A descriptive pilot survey of behavioural addictions in an adolescent secondary school population in Ireland

# Keywords

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* internet addiction
* game addiction

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## Topics

## Sample

A total of 234 children participated in the survey (156 males; aged 12–18 years; average age of 14.2 years; S.D. 1.60).

## Implications For Parents About

Parental practices / parental mediation

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Stepping up awareness and empowerment

# Abstract

The aim of the present study was to evaluate the levels of possible internet addiction, gaming addiction, gambling addiction and associated mental health difficulties in a secondary school population in Ireland. An online survey containing questions related to internet addiction, gaming addiction, gambling addiction and associated mental health difficulties was administered to secondary school adolescents in Ireland. Participants were self-selecting and answered questions on the characteristics of each topic and screening questionnaires for addiction to each behaviour, as well as their respective effects on mental health.
 A total of 234 children participated in the survey (156 males; aged 12–18 years; average age of 14.2 years; S.D. 1.60). Internet addiction as assessed using the Chen Internet Addiction Scale was present for between 11.5% and 22.6% and levels of gaming addiction as assessed using by the Internet Gaming Disorder Scale–Short Form was present for between 0.5% and 1.6%. Weak positive correlations were found between time spent on the internet and time spent gaming with internet addiction and gaming addiction, respectively. There were weak positive correlations between higher internet addiction scores, higher gaming addiction scores, and increased depression and anxiety scores. Using the South Oaks Gambling Screen–Revised for Adolescents, two participants were classed as ‘at-risk’ for gambling addiction and one participant was classed as a problem gambler.

 The present study examined behavioural addictions and their effects on mental health on a self-selecting sample of schoolchildren at two schools in Ireland. A low number were identified as being at risk or problem gamblers.

# Outcome

The present study examined behavioural addictions and their effects on mental health on a self-selecting sample of schoolchildren at two schools in Ireland. A low number were identified as being at risk or problem gamblers