

Les écrans interactifs

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Quels effets ont les téléphones intelligents et les réseaux sociaux ?

Les téléphones ont aujourd'hui la particularité de pouvoir être utilisés pour de multiples raisons, incluant la recherche d'information, la détente, les interactions sociales, ou encore le divertissement¹. Mais malheureusement une **utilisation excessive peut entraîner des problèmes chez certains individus, notamment lorsqu'elle interfère avec le travail, l'école ou la vie sociale**². Une telle utilisation peut alors impacter négativement aussi bien la santé mentale (dépression, anxiété)³ que physique (e.g. problèmes de dos)⁴⁻⁶, ainsi que la productivité⁷ ou les performances scolaires⁸. On peut aussi observer des symptômes d'addiction lorsque l'individu n'a pas accès à son téléphone⁹. Certains traits de personnalité semblent favoriser cette utilisation excessive, comme le besoin d'être rassurés, l'impulsivité, et l'extraversion². **Les réseaux sociaux sont considérés comme étant la cause principale de cette utilisation problématique du téléphone**¹⁰.

Alors est-ce que l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux peut clairement avoir des effets négatifs ?

Cette question reste controversée. Certaines études ont montré que le temps passé sur les réseaux sociaux favorisent les émotions négatives (tristesse, culpabilité)^{11,12}, et une mauvaise image de soi¹³, et que réciproquement des états dépressifs ou d'anxiété favorisent l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux^{14,15}. Mais pourtant, **des méta-analyses ne rapportent que de faibles corrélations entre l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux et des mesures de bien-être, d'estime de soi, de dépression, de solitude¹⁶, ou de performances scolaires¹⁷.** D'autres variables comme le contexte d'utilisation, l'âge de la personne, ses traits de personnalité ou encore son milieu socioculturel doivent donc être pris en compte.

Quels effets ont les jeux-vidéos divertissants ?

Dans les pays dits développés, plus de 1.2 milliards d'individus joueraient régulièrement à des jeux vidéo incluant plus de 80% des enfants à partir de 8 ans¹⁸⁻²⁰. Concernant les jeunes enfants, on sait que l'utilisation d'appareils électroniques mobiles (téléphone, tablette) par les parents réduits significativement la quantité d'interactions qu'ils ont avec leurs enfants^{21,22}, ce qui peut avoir un impact sur leurs développement.

On sait aussi que la plupart **des jeunes enfants commencent aujourd'hui à interagir avec une tablette ou un téléphone avant l'âge d'un an**²³ et que cela peut avoir **possiblement des conséquences négatives sur leur développement cognitif²⁴ et sur leur sommeil²⁵.** Par contre, **pour les enfants plus âgés et les adolescents, jouer à des jeux-vidéos a, bien au contraire, clairement démontré des effets positifs sur les compétences perceptuelles, attentionnelle ou cognitives,** dépendamment de celles que les jeux auxquels ils jouent sollicitent²⁶⁻²⁹. Ainsi, bien évidemment, jouer à un jeu vidéo calme qui ne sollicite pas énormément ces compétences (e.g., Farmville) n'aura pas le même effet qu'un jeu d'action qui les sollicite davantage (e.g., Call of Duty). L'âge reste aussi un facteur important, et **les effets bénéfiques n'apparaissent que pour les jeux qui ont été conçus pour le groupe d'âge testé**^{27,28}.

Du point de vue de la santé mentale, certains travaux suggèrent que **les jeux vidéo peuvent avoir un effet positif sur la motivation, l'humeur et la vie sociale**^{30,31}, voir même augmenter **la créativité** parmi les enfants plus jeunes³². Il existe aussi plusieurs études montrant que **jouer à des jeux coopératifs ou à des jeux dit prosociaux** (e.g. Spock) dans lesquels on doit aider d'autres personnages **induisent davantage d'empathie et de comportement d'entraide** en dehors du jeu³³⁻³⁶. Chez des enfants et des adultes subissant une chimiothérapie, ou devant être anesthésiés jouer aux jeux-vidéo semble même pouvoir réduire l'anxiété et les nausées³⁷⁻³⁹.

Mais que sait-on sur les jeux violents ?

L'idée que jouer aux jeux vidéo violents entraîneraient des comportements violents reste aujourd'hui très **controversée dans la communauté scientifique**^{40,41}. Ce qui n'est pas étonnant vu que plusieurs travaux, et notamment des méta-analyses récentes n'aboutissent pas aux mêmes conclusions. Certaines confirment le lien⁴²⁻⁴⁵ et d'autre non⁴⁶⁻⁵⁰. Un article récent parle même de guerre de méta-analyses⁵¹ ! Les raisons sont liées à la diversité des variables et des études prises en compte dans ces méta-analyses et qui peuvent varier énormément quant à comment l'agressivité a été mesurée ? sur quelle durée ? sur quelle population ? Avec quels jeux ? Sans parler des biais de publication qui restent difficiles à contrôler (la tendance qu'ont les études qui trouvent des effets à être davantage publiées). Une analyse récente concernant les données issues de toutes ces méta-analyses conflictuelles, réalisée en collaboration avec leurs principaux auteurs, concluait que **globalement, dans la grande majorité des cas, les jeux violent augmenteraient bien les comportements agressifs mais que ces effets restent presque toujours très faibles**⁵¹.

Et que sait-on sur les gros joueurs ? Peut-il y avoir des problèmes d'addiction aux jeux vidéo ?

Plusieurs études soulignent que **certains enfants qui jouent plus de 3 heures par jour peuvent perdre le contrôle au point que jouer aux jeux-vidéos entraînerait des problèmes d'isolement social, de mauvais résultats scolaires, de dépression, d'anxiété et de sommeil**⁵²⁻⁵⁷. L'enfant peut alors devenir extrêmement irritable et agressif si les parents tentent de limiter l'accès aux jeux-vidéos⁵⁸. Plusieurs études rapportent qu'**entre 3 et 8 % des adolescents et jeunes adultes** souffrent de ce type de problème avec les jeux vidéo^{59,60}, et les garçons auraient environ 5 fois plus de chances que les filles d'être concernés⁶¹. Ce type de problème avec les jeux-vidéo a, par ailleurs, été associé avec de l'impulsivité, des troubles déficit de l'attention avec hyperactivité^{62,63}, d'agressivité⁶³⁻⁶⁵, de la timidité ou de l'anxiété social^{57,61,66,67}, d'anhédonie^{61,68}, et de solitude⁶⁹.

Certains chercheurs ont même commencé à parler très sérieusement de **possible addiction** aux jeux vidéo ou à internet⁷⁰⁻⁷² mais **cela reste controversé**. Très rapidement, d'autres chercheurs se sont manifestés pour exprimer leurs désaccords pour plusieurs raisons. Tout d'abord, parce qu'on ne voit pas de symptômes physiologiques d'habituance en cas de jeu régulier, ou de sevrage quand un individu est privé d'écran. Ensuite, parce que parler d'addiction risque de détourner l'attention d'autres facteurs comme l'environnement de l'enfant qui peuvent être à l'origine des comportements à problèmes^{70,73,74}.

Quels effets ont les jeux-vidéos éducatifs ? Fonctionnent-ils vraiment ?

Depuis plusieurs années les tablettes, et les ordinateurs apparaissent dans les écoles souvent dès la primaire⁷⁵. Les jeux éducatifs numériques sont des jeux conçus pour être à la fois agréables, motivants et éducatifs. Certains jeux sont conçus pour acquérir des compétences scolaires, d'autre pour améliorer la santé physique ou mentale. Alors sont-ils vraiment efficaces ?

En ce qui concerne les jeunes enfants, même s'il n'y a encore que trop peu d'études pour généraliser à tous les contenus, les quelques méta-analyses et revues de littérature récentes rapportent des **effets bénéfiques du numériques sur les compétences littéraires, mathématiques et sociales** chez les jeunes enfants de moins de 6 ans, **surtout lorsqu'ils sont utilisés avec un parent ou un éducateur**⁷⁶⁻⁷⁸.

Pour les enfants plus âgés ou les adolescents, plusieurs méta-analyses sur le sujet existent et s'accordent toutes sur **l'efficacité des jeux éducatifs numériques pour aider aux apprentissages, et notamment à l'acquisition de connaissances**⁷⁹⁻⁸³. La question est donc maintenant de savoir comment les utiliser pour s'adapter au mieux au niveau et au besoin de chaque élève. On sait par exemple, que les tablettes semblent être plus efficaces que les ordinateurs de bureau (en favorisant le déplacement et les interactions entre élèves), que le numérique est plus efficace lors d'apprentissages inquisitifs/actifs que lors d'apprentissages passifs, dans des cadres informels plutôt que formels, et que les durées courtes (moins de 6 mois) étaient plus efficaces que les durées longues car le support numérique est alors en général plus ciblés, mieux encadrés par l'enseignant et l'effet de nouveauté favorise l'engagement des élèves⁸⁴.

Concernant la santé physique, adopter un mode de vie plus sain reste un défi, souvent à cause de problèmes de temps et de motivation^{85,86}. Des jeux vidéo ont alors été conçus pour surmonter ces obstacles, ainsi que d'autres logiciels ou applications qui intègrent des éléments typiques des jeux vidéo (feedback, points, niveaux, défis, compétitions, avatars, comme par exemple *Zombies, Run!* ou *SuperBetter*). **Ces alternatives numériques ont en général montré une certaine efficacité pour promouvoir l'activité physique et un meilleur régime alimentaire**⁸⁷⁻⁹⁰.

Concernant les jeux conçus pour améliorer la santé mental (e.g. SPARX, Mindlight), **ils ont, eux-aussi, globalement montré leur efficacité** pour diminuer l'anxiété et les symptômes dépressifs chez les enfants et les adolescents⁹¹⁻⁹³.

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