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PSYCH > Vol.3 No.4, April 2012

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## Risk Factors Associated with the Abuse of Video Games in Adolescents

PDF (Size: 83KB) PP. 310-314 DOI: 10.4236/psych.2012.34044

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### ABSTRACT

Several studies have revealed the existence of a maladaptive pattern of video game use whose symptoms are quite similar to those of the disorder referred to as "abuse" in the DSM-IV-TR (APA, 2000). The aim of this paper is to examine the psychosocial characteristics of the adolescent video game abusers and to compare them with the risk factors that the literature associates with substance dependence. For this purpose, two groups ("problem" and "social" players) were formed with 236 Spanish adolescents aged between 12 and 17 years, by means of the Problem Video Game Playing questionnaire (PVP; Tejeiro & Bersabe, 2002), and their psychosocial characteristics were then analyzed by means of a wide battery of tests. Only 37.3% of the problem players showed a psychosocial pattern similar to the risk factors for dependence; an integral model of maladaptive behavior is discussed as explanation for these persons' video game abuse. The other 69.6% of "problem players" only differed from the "social players" in their over-use of video games (but not in other psychosocial factors); the social learning approach is suggested for these adolescents' behavior.

### KEYWORDS

Video Games; Adolescence; Dependence; Abuse; Risk Factors

### Cite this paper

Tejeiro, R. , Gómez-Vallecillo, J. , Pelegrina, M. , Wallace, A. & Emberley, E. (2012). Risk Factors Associated with the Abuse of Video Games in Adolescents. *Psychology*, 3, 310-314. doi: 10.4236/psych.2012.34044.

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