

Abstract

In clinical practice, sufficient attention is paid to the substance dependencies in many respects. Despite being similar to these dependencies, the issue of “activities, behavior, processes” is often left aside. This work deals with online computer games, mostly with the World of Warcraft (WoW), because there are players who may have a problem not only in relation to addictive behavior. The aim of the research was to describe the psychopathological characteristics of MMORPG players and describe the connection between their occurrence and the rate of reported addictive behavior. Participants were MMORPG active players recruited by self-selection based on addressing through online discussion forums, facebook pages and e-mail snowball. The minimum range of subjects was set at 100 players. Tool for gathering data was online questionnaire. The results were determined using descriptive-analytical and mathematical statistics with the help of SPSS software. The final group consists of 243 respondents, of which 216 are men (89%) and 27 women (11%). The age range of the respondents is between 10-56 years, the average age is 22 years. 185 respondents (76%) considered WoW as being their first choice game. Of 243 respondents 23 (it is about 10%) have shown addictive behavior (including 22 men and 1 woman). Psychopathological characteristics of the players in both male and female population are about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the standard. In the field of pathology the most affected dimensions are: Interpersonal sensitivity, Depression, Paranoid thinking and Psychoticism. It was demonstrated that dependent players have substantially higher values of pathology in all areas in comparison with the entire group of respondents. Regarding the overall connection between the gaming style, psychopathology and addiction, it is more likely that in comparison with other players the individuals with pathology in one of the four dimensions of SCL-90 play more Horde than Alliance, that they play sporadically for Hunter and more frequently for Monk, and that they are more often involved in First aid and Archeology than other players. Respondents who suffer from addiction are more likely to play a version of the game Burning Crusade; they prefer the race of Tauren or Undead, Mage as their occupation and Engineering as a profession.

The intent of this research was rather generic (it was aimed at the detection of pathology and addiction among its respondents, followed by a description of the style of the game). At the next stage of the research it would be necessary to examine the file more closely and practically (such as psychopathological characteristics - how pathology affects their social life). With regard to the intervention - 10% prevalence of addictive behavior is certainly not insignificant - and that is one of the reasons why the non substance dep. should be given due attention.

Key words

Psychopathology, addictive behavior, addiction to online games, MMORPG, World of Warcraft