



Mini Review

# Addictive Behavior and Experiences among the Young Saudi: A Mini-Review

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## Abstract

**Background:** Addiction is a rapidly growing global issue, especially among adolescents and young adults. Addiction is a difficult concept to define, and its application has been criticized; however, dependence on a substance or activity is central to its definition. According to behavioral study specialists, any entity capable of stimulating a person can be addictive; and when a habit becomes an obligation, it can be considered an addiction. **Study Aims:** Adolescent and young adulthood is an age of transition. In this age, youth try to copy, like to enjoy, and fantasize things usually. Such type of mindsets and behaviors often leads toward additive behaviors. That is why this study aimed to check the types of addictive behaviors among Saudi adolescents and young adults. **Method:** A literature review was searched from 2017 to 2022. Google Scholar was used to assessing and search out the relevant studies. **Results:** Study of literature review indicated that, many of addictive behaviors were found in the literature. Such as technology addiction, internet addiction, smartphone addiction and smoking addictions were observed commonly. **Conclusion:** Addictive behaviors are becoming more common among Saudi adolescents. To address these issues, serious healthcare and public awareness policies are required.

**Keywords:** Addictive; Adolescents; Behavior; Saudi.

## Introduction

Adolescence is defined as a period of life during which adolescents communicate about a variety of health-related issues, resulting in a decline in individual health and the habitual development of a specific behavior. Because of the most recent misconception, social media addiction is now regarded as the most common and widespread phenomenon worldwide. Isolated people can become lonely and abandoned, resulting in a vicious cycle of withdrawal and isolation. Many people seek relief from chronic and acute oppression by engaging in anti-stress behaviors. The problem is that some anti-stress behaviors are harmful because they can have serious and long-term consequences for people. To be more specific, many people use illegal drugs, prescription or nonprescription drugs, or alcohol for purposes other than those intended, which can result in social, physical, emotional, and occupational problems. These behaviors have serious and negative

health consequences, perpetuating a negative never-ending situation. And, because the concept of addiction is difficult to define, its application has been criticized; however, the dependence on a substance or activity is central to its definition. According to behavioral study experts, any entity capable of stimulating a person can be addictive; and when a habit becomes an obligation, it can be considered an addiction.

Although Saudi Arabia is an Islamic country with religious norms and values pervading all aspects of society, some Saudis drink and use drugs despite religious and legal prohibitions on the possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages and narcotic substances. As a result, Saudi Arabia and other countries have conducted addictive behavior research which focuses on effective adolescent addictive behavior, providing information about the efficient use of time for activities that may later cause health-related problems. Internet addiction is a rapidly growing global problem, particularly among adolescents and young adults. A number of factors could be to blame for the rise in internet

addiction. In such a short period of time, global internet coverage has increased tenfold, and the majority of the country's population now has internet access. Most adolescents have smartphones, computers, and similar devices, and the vast majority of them use them excessively for applications like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Furthermore, climate change influences their behavior and, most likely, increases their use of digital media by requiring them to stay indoors during the day. Thus, given the importance of previous research on behavioral addiction, this study aimed to examine the types of addictive behaviors among Saudi adolescents and young adults. Furthermore, this study provides information about health care concerns and trivial addictive behavior from the mouth of a small sample of the general adolescent population.

## Methodology

**Database Searching:** Using the Google Chrome research engine, data was gathered from Google Scholar. The total number of raw data is 20,130, but after selection, the total number of articles is reduced to 11 that meet the criteria of the current literature review.

**Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:** The studies included were operationalizing the assessment of addiction behavior in the Saudi population, with publication years ranging from 2017 to 2022. Authentic research articles on Saudi Arabia from peer-reviewed journals and reputable publishers.

**Study Characteristics:** The respondents' addiction behaviors were used to select primary articles, which included technology addiction, internet addiction, smartphone addiction, and smoking. The articles were written by students with strong research capacity, capability, and competence. The current articles frequently demonstrated addictive behavior in people of various ages. This demonstrates the establishment, projection, execution, and extinction of the specific addiction behavior.

**Assessment of Risk of Bias:** Articles discuss the quality of the research work, its efficacy in the research field, and its effectiveness in studying human behavior trends. Reach articles generally lack generalizability due to situational, environmental, and personal biases that represent the individual's own ability to do things.

**Aim of Review:** Human behavior is composed of several characteristics that represent the emotional constituency, the physical constituency, the psychological constituency, the social constituency, the personal constituency, and the occupational constituency. Overall, this behavior stresses the human body at the end of life. As a result, it causes a wide range of addictions. This property puts the individual at risk of a number of health-related consequences. Addiction is a major cause of health decline in all societies. As a result, in all societies, studying addiction behavior is regarded as the most fundamental. The current study sought to address addiction behavior as it relates to the underlying factors that cause human decline and society's deprivation of various rules

and regulations.

## Review discussion

**Early Online Addiction.** A behavioral addiction is characterized as any disturbed or continual behavior that causes important and functionally impairing harm or distress. Addiction is a chronic medical disease that can be treated. It is caused by complex interactions between brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and a person's life experience. When Saquib et al. (2017) conducted research on the psychological impact of video game addiction on the adolescence of Saudi expatriates, internet gaming behavior and video game addiction have received less attention in research [1]. The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional research design with 276 students (from the ninth to the eleventh academic year). The valley for gender differences and educational ages was similar, according to the findings. Furthermore, the young girl with the video, screen time addiction, and psychological distress is thought to have a higher addiction prevalence rate. This is due to the younger generation's greater capacity for comparison. Gaming addiction and stress were also investigated in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's adolescent population. The study included young people aged 10 to 19 with easy access to electronic devices, the internet, and its resources. According to the findings, a higher level of gaming addiction was associated with 63% of adolescents experiencing stress. As a result, adolescent gaming addiction typically worsens the psychological stress that comes with it [2].

Another study was conducted by Riad et al. [3] on oral health practices, internet addiction, self-reported oral health, and clinical outcomes in young adults in Saudi Arabia's kingdom route. The use of a correlational associate to process an ellipsoid joint was useful in assessing oral hygiene and associated factors. The results show that the always-sticking approach has a negative impact on internet addiction, which is linked to adolescent health and oral hygiene. It has been proposed that adolescent oral health is linked to age-related risk. In addition, research was conducted regarding the association with the body image such as BMI (body mass index) and social media addiction among the public universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The findings stated that a strong relationship between body image and social media addiction for tray evidence that social perception is ever wanted the character of an individual. Therefore, it required effective and explorative management to be treated appropriately [4]. Internet addiction is causing problems and is becoming more common as the amount of virtual communication versus physical communication increases [5]. The findings show that 49.5% of adolescents are highly addicted to the internet, with 1.9% obsessing over it. This affects their personal lives as well as their social and professional lives. According to the evidence, addiction is based on communication, comparative understanding, and learning; therefore, specific legislation to reduce the level of addiction among female students

should be implemented. In the kingdom of Qassim, a study on internet use and addiction among young medical students was conducted to address the prevalence of internet use and addiction as well as the relationship between academic performance, decline, and gender in healthcare practitioners, particularly medical students. Results stated that 12.4% of students were addicted to the internet with a potential rate of 57.9% in the physiological condition. The psychological conditions were expressed as 57.9% in a differential condition, 71.8 percent in the year of sleep loss, and 12.3% in the year of appetite loss. It was declared when there was a 63.1% drop in academic performance. It should be noted that appropriate intervention reduces the mark deficits among the young population in terms of smartphone addiction [6].

**Vices and Addiction.** On the other hand, bullying was identified as a common behavior in the population based on the characteristics of child building behavior, anti-social behavior, and addiction behavior in adults in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia [7]. Voting behavior was associated with unethical and socially acceptable behavior in society, such as victimization (1.8%), smoking (2.3%), drug abuse (2.5%), and alcohol consumption (2.9%), according to the final findings. Working during childhood experiences has been shown in Saudi Arabia to increase risky behavior. As a result, the prevalence of this factor should be the litmus test, and specific legislation should be drafted [8]. In addition, another study was conducted to predict the relationship between various smoking behaviors and religious practices in the male-dominated society of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Taha et al., 2019). Also, researchers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia conducted a study on the prevalence and risk factors for addiction among female university students.

In addition, Alnasser et al. (2022) [9] investigated gender differences in smoking behavior among adolescents in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The purpose of this study is to look into gender differences in cigarette smoking habits. This report provides

information on the prevalence, accountability, and attitude toward environmental factors related to tobacco consumption. The female population has a prevalence of 44%, while the general population has a prevalence of 25.4%, according to the findings. This indicated that males were more likely than females to be addicted to smoking. Furthermore, it was widely assumed that adolescence in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia necessitates specific strategies and policies in order to reduce smoking's highest prevalence rate in the academic scenario.

These researchers all have a wealth of knowledge about adolescent addiction in Saudi Arabia. Adolescent life is comprised of many different types of behaviors. Understanding how health-related behaviors interact with one another in adolescents has significant implications for the rest of one's life because adult behavioral patterns are primarily formed during adolescence. Expresses statistical values and information based on experiences and intuition that are thought to be the most effective in identifying addiction behavior among the kingdom of Saudi Arabia's adolescent population.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

Humans are amphibious beings who not only explore the beauty of nature, but also extensively use it to gain extra pleasure, hide from issues and problems, and for personal concerns. As a result, the current review of the literature intends to address human behavior in the form of addiction. This encompasses not only the various types of addictions, but also the intensity, frequency, and potential of closely monitoring human behavior. The current review of the literature was conducted in the context of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As a result, the majority of the articles came from peer-reviewed journals that adhere to Saudi research approval norms and rituals. According to the literature, human addiction behavior is primarily associated with responsibilities, the behavior execution process, and personal characteristics.

Author & Year	Country of Study	Study Design	Total Sample	Types of Participants	Outcomes	Conclusion
Alnasser AHA, Al-Tawfiq JA, Kheimi RMA, Alibrahim RMS, Albanawi NAH, Almeshal AKA, Alsomali HHM, Al Kalif MSH, Al Sayed Ahmed HH, Khamees SHA, Al-Thubiani WSS, Alqurashi DSM, Alrashed AAA, Alburaih JAH, Alnasser AAH. (2022)	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional online survey	421	Medical students (18 years or older)	421 people responded; 255 (60.6%) of them were women, 243 (57.7%) were between the ages of 18 and 24, and 164 (39%) were from the Eastern Province. Smoking was more prevalent overall (25.4%) and was more prevalent in men than in women (44% and 13.3%, respectively) (P 0.001). The mean score for the overall attitude toward smoking did not significantly differ between males and females, albeit [(3.020.44 and 3.000.34, respectively, P=0.64]. But compared to male students, more female students thought e-cigarettes were unhealthy [(4.191.04 and 4.450.9, respectively, P=0.002]].	Different intervention tactics and regulations, like limiting youth access to cigarettes, are needed in Saudi Arabia to minimize adolescent tobacco use. In addition to thorough anti-tobacco initiatives in schools and communities.
Abdel-Salam, D. M., Alrowaili, H. I., Albedaiwi, H. K., Alessa, A. I., & Alfayyadh, H. A. (2019).	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study	368	University students	48.6% of students were rated as average Internet users. However, 49.5% and 1.9% of the students, respectively, had moderate and severe addictions. According to 47.3% of students, the primary reason for using the Internet was communication. The majority of students (79.5%) used mobile phones for Internet access, while other devices were used by 73% of study participants, who had a negative body image and were moderately addicted to social media. Body image and social media addiction were not significantly associated using the chi-square test (p=0.22). When the relationship between social media addiction and BMI was examined, it was found to be significant (p=0.001).	Male students smoke more than female students, and there were no significant differences in the overall attitudes score towards smoking. Therefore, campaigns are needed to decrease smoking rate, especially among male students.

Al Saud, D. F., Alhaddab, S. A., Alhajri, S. M., Alharbi, N. S., Aljohar, S. A., & Mortada, E. M. (2019).	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study	307	Female students	73% of study participants had a negative body image, and 50.1% were moderately addicted to alcohol. social networking Body image and social media addiction were not significantly associated using the chi-square test (p=0.22). When the relationship between social media addiction and BMI was examined, it was found to be significant (p=0.001).	A statistically significant association was found between social media addiction and BMI.
Alkhateeb, A., Alboali, R., Alharbi, W., & Saleh, O. (2020). [10]	Saudi Arabia	A multicenter study	1941	College and university students	Smartphone addiction was found in 19.1% of people. Female subjects were more addicted than male subjects (P= 0.001). Smartphone use was also linked to musculoskeletal complications, upper limb, eye, and sleep complications.	High frequency and duration of smartphone use was associated with a high risk of addiction. Additionally, smartphone addiction had a significant impact on daily activities, sleeping disorders, and health problems.
Almuneef, M., Saleheen, H. N., elchoueiry, N., & Al-Eissa, M. A. (2019).	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study	10,156	Adults aged ≥18 years	39% of those polled said they had been bullied. There were significant gender differences in the prevalence of various types of bullying. Men reported a higher prevalence of physical bullying (40% vs. 33%, p 0.01) and sexual bullying (19% vs. 10%, p 0.01).	Childhood bullying increases the likelihood of risky behavior in adults in South Africa. Bullying prevention should be on the Ministry of Education's national agenda.
Bin Abdulrahman, K.A., Alghamdi, H.A., Alfaleh, R.S., Albishri, W.S., Almuslamani, W.B., Alshakrah, A.M., Alsuwailem, H.M., & Alkhalaiwi, S.A. (2022).[11]	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study	895	Students from Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Saudi Arabia	Students who have never smoked or tried tobacco make up (76.4%). The majority of students who smoke (46.4%) started doing so during the past five years, which is a strong indicator that they started smoking when they first enrolled in college. When asked when they like to smoke, most students (57.1%) said that it is when they are anxious or under pressure. Smoking and having a family member who smokes are strongly correlated (53.1%), while students who practice Islam more fervently are 15% less likely to smoke. The four-factor model's total classification accuracy was 78%.	Shisha, e-cigarettes, and cigarettes all had prevalence rates of 18.3%, 5%, and 11%, respectively. To ensure the efficacy and efficiency of tobacco control initiatives, anti-smoking policies at the university level should be routinely evaluated.

Alshahwan, H., Alosaimi, F. D., Alyahya, H., Mahyijari, N. A., & Shaik, S. A. (2020)[10]	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study	2367	University students of King Saud University, Riyadh	Internal consistency values for the 20 items varied from 0.904 to 0.912, which is extremely statistically significant.	The PUMP scale, which is used to measure smartphone addiction, has been shown to be accurate and trustworthy in the Arabic language among Saudi residents, putting university students in Saudi Arabia at risk of developing a dependency on their smartphones.
Rajab, A. M., Zaghoul, M. S., Enabi, S., Rajab, T. M., Al-Khani, A. M., Basalah, A., ... & Saqib, N. (2020).	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study	2675	school students (grades 7–12)	64% reported >3 h of daily screen time; 5% were addicted to gaming; 11.4% had high-level stress.	Stress is strongly associated with gaming addiction among Saudi adolescents.
Riad, A., Buchbender, M., Howaldt, H. P., Klugar, M., Krsek, M., & Attia, S. (2022).	Germany	Descriptive Cross-Sectional Study	508	Medical Students	1.4% reported smoking tobacco at least once per week, 26.6% reported drinking alcohol at least once per week, and 82.9% reported problematic internet use. The overall HU-DBI score was high ( $7.67 \pm 1.32$ ), and females ( $7.70 \pm 1.33$ ) scored slightly higher than males ( $7.59 \pm 1.29$ ), as did gender-diverse students ( $7.33 \pm 1.37$ ).	Problematic internet use and alcohol consumption resulted in slightly lower HU-DBI scores. The current study's findings advocate for the early incorporation of preventive dentistry elements into German curricula, as well as future epidemiologic studies addressing the oral health needs of gender minorities in Germany.
Saqib, N., Saqib, J., Wahid, A., Ahmed, A. A., Dhuhayr, H. E., Zaghoul, M. S., ... & Al-Mazrou, A. (2017).	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study	276	Students from 9-12 grades in the International Schools	Around 32% were overweight or obese, 75% had 2 hours of screen time per day, and 20% slept 5 hours per night. Sixteen percent (16%) were addicted to video games, and 54% were suffering from psychological distress.	The percentage of students experiencing psychological distress was high. Future research should look into other potential predictors of distress, such as personality traits, family relationships, and academic performance.
Taha, M. H., Shehzad, K., Alamro, A. S., & Wadi, M. (2019).	Saudi Arabia	Cross-sectional study	216	medical students	12.4% were addicted to the Internet, and 57.9% were at risk of becoming addicted. Females used the Internet more frequently than males ( $w = 0.006$ ). Academic performance was harmed in 63.1% of students, and 71.8% lost sleep as a result of late-night Internet use, affecting attendance at morning activities. The majority (59.7%) said they were depressed.	Internet addiction was very common among medical students at Qassim University, affecting both academic performance and psychological well-being. To protect students' mental and physical health, appropriate interventional and preventive measures are required for proper Internet use.

**Table:** Research Matrix.

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