

Ecotherapy: an alternative therapy for social media addiction during covid-19 outbreak

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Abstract

The covid-19 epidemic has led to a major increase in the usage of social media, with many individuals finding sanctuary in the digital realm. In light of the potential for addiction, it has become crucial to develop alternate treatments for social media addiction. Ecotherapy, often known as nature-based therapy, has emerged as a novel and successful treatment for social media addiction among individuals. During the covid-19 epidemic, this essay explores the prospect of ecotherapy as an alternative treatment for social media addiction. In addition, the possible implications of ecotherapy for the treatment of social media addiction during the pandemic will be discussed. This study may serve to guide judgments on the use of ecotherapy during the ongoing epidemic by offering a comprehensive overview of ecotherapy.

Keywords: Ecotherapy, social media addiction, covid-19

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Dear to editor

Indonesia is a country that is currently facing the covid-19 Outbreak. Indonesia has become the country with the highest covid-19 cases in Asia; during March 2021, the number of covid-19 cases in Indonesia reached 1.51 million. The government seeks to make efforts to handle and prevent Covid-19 by implementing large-scale social restrictions and policies for working from home and distance learning as contained in Indonesian republican government regulation number 12 of 2020 and circular letter number 15 of 2020 concerning guidelines for organizing learning from home in an emergency the spread of covid-19 (Azhari & Fajri, 2022; Ifdil, Fadli, Suranata, Zola, & Ardi, 2020). One of these efforts is to urge the public to reduce activities outside the home and to do learning activities from home. One of the policies is that schools in Indonesia are urged to carry out online learning to prevent virus transmission in the school environment. In this case, the school applies Internet-based learning methods using various platforms that are carried out asynchronously or synchronously (Asvial, Mayangsari, & Yudistriansyah, 2021).

Learning activities that are only carried out online cause boredom and stress, so that adolescents need the consolation to reduce. The activity that many adolescents choose as consolation during the covid-19 pandemic is playing games (Syahniar, et al., 2018). Based entirely on the study, the percentage of online game users during the covid-19 pandemics has increased significantly by up to 75 percent. There are 50.8

million in the world using mobile games in 2020 (King, Delfabbro, Billieux, & Potenza, 2020; Kostov, 2020). That causes online game application usage and downloads to have increased. Unwittingly, many adolescents that frequently access online games show indications of addiction. Adolescents spend a lot of time playing online games where there is a process of increasing play intensity, which affects adolescent behavior to become maladaptive. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA) have determined that online game addiction is included in the diagnosis of a mental disorder known as Internet Gaming Disorder (Bányai, et al., 2021).

Game addiction among adolescents in Indonesia is still considered a new phenomenon and is not yet considered a serious problem. However, the number is increasing, and its impact on adolescents' physical, congenital, and psychological conditions should not be underestimated (Saddhono, Setyawan, Raharjo, & Devilito, 2020). Based epidemiological and clinical studies have shown that there is damage in the brain of game addicts, especially in the Prefrontal cortex, which functions to control themselves and their behavior. This part can be damaged due to game addiction that makes addicts unable to control themselves and their behavior. This area is responsible for self-control, behavior, and the impulses that give rise to the so-called neurotransmitter dopamine, making him feel happy or satisfied. In addition to behaving impulsively, in general, adolescents who are addicted to games lose focus while doing something, which results in decreased performance and productivity. Meanwhile, unstable emotions also often harm relationships, so that most game addicts show anti-social attitudes and lead to maladaptive behavior in their lives.

A form of psychotherapy treatment that can be used to reduce game addiction is cognitive behavior therapy. Several studies prove that cognitive behavior therapy can reduce online game addiction in patients diagnosed with internet gaming disorder. Cognitive Behavior Therapy can increase motivation to stop playing online games, control repetitive behavior, and strengthen diversion decision-making. Individuals who are dependent on something, then they already have a certain mindset. Therefore, Cognitive Behavior Therapy is used to modify negative thoughts to be substituted for a more positive mindset (Narullita & Yuniati, 2020). This method is carried out by modifying the environment to reduce the patient's motivation to inhibit dependence by multiplying and modifying thoughts and behavior. There are other fun activities besides games by exploring actual activities that can make you happy, such as exercising, cooking, etc.

In Indonesia, public awareness about game addiction's impact is still low, so this is considered a less severe phenomenon. In contrast, the impact is hazardous for physical health, cognitive and psychological, as well as causing maladaptive behavior. In this case, the Indonesian government needs to have a national policy to anticipate game addiction's impact on Indonesian adolescents to protect the quality of human resources in the future. The government can provide policies in the form of laws limiting game hours. The government can synergize and collaborate with several practitioners such as counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and doctors, and other related parties to be able to provide socialization to the public about game addiction so that Indonesian people have knowledge and insight about the impact and prevention of dependence on games, which aims to reduce cases of game addiction among adolescents in Indonesia during the covid-19 outbreak

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