

# Exploring the Psychological Indicators of Online Gaming Dependency in Teenagers

Marco. Conti<sup>1</sup>, Eszter. Kovács<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Educational Sciences, University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy

<sup>2</sup> Department of Psychology, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

\* Corresponding author email address: eszter.kovacs@elte.hu

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Gholamreza Rajabi  Professor of Counseling Department, Shahid Chamran University, Ahvaz, Iran rajabireza@scu.ac.ir	<b>Reviewer 1:</b> Mahdi Khanjani  Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran. Email: khanjani_m@atu.ac.ir <b>Reviewer 2:</b> Faranak Saboonchi  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Payam Noor University, Tehran, Iran. Email: faranaksaboonchi@pnu.ac.ir

## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introduction begins appropriately but quickly shifts to PTG without any theoretical bridge to gaming dependency or trauma exposure from gaming contexts. Provide a logical transition or remove irrelevant material.

While the paragraph is well-written, it is nearly identical to literature in trauma psychology, not adolescent gaming behavior. Either justify how gaming experiences are conceptualized as traumatic events or revise the paragraph to maintain theoretical consistency.

The inclusion of participants up to 25 years old exceeds the “teenager” definition in the title. Please clarify age criteria and theoretical rationale for including emerging adults.

Expand on the interview guide’s development process. Indicate whether pilot testing was conducted and how reliability or intercoder agreement was ensured during thematic analysis.

Excellent mention of analytic framework, but missing details on inter-rater reliability or consensus meetings. Clarify how coding credibility was maintained across coders.

Elaborate on reflexive practices—e.g., positionality statement, journaling, or peer audit—to demonstrate methodological transparency.

The table is comprehensive but too condensed. Consider presenting representative participant quotes for each subtheme to substantiate interpretative claims.

Consider discussing whether this increased empathy may also lead to compassion fatigue or emotional overidentification—a nuanced aspect missing from the analysis.

Specify whether any participants had prior access to mental-health interventions. Otherwise, readers cannot distinguish between natural coping development and therapy-facilitated growth.

Clarify whether agency and autonomy were emergent outcomes or preexisting traits intensified by adversity. This distinction is essential for causal interpretation.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

This paragraph is rich in cross-cultural insight but lacks any Hungarian-specific contextualization. Please include sociocultural details about Hungary's youth mental-health system or post-transition stressors to substantiate the national focus.

This aim contradicts both the paper's title and abstract focus. It must be rewritten to reflect a single, unambiguous objective. Clearly define what "psychological indicators" are being measured or explored.

Provide justification for choosing a phenomenological design rather than grounded theory or narrative analysis, given your emphasis on meaning-making and identity reconstruction.

Good synthesis, but repetitive of the Results section. Strengthen interpretive analysis by linking these four dimensions to existing PTG theoretical frameworks (e.g., Tedeschi & Calhoun model).

Excellent cross-cultural linkage, but please justify why Hungary was selected as a unique context rather than merely representative of "Central Europe." Include sociocultural characteristics such as family collectivism or religious practices.

The claim that Hungarian youth exhibit "collectivist tendencies" requires empirical or sociological citation. Hungary is generally considered moderately individualistic; support or revise this assertion.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.