

ADDICTION TO THE DIGITAL DRUGS BY YOUTHS: SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS AND TREATMENT METHODS

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Abstract:

This study aims at defining the scourge of digital drugs that it is new to the Algerian society. Besides, it aims at preventing this issue through suggesting solutions that fight it to limit its effects on the youths. In so doing, we shed light on many aspects of the phenomenon that is one of the repercussions of modern technology and globalization. It is a set of numbing musical tracks that harm the individual and unconsciously imprison him; just like the traditional drugs. Moreover, the study investigates the causes and consequences and analyzes them to find suitable solutions that can pave the way for further studies .

Keywords: Addiction, Drugs, digital drugs, university youth

Introduction:

The technological development worldwide changed some social phenomena and brought about negative behaviors that led to infinite problems at the social, political, and economic aspects. These phenomena are no more like the past as their severity increased and, thus, complicated the social problems. In this context, the change of the lifestyle and the domination of materialism changed the family path and weakened its role. Besides, social media and the daily use of internet by the youths, mainly in the university where they are far from their families, created an absolute freedom and decreased the religious attachment. In addition, it increased the youths' curiosity to try all what is new. Consequently, the social problems increased and the potential of addiction came to surface.

In this regard, addiction to drugs became one of the social scourges that the society failed in combatting. Nevertheless, addiction did not stop at drugs, as it moved to the electronic world leading to the emergence of the digital addiction that is more dangerous. This phenomenon attracts the youths' minds and threatens their lives, mainly the adolescents, as they misuse the internet that is easily accessed whenever they want. Based on what was said, this paper points to some important aspects and raises the following problematic, "what is meant by digital drugs? What are their social and psychological effects on the university youths? What are the methods of treating this scourge?"

Importance of the study:

The importance of the study lies in describing and analyzing the digital drugs that are a new phenomenon in the Algerian society, to warn of its dangers. It penetrated the Algerian

houses lately and spread fears amid the Algerian families regarding their young children. Thus, we shall find solutions to limit this phenomenon and its future repercussions.

Main concepts of the study:

1. Definition of the addiction:

It is taking medically, socially, and organically anesthetic substances in big doses for long periods. This makes the individual used to these substances and subject to their effect. Consequently, it is hard or impossible to quit them (Al Mohanadi, 2015, p. 47)

2. Definition of the drug:

It is any substance that leads to organic or psychological deficits. It helps the addicted develop readiness for psychological and mental diseases. Scientifically and medically speaking, it is any chemical substance that causes sleep, numbness, or unconsciousness (Al Hamdani, 2007, p. 37)

3. Definition of the digital drugs:

They are audio files, and sometimes include visual content that is studied and engineered to numb the mind through vocal waves of different frequencies that take a simple form for the ear. Because the ear is accustomed to such waves, the brain unifies the frequencies to reach one level. Thus, it turns into electrically unstable. Moreover, the individual reaches certain feeling according to the type of the disorder that simulates the feeling of drugs or euphoria (Al Majni, 2013, p. 87)

4. Definition of the youth:

It is the main phase where the character changes. Thus, the will to prove the self merges with the search for a social role, the rebellion against what was achieved, the feeling of responsibility, and the will to become more ideal (Kamal, 2004, p. 53)

5. Methods of prevention and treatment:

The prevention is monitoring any activity that limits any health disorder or stops the death. As for the medical treatment, it is the attempt to control and get rid of the disease. It is the phase that follows the diagnosis. Its main aim is taking away all the symptoms and causes of the disease and to reach functional balance and stability ([Https://WWW.thes.Bncf.Fineze.Sbnt.It](https://WWW.thes.Bncf.Fineze.Sbnt.It))

First: the digital drugs between the concept and the genesis:

The digital drugs are a form of anesthesia that penetrates the body through the ear because they take the form of a vocal track or a tone heard via the earphones through frequencies with a certain level in the right ear, and a less level in the left ear. Thus, the brain equals these frequencies. Another definition is that the digital drugs are the most modern tools of addiction for the humans. They rely on loud music that creates euphoria for the youths and a feeling of impermanent joy (Zeineb Abdul Kazem, 2016, p. 41). We can say that the digital drugs are a new form of the electronic addiction that differs than the conventional drugs as it relies on browsing social media and internet sites that post numbing musical tracks that harm the youth's mental and psychological health.

After tackling any social problem, we must mention its historical development. The digital drugs have a historical extent since the Arab scholar Abu Bakr Al-Razi found out the benefits of music 1000 years ago. In this line, he noticed that some patients that suffer painful diseases forget the pain and calm down when hearing the nice music. Hence, he recognized that music has an effect in alleviating pains and in recovery from certain diseases.

After some experiments, he confirmed that the beautiful music has an effect in the recovery and adopted it as one of the psychological treatments (Kazem, 2016, p. 07)

After al-Razi, many foreign attempts focused on music and its effects on the mental and physical aspects of the individual to justify its role in treating pathological symptoms. Among the studies that focused on this side, we find those of the German Heinrich Wilhelm Dove who discovered the notion of tapping on the ears in 1839, as it is a form of the alternative medicine. In this regard, he relied on music to incite the brain to relax, contemplate, and create a set of desired effects. Besides, there are effects on the brain waves through the difference in the frequencies of each ear. For instance, one side of the earphones is set on 300 HZ while the other is on 310 HZ. This gives a certain feeling (Kazem, 2016, p. 09) In addition, this was used in 1970 to treat some psychological cases of depression patients who refuse the hospital treatment. Therefore, they have been treated through the electromagnetic frequencies to regulate the mood.

Furthermore, the anesthetic musical tones were used in the psychotherapy clinics due to the lack of the substance that invigorates the mood. Therefore, the nervous cells were stimulated to produce this substance under medical supervision. Besides, the technique was used relying on the variant light spectra in front of the patient for short moments. Some communities in the Arab world, India, and South West Asia use specific music that triggers dances and movements that lead to shivering and passing out (Ibrahim, 2020, p. 2007) This shows the historical development of the various uses of the digital drugs in their beginning. In this line, the digital drugs resemble the conventional ones that have waves as well, such as the alcohol waves, opium waves, marijuana waves, cocaine waves, sexual waves, and leisure waves (<https://www.altaafi.com>).

The digital drugs are uploaded on many sites, such as:

- Binaural-Beats.com.
- Brainblogger.com.
- I-Doser.com.
- <http://sm3ha.ws> (Taleb, 2016, p. 15)

Besides, the digital drugs are uploaded on I-Doser that determines a vocal mixture for every numbing tone and gives it one of the conventional drugs names that target a specific mental activity. Generally, the sets (vocal mixtures) aim at simulating the joy and happiness, the obligatory medical prescription (the funny atmosphere), the legends and imagination (the bloody), going higher (the sleeping angel), leisure (Amanita), and the sacred (the Hands of the Almighty) (Taleb, 2016, p. 14)

By affecting the electromagnetic waves of the brain through the vocal mixtures, the desired state is reached. This state manifests in the relaxation, euphoria, imagination of the ability to create, and travel to an imaginary world. These are all cases of artificial numbing or alienation from the reality. In this line, to listen to the digital drugs, the addicted must respect some conditions or rituals as follows:

- wearing oversize clothes;
- being blindfolded;
- drinking some water;
- putting a high-quality earphone;

- being in a slight lighted room (Aouidat, 2016, p. 08)

Second: the psychological and social effects of the digital drugs and the prevention and treatment methods:

The effects of the digital drugs are similar to those of the conventional drugs. Moreover, the digital drugs have worse effects on the health of the individual.

1. The neural and psychological effects of the digital drugs on the youths:

Dr. Raji al-Omda, neurosurgery counsellor at the UN medical committee, confirms that the loud musical doses negatively affect the electricity of the brain. These doses do not make the listener feel joy and ecstasy only; rather, they cause a mental hesitation moment that is very dangerous. This is because the youths feel joy while they are, in fact, numbed and pay less attention. In this line, they live a separation from the reality and experience a violent electrical wave in the brain that leads to spasms and absorption in thought.

In this line, Dr. Mohamed Ahmed, psychology professor at the University of al Azhar, points that the digital drugs get the youth in a state of holotropic effect that takes them, after a while, into the pre-consciousness state that is between the consciousness and unconsciousness. Here, man recalls back his memories and lives previous painful experiences that he cannot recall in the ordinary circumstance. Moreover, he may even recall his birth memories. This is a therapeutic method that must be carried out under the supervision of a doctor to renew the type of music and the duration of listening because its effect may be devastating as it amounts up to that of the normal drugs. Besides, this music may cause addiction. In this regard, it differs from one individual to another because some people have undiscovered epilepsy and, thus, feel spasms when hearing the music.

The US expert in psychological and neurological effects, Brigit Forgo, explains these mechanisms saying that the digital content relies on the technique of ear tapping that stimulates the brain to generate slow waves such as Alpha waves that are related to the relaxation state, and fast waves such as Beta waves that are related to the state of vigilance and concentration. Here, the listener feels a state of unconsciousness accompanied by hallucinations and loss of the physical and mental balance. In addition, she sees that the excessive use of the stimulating doses may, in the long-run, lead to insomnia or anxiety, just like the stimulants used in treating some pathological cases (Abu Sari, 2010, pp. 07-08)

- The digital drugs lead to the decrease of the efficiency of the short-term memory that rapidly recalls information.
- They increase the depression level after a short period.
- They lead to undistinguishing the features of the variant tapping.
- The frequency has harmful effects on the acoustic and nervous system, mainly with the recurrent use because the sounds are at 400 HZ (Ben Safhan, 2015, pp. 05-07).

2. The effects of the digital drugs on the social and psychological state of the youths:

- The alienation of the youths from the reality and their quest for a fake ecstasy, whose existence is not scientifically proved, weakens the ability of social adaptation.
- The productive efficiency of the youth decreases due to the alienation.
- A psychological addiction to these sounds takes place.

The danger of the digital drugs lies within the fact that:

- It is easy to have access to them through the internet.
- Their cost is low; therefore, parents cannot know about it.
- There are no clear physical symptoms.
- It is easy to have access to them at any age, as they require just a computer and headphones.
- There is no legal environment that combats this vocal poison (Ben Safhan, 2015, p. 11).
 - They cause weakness, psychological instability, and maladjustment with life.
 - They lead to familial issues such as divorce, absence of communication, neglect, and violence.
 - The parents spoil their children and make them subject to addiction to the digital drugs (Labsir & Labyed, 2021, pp. 60-61)

Taking digital drugs in Algeria (University male youths from the campus as a model):

The digital drugs threaten the Algerian youths as they can consume it whenever the chance allows, as the drugs are easily available. Technology, medicine, law, and religion experts agree that they are very dangerous and easily grab the victims who show spasms and abnormal movements. In this line, experts whom we interrogated launched a warning saying, "Beware, the danger is coming to Algeria" because this phenomenon is close to children and adolescents. Sadly, the addiction penetrated the society, all along with the addiction to the conventional drugs (<https://www.echoroukonline.com>)

The digital drugs are widespread among the males and are consumed at the university, mainly by the campus students according to Ennahar TV. The digital drugs, Iposer, are freely available on social media in the form of musical tracks that resemble the Mason music that conjures devils. In this regard, once the youths listen to this music, the latter penetrates the mind where there is a sensitive area in the nervous system that sends certain frequencies that stimulate involuntary movements, accompanied by crying and irritation, according to Mrs. Amina Harich, an expert in psychology. Thus, this phenomenon is foreign to the Algerian society and triggers the curiosity of the youths that get addicted to it (<https://www.ennabartv.net>).

Moreover, according to Al Hurra TV in its interview with a young man addicted to the digital drugs, they are cheaper than the conventional ones that some youths cannot buy. Since the young man is addicted to conventional drugs, he tried the digital ones to quit them. Thus, he found out they have the same effect of ecstasy and joy. In the same context, ICTs experts confirm that these musical files have an effect on the mind similar to that of the normal drugs. The experts of drugs recovery warn of this scourge that has an effect on the brain activity and control the psychological state. The digital drugs are made up of mono or dual files that numb the mind. They are promoted for through nets that produce MP3 files for free. Nevertheless, if the consumer wants a bigger dose, he has to buy it. In this vein, the bigger the dose is, the more expensive it is. Consequently, the youths feel alienated and may commit suicide if they do not quit them in the suitable time. Sadly, instead of doing sports, the youths consume these technological poisons that destroy their minds and threaten their lives with a simple click. In addition, they weaken the beliefs, psyche, and target the brain. Their effects cannot be treated with injections or medicines. The reason behind this addiction is the negative consumption of

the internet and social media and the freedom allowed to the youths far from their families. In this regard, Islam bans this scourge because every numbing substance is sinful (<http://www.alhurra.com>).

Methods of prevention and treatment of the digital drugs:

1. The methods of prevention:

- It is necessary to ban these sites and contents before they are posted. Moreover, the promoters must be controlled by the governmental institutions in collaboration with the Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- Psychological counseling committees should make some awareness activities and applications that suit the thought of the youth, mainly at the universities in collaboration with their administrations.
- Computers must not be put in the children's rooms, and had better be placed in open space so that the child feels controlled (Al Salah, 2015, p. 44)

The methods of treatment:

- Stringent laws must be enacted against the use of these drugs.
- The role of the combatting teams must be promoted to deal with the sites that post such drugs and report them to be banned by the state.
- A new international collaboration must be created to reach these sites to take the necessary measures.
- Preventive applications must be developed based on knowing the motives that lead the university youths to consume the digital drugs. Thus, the imbalance of the social role of the individual and his deprivation of this role are one of the strong factors behind the consumption of drugs. For instance, various social circumstances press the awareness of the young man about his social role as an offshoot of the new values to the Arab families.
- It is necessary to promote the role of the social counsellor inside the university campus and to hold workshops about the positive use of social media. In addition, it is necessary to continue the war against the negative phenomena in collaboration with the family to protect the student inside the school and family. (Abir Najm & al Khaldi, 2019)

Conclusion:

Based on what was said, we can say that the digital drugs that are one offshoot of modern technology have lately penetrated the Algerian society even though they are old and had been used for therapeutic purposes. Their use requires some rituals and conditions that threaten the life. The consumption of such drugs is, sadly, accompanied by the consumption of the conventional ones. This increases the risk of the death as the youths may suicide at any time without knowledge of the family due to the absence of physical symptoms unlike the traditional drugs. The youths may be absorbed in their worlds and suffer school delay. For instance, there was a young man whom people thought was addicted to normal music; however, they discovered he was addicted to digital drugs after he had committed suicide. These models are various in our society. In this line, the risk of the digital drugs exceeds that of the conventional ones as they lead to mental disorders and many psychological diseases. The sad news is that the families do not control their children. Thus, the prevention is better

than treatment. In the end, we can make some suggestions to help limit the risks of this phenomenon as follows:

- The suggested treatment is that the family should control its children to know the music and the electronic content they consume. Besides, it must set a firewall against the sites that post such contents.
- Punishments must be enacted against the consumers and dealers of such contents.
- It is necessary to set awareness programs by psychological experts and educational counselors, and inform the youths about the dangers of this scourge.
- Youths must pay more attention to the religious aspect.
- Youths must do sports and hobbies such as swimming, horse riding, and archery.
- The youths must focus more on work, study, language learning, and the future.
- The youths must abandon the bad peers and go back home after school.
- The youths must maintain their mental and psychological health as their loss deteriorates life.

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