results are primarily presented in tabular form. After analyzing the data, I found that people play computer games frequently, indicating their popularity. The survey also shows that individuals aged 12 to 18 are the primary players. Entertainment games appear to be more popular than educational ones. Most respondents indicated that computer games do not distract them from their studies or work and do not negatively impact their minds, although this is difficult to judge conclusively.

The future of computer games is promising, with potential for further development and impact on society. Whether this impact will be positive or negative remains uncertain. Time will reveal the true effects. Based on research, computer games seem to have a promising future. We can only speculate about what lies ahead. It seems that the popularity of computer games will continue to rise, and they might become central to scientific research. Games may be used for creating material objects, educational programs, and other benefits in their original form. Of course, this is my

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subjective opinion. When discussing the future, one cannot ignore the present. Currently, in some countries, computer games are recognized as a modern art form, and research work in this field has begun, even leading to the development of academic disciplines like video game philosophy.

To be honest, I have learned a lot about the world of computer games. I did not think it was so diverse and multifaceted; the information I have gathered has amazed me. Consequently, I would say that perhaps I might engage in playing computer games: which games to play, their types, and small games were surveyed and discussed, and the future development of computer games was considered. It is essential to remember: do not misuse time on computer games, and do not replace real life with the virtual one. Avoid getting lost in computer reality; problems need to be solved in the real world. Play, but not excessively. Remember the time, and try to follow the rules for gaming. It might be helpful to organize your time, actions, and establish some control over yourself.

In schools, communities, and families, discussions often arise about computer games: are they harmful or beneficial? Today, many children are passionately interested in computers and especially computer games. In games, they have the opportunity to be active participants and influence the events in the virtual world. Unfortunately, parents do not always fully understand their role in this issue. However, returning to reality, they often lose sight of their responsibilities. Many people have enjoyed playing computer games since they were 4-5 years old or older. Boys particularly enjoy playing various "shooting" games, which often involve violence, blood, battles, screams, and other intense elements.

Computer games can obstruct positive personal development, making children immoral, smooth, cruel, and selfish. Children might enact violence on the streets, experiencing nightmares at night, and trying to replicate the actions. This is a specific degree of concentration on either internal or external world objects. In computer games, attention is focused on repetitive, stereotypical actions (running and shooting) on the screen. The sense of real time is lost, and the child may be compared to a trance state. If a child spends long hours playing games, only violence and brutality may be involved, and people act in the role of victims. This gradually deteriorates their consciousness and can result in them being less aware of the consequences. An unconscious attitude towards violence might sharply reduce the psychological barriers against such actions in real life.

If a child cannot detach from the screen for several hours, there is an issue of being "hooked." Meanwhile, the child's interaction with people is limited, and communication skills deteriorate, which is necessary for normal mental and social development. Excessive work in front of the monitor and prolonged use can even affect the nervous system negatively. Therefore, sanitary norms should be respected. Special attention should be given to minimal organic damage to the nervous system (associated with pathological development during pregnancy and the pathological course of childbirth in the early months of life). Such children may be careless, hyperactive, or, conversely, slow and lethargic. Their nervous system experiences the necessary protective response - trance. The process of obtaining information and developing computer addiction progresses more rapidly. However, it is crucial to consider the physical health and mental well-being of children. Researchers have proven that large doses of computer games can lead to chronic stress and its effects on the body.

How do computer games ("toys") affect a child's mental development and identity?

There are many commercial computer games in the cognitive and educational domain. These games expand horizons and general awareness, developing logical thinking, visual perception,

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reaction speed, and mental skills in children. However, alongside these games, there are many "shooting," "combat," "warrior," and "strategy" games. These also contribute to the development of individual skills but can have a negative impact on a child's psyche. Nonetheless, most children prefer these aggressive cognitive and educational games over others.

Despite this, children may feel like "cool" and powerful superheroes while playing these games. Nearly all of these games have age restrictions displayed on their covers. However, how many people actually consider these restrictions? And parents often do not think about these issues at all. Can computer games be harmful? It turns out that they can be significantly so. Psychological research, particularly by domestic scholars, indicates that Western commercial computer games prevalent in today's market may elevate aggressive and individualistic behavior in children. The role of the main character, controlling the screen or placing weapons on the display's lower panel, often leaves the child frozen with virtual victims.

In many of these games, the number of "kills" and "injuries" is used as a quantitative indicator of the player's achievements: the more victims, the higher the score, which gratifies the child. All of this rapidly affects their consciousness, leading to distorted beliefs: "I am against everyone!", "The more I kill, the better!" Games that promote violence and crude language are prevalent. Some researchers believe that these "toys" provide an outlet for children to express aggression and cruelty, potentially offering a way to release pent-up anger and frustration.

However, children who engage in games with peers or more serious games often compare violent situations in real life with those seen in games or on television. As a rule, aggressive reactions are most prominently displayed in adolescents, but they can be ingrained during childhood.

Young students often imitate heroes from movies and TV channels, where aggression is typically rewarded and the winner appears in a heroic light. Children are inclined not only to become familiar with personal victims or aggressors but also to transfer these roles to real-life situations. Additionally, after watching numerous scenes of violence, children might become indifferent to cruelty and aggression. Finally, children, especially the youngest ones, may start to see violence as a model for behavior and problem-solving.

Researchers have found that computer games stimulate certain parts of children's brains, which means children might benefit from more reading, writing, and engaging with math. Additionally, it is beneficial for children to play outside and interact with other children as much as possible. For example, sports like football are often replaced with FIFA simulators. This presents a problem: society does not pay adequate attention to this issue, and virtual worlds are increasingly engrossing more and more people, leading to addiction.

How can we help children escape from "virtual captivity"? It is necessary to limit time spent on computers and games since prolonged periods in front of a monitor can negatively impact a child's physical well-being. This includes vision problems, spine issues, hand problems, mental state, sleep disturbances, and information overload. Even the most advanced modern monitors, which are considered safe, still exert considerable strain on children's vision and posture. Considering these sanitary and hygienic requirements, it is recommended that:

- Children should spend no more than 30 minutes at a time on a computer.

- Younger children (under school age) should use computers for no more than 40 minutes per day.
- School-aged children and teenagers should spend no more than one hour per day on computers.

With the advent of computers came computer games, which quickly gained popularity. Games that children play at home have accompanied the younger generation, contributing to both the development of the musculoskeletal system and the decline in physical activity, as well as the rapid development of intellect, logical thinking, and imagination. Computer players used to move from one virtual world to another, quickly adapting to unfamiliar situations. In the rapidly changing society of the 21st century, intellectual adaptability ensures the ability to cope with new and unexpected realities. Thus, computer games serve the function of socialization for youth in a post-industrial society.

The development and improvement of games are closely linked to supporting computer technology and its advancement. Nowadays, many games are designed with the latest computer components in mind. For example, expensive video cards can cost as much as half of a satisfactory office computer. All games are developed with the latest computer equipment and technologies, striving to meet all the advancements and achieve realism in graphics and sound. To this day, there are excellent games with impressive graphics and sound effects that closely mimic real life. Additionally, there are many companies offering new and innovative games.

1. **Computer Games:** Like any other equipment, computers are generally safe. However, similar to other household appliances, there are health risks associated with their use. Considering the health impact of computers, we note several risk factors. These include:

Potential Problems Associated with Computer Use:

- **Electromagnetic Radiation Issues**
- **Vision Problems**
- **Muscle and Joint Issues**
- **Sleep Disturbances, Stress, and Nervous Disorders**
- **Respiratory Issues**

In each of these cases, the level of risk is proportional to the amount of time spent on the computer and in close proximity to it.

Extended computer use can affect mental health, which is already sensitive to psychological influences and chronic stress. Problems may arise from a lack of information or issues with certain programs. Additionally, research has shown that stress related to computer use, particularly on the internet, can lead to increased alcohol consumption. Therefore, either we face mental health issues or alcoholism, or both.

Another significant factor is the nervous emotional tension experienced by children. It is well-known that interaction with gaming programs can lead to high levels of nervous tension due to the rapid responses required. Short-term concentration of nervous processes can lead to fatigue. Working on a computer can induce emotional stress. Our studies indicate that even the anticipation of a game can lead to a significant increase in the levels of adrenal cortex hormones.

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Any advancement in science or technology, while undeniably bringing positive changes, also brings unavoidable negative aspects. The issue of computerization in society involves several factors that affect human health. Therefore, it is crucial to assess the impact of information technologies on human health. Recently, concerns have been raised about the harmful effects of modern information technology, including computers, on the body.

The safety level of computer equipment for users varies according to international standards, which have been enforced rigorously over the years. Recent research by scientists has shown that computer technology can negatively affect the human body if basic hygiene standards related to work and rest are not followed. Studying the impact on human health helps develop guidelines and measures to reduce and prevent such effects.

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