Screening Tools for Technological Addictions: A Proposal for the Strategy of Mental Health

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## Sample

Two groups of participants were selected for each technology: a) users of Internet/social network, mobile or video games without psychological problems due to the use of these technologies, and b)
people who sought counselling or advice for their addictive problems with some of these
technologies.
In the case of Internet, the sample was composed by 139 people younger than 31 years of
age (87 women, 52 men): 59 needed help or advice due to their problems with Internet
addiction (social networks), whereas the other 80 users had no problem with the use of social
networks. For the screening of video games addiction, the participants were 117 people
younger than 31 years of age (57 women, 60 men): 40 sought help or advice due to their
problems with video game addiction, whereas 77 users had no problem with the use of video
games. Finally, 226 people younger than 31 years of age (140 women, 86 men): 96 sought
help or advice due to their problem with mobile phone addiction, whereas 130 users had no
problem with the use of mobile phones.

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

The emergence of addictive problems associated with the development of Information
and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is a challenge for mental health in modern
societies. For this reason, the Spanish Mental Health Strategy, currently in project, includes the
problem of Bemerging addictions^ in young people, in the 14 mental health topics to be
analysed. The main objective of this research was to develop three screening tools that can be
used by health staff (e.g., psychologists, physicians) to better link early detection with early
intervention in the field of technological addictions. In this paper, three kind of technological
addictions were selected: Internet/social networks, mobile and video games. Two groups of
participants were selected for each technology: a) users of Internet/social network, mobile or
video games without psychological problems due to the use of these technologies, and b)
people who sought counselling or advice for their addictive problems with some of these
technologies. Three screening tools for each technological addiction (Internet/social network,
mobile and video games) were developed. These tools consist on the two items of each of the
tests which have the highest Positive Predictive Values (PPV) to differentiate between the nonproblematic
users of technologies and those who have an addictive problem with Internet,
mobile or video games. This article shows three screening tools that can be used by health or
clinical staff, in the case that the professional supposes that the patient has an addictive
problem with any of the three technologies. Then, the screening procedure should be implemented.
If the diagnostic of addiction is confirmed, the patient should be treated with
psychological treatment based in evidence. Some advices are also proposed for those who
do not need any specialized intervention for addiction.

# Outcome

In this paper, three kind of technological addictions were selected: Internet/social networks, mobile and video games.
The main objective of this work is to develop several screening tools for technological
addictions (Internet/social networks, mobile and video games). These instruments can be
used by professionals of health (e.g., psychologists, physicians) in order to early detection
of technological addictions. Depending on the results of the screening tests, the own
professional could advise to young, or direct them to specialized treatment and assistance
centre of addiction.