

Simple Positive Psychology Interventions on Internet Gaming Disorder

William Taylor Blue

Department of Psychology, Brandon University

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Summary

Internet gaming addiction (IGD) is a behavioral addiction to online video games. This type of addiction can result in various negative consequences, particularly with regards to negative affect. Although a variety of interventions have been evaluated for treating this disorder, there is a dearth of evidence regarding positive psychological interventions and their effectiveness in the treatment of IGD. This study investigated whether the simple psychology intervention, “Three Good Things in Life”, could reduce symptoms of IGD and screen time by increasing positive affect. The Three Good Things in Life intervention is a gratitude exercise that was implemented as a daily habit for the participants in the intervention group. It was administered over a three-week period with a minimum requirement of 7 days of the exercise completed. Each day the participants in the intervention group in the evening were required to think back on their day and write down three good things that happened and reflect on them (e.g., give a brief explanation for why those good things happened). The “good” things that the participants can include are subjective and can range from anything from having someone make dinner for them to winning the lottery. The point is, that they view it as a good thing that happened to them, write it down, and give a brief description of why it happened. They kept a record in a Microsoft Word File and were required to submit the file at the end of the three-week period. The study included 5 first-year psychology students at Brandon University. Of the 5 participants, 4 were male and 1 identified as other. All aged 18 to 37 years of age (mean age = 23.6). The study had an attrition rate of 3 out of 8 participants (37.5%, 1 experimental, 2 control). This study was a 2 (pre-test, post-test) x 2 (control vs intervention) mixed design. There are two independent variables in the study, a within-subjects variable, time (consisted of pre-test and post-test scores), and a between-subject variable, intervention

(receiving the treatment or no treatment at all). The dependent variables consist of the IGD-20, PANAS, and PWB questionnaire scores. The data suggests that the Three Good Things in Life exercise does not make a statistically significant difference in the treatment of IGD, however, we cannot say this is for certain based on the low sample size. The results of this study indicate that the effect of the intervention did not have an interaction with any of the dependent variables (positive affect, negative affect, personal well-being scores, IGD scores). Overall, the research carried out in this study provides quality information on IGD and gives direction for future studies on understanding IGD and using simple positive psychology interventions for its treatment.