

Parental View on Free Fire Game Impact on Children Mental Health and Effectiveness of Control Measures

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: The primary purpose of this study was to better understand what parents think Free Fire is doing to their children's academic performance, emotional well-being and mental health. The study also took into account what the parents do to prevent or minimize the impact. This study was guided by two relevant theories. Social learning theory describes how children imitate behaviors they see, while parental mediation theory describes how parents can control their children's media consumption by keeping an eye on them and communicating with them.

Methodology: The study used purposive sampling and was qualitative in nature. Fifteen parents from Lahore were chosen whose children (between the ages of 8 and 16) frequently play Free Fire. The data collected from in-depth interviews were examined using thematic analysis to find significant trends and patterns in the observations of parents.

Findings: The result of this research provided significant wisdom for Parents, Educators, Game Developer and Especially to the Digital Rating Board. It encouraged responsible parenting and game design, which will eventually decrease the negative effects of children's internet gaming and promote the growth of healthier children in society.

Conclusion: The research highlights the growing role of gaming Free Fire in the perceptions of the parents regarding the daily activities of their children, their achievements in school, socialization, and their psychological well-being. More gaming is linked to increased irritability, aggressiveness, emotional dysregulation, sleeping problems, and lack of attachment to face-to-face social relationships. The parents and teachers continuously noted decline in academic performance and attention which adversely affected academic engagement and attention among children.

Keywords: Online Games, Free Fire, Battle Royale, Parental Views, Mental Health.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile gaming has emerged as one of the most well-liked entertainment options in the current digital era, especially among adolescents and children. In nations like Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, Garena Free Fire has become one of the most popular online games available.

The game, which was created by the 111 Dots Studio as well as released through Garena in 2017, immediately became well-known throughout the world thanks to its short matches, accessible design, and thrilling action. It was named the "most popular vote game" by the Google Play Store in 2019 (Agnihotri, 2020), it had received over 284 million downloads worldwide (Business of Apps, 2024).

In the multiplayer Battle Royale game Free Fire; fifty players may land on an island to fight for survival. Until just one player or team is left, players gather weapons, locate tools, and eliminate other players. Saputraa (2023) claims that the game's fast-paced matches, which last barely ten minutes, keep players interested. This structure of reward, in a brief time frame, can develop addictive behaviors and stimulate a volatile gameplay habit (Gao, 2023). The game allows, in various modes - Solo, Duo, or Squad - cooperation, teamwork and strategic play (Safdar and Eman, 2025; Khan and Safdar, 2025; Saputraa, 2023).

Players can also generate strategies, have fun, and develop friendships using real-time voice chat communication (Abidah et al., 2023). Free Fire can operate well on low-end smartphones deficit, just like its other battle royale equivalent titles, PUBG and Call of Duty, allowing millions of young adults, including those in low and middle-income countries, to play (Huda and Hotimah, 2020). It is so widely played by students from school-age to late adolescent, due to being widely accessible on low-cost electronic devices and due to being free to download, is something that parents and families find concerning.

Parents have actually observed detrimental behavior alterations in their children, due to excessive playing time. Children do have symptoms of addiction, playing the game for hours a day, skipping school, and displaying irritable or unstable mood. Addiction to a video game, especially those with violent images like Free Fire, has been associated with emotional issues, refusal to comply, and increased the usage of harsh language (Wirati et al., 2024; Safdar and Waseem, 2025; Aziz et al., 2025).

Erofonina et al., (2021) found that the overindulgence of play diminishes children's emotion-regulating skills and produces uncontrollable behavioral responses, such as anger, yelling, or impatience. Parents have also raised questions regarding the competitive and even aggressive nature of the games encouraging children to copy violent behavior in real life.

The impact of gaming can be particularly problematic when we look at gaming addiction and the impact it can have on mental health. The World Health Organization (2023) suggests that the mental well-being of children has a significant impact on their emotional and cognitive development. While this might not be the complete list of effects of excessive gaming, it does, however, provide challenges with attention, stress, and violence (Rumpf et al., 2021; Akbas and Isleyen, 2024). Children can have anxiety if they lose the game or do not advance to the next level. This anxiety may manifest itself in physical responses, for example, having headaches, biting nails, or being unable to sleep. After seeing children play for periods of time, parents have noted that their children demonstrated behaving in unhappiness, restless behavior or became social withdrawn. These responses correspond with previous literature of anxiety and a sleep disorder related to gaming addiction (Safdar and Malik, 2025; Fossum et al., 2014; Dai & Ouyang, 2025).

Another major area of concern is social behavior. Parents have also stated that their children prefer to play video games rather than spend time with their friends or family. Their kids often are defiant, socially withdrawn and speak disrespectfully. Some research has suggested that even over-gaming can result in a withdrawal from socialisation and a loss of emotional sensitivity making it harder for children to form healthy relationships (Lutfiwati, 2018; Munawir, 2019; Surbakti, 2017). When children start relying too

much on the formal world, they are not as socially involved in real life, and this, of course, seems likely to lead to isolation or depression.

As time allotted to game play goes up, academic performances also go down. Children that play lots of hours of Free Fire tend to have very limited attention for work in school, rush through their assignments, and are inattentive during class. Children who play too many video games are also specifically related to declines in performance at school (Gentile, 2009).

Teachers and parents see that children who are dependent on Free Fire have short attention spans, are impatient, and are becoming uninterested in schoolwork, which is indicative of serious behavioral and cognitive consequences that interfere with educational outcomes. As a result, many parents try to control their gaming habits in their children. Some parents use mobile apps, while others set specific hours for games, limit how long children can use a device, or simply limit screen time.

Nevertheless, not all parents possess the skills or consistency necessary to successfully implement these tactics. According to research, effective digital parenting calls for active supervision as well as limitations in order to assist children comprehend acceptable content and responsible online conduct (Kaya and Mutlu-Bayraktar, 2021). Additionally, Manap and Durmuş (2021) stressed that rather than outright forbidding, parents should stay up to date on digital trends and offer balanced assistance.

According to Nagy et al. (2023), there are three forms of parental mediation strategies, and their main categories are monitoring (observing children's usage and behavior), restrictive mediation (making rules and limits), and active mediation (when discussing the content with children). Monitoring is believed to be the most successful of these since it creates awareness without completely eliminating the youngster from technology. In order to help children utilise digital entertainment with healthy behaviours, education and social connection, parents are crucial role models (Benedetto and Ingrassia, 2021; Griffith, 2023).

Garena Free Fire shows the pros and cons of digital gaming, promoting creativity and social interaction while being addictive and causing school problems. Its popularity among children requires more parental supervision and education. This study seeks to understand parental experiences and perceptions of Free Fire's impact on children's mental health, to explore rules for a healthy gaming routine. Findings will provide valuable insights for parents, educators and policymakers to help support children's mental well-being as well as balanced digital play.

1.1 Problem Statement

The growing popularity of online games targeted at players aged 12 and over, such as Free Fire, amongst children as young as eight years of age, has raised concerns regarding possible implications for, social connection and academic performance and mental well-being. Previous research examined the broad effects of being involved in online video games. However, there is a lack of research that captures parent perceptions of Free Fire's effect on their children's mental health. Likewise, parenting techniques to limit these effects such as limits on screen-time, surveillance of game content and the provision of behavioral advice remain understudied. Parents may have an important role in the monitoring of their children's video game behaviour which may be important for the promotion of healthy gaming behaviour. Prior studies on this topic have highlighted the importance of family-centered interventions (Limone et al. 2023) and the role of parental involvement in the prevention and mitigation of adolescent video game addiction (Jimenez & Hidalgo 2024), but very little research effort has been devoted to parental interventions to help younger children cope with games of concern such as Free Fire. In an effort to fill this research gap, the study will look at the perception of Free Fire by parents and their approaches in reducing potential negative effects on children's health.

1.2 Study Objectives

This research is driven by the following Objectives

1. To determine the views of parents towards video gaming Free Fire and their children's experiences
2. To explore the effects of Free Fire addiction on children's mental health, particular with regards to stress, aggression, and lack of interest in school.
3. To investigate the methods parents employ to monitor and control their Children' Free Fire gaming.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section offers a thorough analysis of the body of research on the subject of the study, including how parents evaluate the mobile game Free Fire, how it affects children' mental health, and how successful parental control strategies are. The literature review is divided into six main thematic sections: (1) how common mobile battle-royale gaming is among children and teenagers; (2) particular mental health consequences linked to excessive gaming; (3) social behaviour and peer interactions mechanics and risk factors specific to battle-royale formats; (4) lack of academic performance; (5) sleep patterns and physical activities (6) interventions and the efficacy of control measures; with identified gaps in the literature. The aim is to present an overview of current knowledge, to underline inconsistencies and gaps, and to allow for the current study to be established.

2.1 Parental Perception

Parents' views about video games such as Free Fire Battle Royal are established based upon the potential benefits and drawbacks, regarding benefits and risks associated with these forms of digital entertainment. Many parents understand the appeal of Free Fire to children, and even young children below this age, as a form of recreation that allows for socialization and cognitive skill development. Yet, parents always express their concern because prolonged gaming could lead to adverse consequences in children's behaviour, mental health, and academic performance.

Noor and Abbas (2021) had studied in Pakistan, the parental anxiety due to children's excessive play of video games where too much screen time can cause behavioral and cognitive problems. The study revealed that parental supervision and involvement was crucial in supporting their children in developing healthy habits. The research also reported that co-gaming and co-viewing became important dimension of family interactions of which parents intentionally participate in video-game playing (Hassan, 2023).

In a study conducted with 112 parents, it has been noticed that over 70% of the parents play online games with their children. At the same time, concerns were reported with the games, mostly with the language, violence and sexual themes. Most parents, however, were supportive of their children's gaming choices, and expected their children's participation in gaming (Lim, 2019). Saputra (2023) investigated the communication of children and parents about their Free Fire addiction. The parents in the study showed a certain understanding of Free Fire as harmless entertainment for some children, while others saw it as a source of emotional and behavioral problems, including anger and irritability.

Saputra (2023) concluded that parent's ideas surrounding Free Fire is determined by understanding the impact of gaming, as well as their own preference as children towards gaming. This conclusion corresponds with Garena's (2023) description of parental involvement. While some parents are actively involved in their children's gaming experiences, others are detached from the possible drawbacks of gaming altogether.

2.2 Impact on Children' Mental Health

Excessive Free Fire use has been linked to an increase in stress and anxiety in children and teenagers. According to a study by Beulah et al. (2023), as a result of playing Free Fire, 72% of students between the ages of 12 and 17 had moderate psychological issues. In the same spirit, Shrestha et al. (2024) discovered a strong link between an addiction to online gaming and elevated anxiety and sadness in Kathmandu Valley teenagers. These findings suggest that prolonged gaming sessions are linked to a permanent pattern of detrimental impacts on mental health.

People who play video games for extended periods of time run the risk of gathering multiple illnesses linked to a sedentary lifestyle, including blood clots, heart difficulties, muscle atrophy, and an unhealthy diet (King et al., 2019). Prolonged gaming has been associated with musculoskeletal pain, which includes wrist, back, and neck discomfort (Harding, 2021). Long-term usage of screen for online gaming can lead to headaches, impaired vision, and eyestrain (Pelletier et al., 2020)

Adolescent aggressiveness has been found to rise in response to exposure to aggressive material in Free Fire. Elementary school adolescents who were hooked to Free Fire showed signs of anger and rude behavior toward friends and teachers, as described by Febriady et al. (2022). In support of the above, Zareen et al. (2023) found a strong positive relationship between violence and Free Fire addiction that was controlled by negative emotions. These results imply that young players' aggressive actions may be influenced by violent video game material.

Overgaming has frequently been connected to decreased sleep duration and lower sleep quality. Teenagers who spend too much time on screens, particularly while playing video games like Free Fire, have been shown to have difficulty in falling sleep and shorter sleep duration (Polos et al., 2015). According to this study, teenagers who spent over two hours a day playing video games slept less, which had a detrimental impact on their general health. Kılıç and Konuksever's (2023) study investigates the connection between elementary school students' sleeping patterns and their use of video games. Excessive video gaming has been linked to sleep disturbances in youngsters, including trouble getting asleep and poor quality sleep.

Social interaction cause anxiety and this is only because of online gaming addiction which have a complicated relationship. As to a study conducted by Mazhar et al. (2023) teenagers who have an addiction to online gaming suffer from greater levels of social stress, which may be related to fewer social interactions in real life. The results showed a strong link between excessive gaming on the internet and increased feelings of social anxiety, especially among teenage boys. Excessive gaming may cause social disengagement and avoidance of in-person encounters, according to the study.

Investigating the impact of Free Fire on students on their academic achievement, interest in learning, and aggression, researchers Septinarini and Alimuddin (2024) demonstrated Free Fire was negatively correlated with interest in learning, as the students had a decreased interest in learning as they spent more time gaming. Similarly, Fatima and Amin (2023) demonstrated that, adolescents with online gaming disorder, performed significantly lower academically.

2.3 Parental Control Measures

As online games, such as Free Fire, become more prevalent, concerns about the mental health of children and their potential for gaming addiction has increased. Parental direction is an essential element in regulating children gaming behaviors in order to prevent adverse consequences resulting from excessive gaming practices. Several interventions have been developed to assist parents in the management of their children's gaming habits in a healthy manner and to promote a healthy balance between gaming and other family priorities, such as school assignments, social networks, and physical activity.

One of the best strategies for parents is to have children play video games for a set amount of time. Research suggests that limiting children and adolescents' exposure to violent video games (e.g., Free Fire)

also protects them from developing video game addiction and other mental health issues (Przybylski and Weinstein, 2017). Gentile et al. (2017) found that limiting children and adolescents' exposure to screen time, especially video games, also helps prevent negative psychological issues. In their study, Gentile and colleagues found that children that participated in video gaming in moderation as well as outdoor or other types of physical activity and family time failed to report mental health issues and higher levels of emotional well-being.

Study indicates that one effective way to lessen addiction is to build strong bond with their children. It also emphasizes how important the parent-child relationship is and how gender inequalities may exist when evaluating and treating children and adolescents who have shown pathological signs of an addiction to internet gaming (Choo, 2014). Similarly, in a study by Choi (2023) gaming habits are influenced by the type of parent-child relationship in terms of warmth and communication. Chen et al. (2022) found that adolescents who reported that their parents were warm, and assertive, and exercised appropriate control had better gaming habits.

The importance of supervising children during their play can be explained by various reasons that may be such as keeping children safe against the online predator and harmful or violent information. It will also help the parents realize potential issues and understand the interests of their children.

Donati et al., (2021) state that it can also assist parents in educating their children on how they can play video games in a responsible and effective manner. A study by Da Charlie et al. (2024) explored how strategic interventions in parents could be used to reduce the levels of addiction to internet gaming in children. The qualitative study demonstrated that excessive gaming can be successfully avoided by understanding children's interests, spend quality time with them, and establishing reasonable boundaries. By creating a supportive atmosphere, these actions reduce the risk of developing a gaming addiction.

3. THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Two fundamental theories serve as the basis for this study's analysis of the impact of digital gaming, particularly Free Fire Battle Royale Game, on children as well as how parents view and react to those effects:

Social Learning Theory (Albert Bandura, 1977) and Parental Mediation Theory (Nathanson, 1999), Every theory contributes to the explanation of many aspects of the research, from parental tactics and gaming rewards to the behavioral effects of children.

3.1 Social Learning Theory

According to Bandura's Social Learning Theory, people, particularly children, learn behaviors and emotions from watching and modeling others. Children frequently replicate violent, aggressive, competitive, or joyous behavior modeled in Free Fire. Learning these modeled influences can impact children's moods, focus, and emotional regulation in everyday life.

The theory is based on four essential processes, which are attention; retention; reproduction; and motivation. Free Fire attracts attention through its thrilling and fast-paced gameplay. Repetition of the content helps aid the retention of modeled behaviors. Children may reproduce (imitate) behavior in their own spoken language or behavior. Motivation comes from social reinforcement, such as peer feedback, specifically winning online sessions.

The idea adds to Objectives 1 and 2, and how children internalize behaviors and emotional responses connected to playing games, which may impact their mental health and social relationships.

3.2 Parental Mediation Theory

It is essential to monitor children's play for many reasons, which may include protecting them from online predators and exposure to harmful or violent content.

Nathanson's Parental Mediation Theory (1999), further developed by Livingston and Helsper (2008), investigates the different forms of mediation parents employ to influence their child's media exposure (e.g., active mediation (discussing content), restrictive mediation (drawing a line or setting limits), and co-viewing/co-playing (participation in the activity)).

There are three postulations within this idea, (1) children are proactive consumers of media, (2) parental mediation can impact how they consume media and (3) the different tactics of mediation yield different outcomes. PMT is relevant to this study because it relates to our Objective 3, which examines how active supervision and regulation of free fire gaming consumption occurs by parents.

Parents try to reduce undesirable effects such as violence, addiction, scholastic decline, and social disengagement by imposing time constraints, topic controls, and open talks.

This is also related to objective 4, since it focuses on how parent-child connection and communication influence children's games opinions, feelings, and behavioral results. For example, regular parental talk about game material might help youngsters discern between fiction and reality, whereas restricting measures can decrease excessive exposure and mental dependence on gaming.

Together, these two ideas provide a complimentary foundation for understanding the mental, emotional and behavioral effects of gaming on children, as well as parental reactions aimed at minimizing these impacts.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative methodology based on primary data to examine how parents perceived the video game Free Fire, how it impacts their child's mental health, and how they try to limit or manage their youngsters' gaming habits.

An exploratory research design was adopted in order to understand better the parental fears about their children in terms of their concentration, level of education, emotional expression and physical wellbeing as a byproduct of long durations of gaming.

4.2 Sampling Design

The purposive sampling method was applied to identify participants recommended by the parents of children aged between 8 and 16. Purposive sampling is a method that is commonly used in qualitative research for the purpose of discovering and selecting individuals or groups who are particularly knowledgeable or experienced in a phenomenon of interest-Palinkas, et al., 2015.

4.3 Sampling Size

Fifteen parents were interviewed to ensure adequate depth of understanding of their concerns and experiences, as well as to provide a spectrum of perspectives. A Qualitative study of Internet Gaming Disorder among Rural left behind children in china, it includes sample size of 7 parents (bao et al., 2025). According to the study (Werner, 2004) interviews were conducted with 12 Parents should investigate how they viewed their relationship with a child who engages in problematic gaming behavior. To assure more varied perspectives, improve data richness, and increase the validity of thematic conclusions, this study involved 15 parents. To capture a broader range of perspectives across various family dynamics and parental approaches, a slightly larger number of participants was considered necessary.

4.4 Study Area / Target Area

The study has concentrated on the suburban and urban society of Lahore, where children normally played Free Fire. These communities gave a range of the views of the parents of varying backgrounds. The study used the following particular places: Pak Arab Housing Society, Central Park, DHA Main Boulevard, Model Town, and Chungi Amer Sidhu. Through this variety of fields, the research could investigate the

perceptions of parents with varying socioeconomic status and cohabitation on the adverse consequences of gaming on mental wellbeing and the protective measures implemented by parents. The families of the well-off and deprived neighborhoods were used in the research to offer a more comprehensive and balanced answer.

4.5 Target Population

The target segment was parents of children who played the Free Fire Battle Royal game regularly and were aged between eight and sixteen.

4.6 Data Collection Tool

Semi structured in depth interviews were used to explore parent perceptions about Free Fire on behavior of children, emotional wellness, stress related issues, academic performance and mental health of the children. The open-ended questions were used to enable the participants to tell more about their experiences and concerns.

4.7 Data Analysis Tool

The answers obtained in the test were evaluated in accordance with the method of thematic analysis offered by Braun and Clarke (2006) by determining the major themes and meanings through manual means. Based on the goals of the research, there were six main themes that were singled out with some sub-themes. This methodological, procedural practice encouraged anonymity, precision and faithfulness in interpreting the perceptions of mothers.

5. FINDING & ANALYSIS

Theme 1: Parental Perception on Free Fire Game

Most mothers expressed confusion and fear after learning their child had been playing Free Fire. They described it as an aggressive game because it "fills the child's mind with aggressiveness rather than calmness" (p. 4). Many mothers stated that when they were initially curious, alarm set in fast after they heard the loudness of the firing, violence of sights, and changes in their child's language and behavior. As one mother described when, "I came to see and understand it was a game with guns, I got worried about the shootings and then the amount of time he was playing" (M-3).

Mothers, even those who were less familiar with technology, raised concern about the volume level of the game, as well as the violence, and said this was "not for children" (M-12). Educated parents simply recognized that their child was drawn to the character designs, weapon upgrades, and online conversations with strangers, fearing that their child could be negatively impacted (M-9 and M-15). All mothers from joint or nuclear families generally agreed that Free Fire leads to impatience, aggression, and emotional disruption in their child.

Theme2: Mental and Emotional Impact

This theme, asks how mothers observed psychological, emotional, or physical changes in their children when they played Free Fire. All 15 mothers reported that Free Fire negatively affected their child's mood, patience, behavior, social interaction, and daily habits, which means all of them made a connection between the game and mental health issues.

Numerous mothers reported that their children become upset, impatient and agitated while or after playing. They yelled, shouted, and used aggressive language, depicting the violence and competitiveness of the game. The mothers claimed, "I have witnessed numerous instances of frustration and anxiety particularly if he loses or when the game does not go his way" (M-12). "His voice often sounds harsh or arrogant when he gets upset during the game" (M-8). Some children, even use gaming language in their non-gaming activities, often referred to as "kill him" and "bot," indicating that the gaming influenced their emotions. The mothers also reported increased obstinacy and instances of violence towards their siblings

and cousins. A parent expressed, "He talks aggressively to his cousins and siblings sometimes using a rude tone of voice" (M-4). "His tone gets louder, and at times he talks in a forceful or angry tone, replicating the demeanor of the video game" (M-15).

Due to the expectations of excellence and winning, many children also showed signs of being mentally fatigued and affected by stress. A mother mentioned, "If he wins, he seems overly excited, if he loses, he gets angry or shuts down" (M-15). Some children seemed out of touch with reality due to this long mental engagement when they were not really aware or had to think about the game, often running game sequences again and again in their heads. "He often sits silently and talks to himself sometimes making up fake stories like he is a part of a war," a mother stated (M-1). In addition, there were physical cues of mental stress such as children complaining of headaches, eye strain, dark bags under the eyes, and nail biting. "His habit of biting his nails has gotten so bad that his fingers appear nearly bare" (M-8),

Children also frequently preferred isolation and avoiding social events and family contacts. "He devotes the majority of his energy in this online setting, avoids gatherings, and ignores calls from friends" (M-8). Additionally, they verbally communicated their discomfort by stating things like, "My head spins and my eyes feel tired" (M-12). Together, these physical, social, and emotional markers show that Free Fire having a severe detrimental effect on children' mental health, influencing their behavior, emotions, social lives, and general well-being.

Theme 3: Social Behavior and Peer Interaction

Mothers saw that their children's social conduct changed when they played Free Fire. Many children have lost interest in real-life friends, outdoor play, and family get-togethers. Rather, they spend more time with their virtual friends, frequently using rude, hostile, or boisterous language that they had picked up from the game. "He occasionally repeats abusive words or phrases which he hears from teammates, which aren't good for an innocent child," a mother reported (M-2). "Because of this activity, he has created a habit of refusing to accept loss, which means that with me he keeps arguments," another mother said (M-8).

Further, children favored online conversations over in-person interactions with their virtual acquaintances. Mothers were concerned about their children being influenced by outsiders. "We have no idea who they are or how they may be teaching him" (M-10). Online relationships could be helpful for teamwork, according to some mothers, but children at that age couldn't handle them safely. "It's inappropriate for children this age because they can't handle such information and don't know who the other person is" (M-1).

Theme 4: Academic Performance

After playing Free Fire, mothers saw a decline in the academic achievement of their children. Children frequently put off doing their assignments, had trouble concentrating, and focused more on the game than their studies. Distraction, restlessness, and poorer marks were also noted by teachers. "His concentration span has significantly decreased," stated one mother. He frequently appears preoccupied when studying. (M-11) Kids frequently used justifications like "Just 10 more minutes" to play, which caused them to put off learning for hours. "What was once a concentrated hour of schoolwork has now become an ongoing negotiation" (M-4). Children's focus in class also decreased. They appeared exhausted, spoke discussing the game, and interrupted classes, according to the teachers.

"Teachers say he appears less attentive, and he frequently looks tired in class." (M-6) Some parents were warned by the school or advised to see a doctor about the connection between gaming and academic deterioration. Teachers even suggested that we see a doctor because they thought the drop might be related to gaming addiction. (M-8) In general, Free Fire caused youngsters to become distracted from their schoolwork, lose attention, and do worse academically.

Theme 5: Sleep Patterns

Free Fire has significantly interfered with children's sleep patterns, daily routines, and sporting activities, according to mothers. It is difficult for numerous children to get up early the morning since they remain up late finishing matches. They frequently get little sleep, which leaves them exhausted, lethargic, and uninterested in household or academic chores. He frequently stays up late, wakes up exhausted, skips a meal, and complaints of headaches and exhaustion, according to one mother. (M-11)

There were also reports of unusual sleeping habits. Some kids pretend that the game is still going on in their dreams by talking, yelling, or mumbling game speech as they sleep, repeating offensive terms from the game, kicking their legs, or making aggressive motions. "Sometimes he screams, kicks into the air, or says 'kill him' while sleeping," a mother explained, "I am worried about how he feels emotionally". (M-15)

In general, Free Fire influences daily routines, sleep quality, physical health, and mental focus, demonstrating a strong connection between individual addiction to gaming and associated health issues, both physical and mental health.

Theme 6: Parental Control Measures

Mothers were taking an active role in overseeing and regulating their children's gaming in Free Fire to eliminate any risk of misuse or associated problems. Many put in place strict time limits for gaming to ensure that gaming performance occurred after homework and any household responsibilities were completed, and also put limits on gaming on school nights. "I set limits on gaming times to make sure he doesn't go over. If I notice that he has played too often or too consistently, I will step in right away," said one mother. (M-10) To continue overseeing their children's gaming behavior, mothers also mentioned using parental control software or applications. Specifically, they mentioned how they monitored game playtime and limited their children's daily screen time, and/or blocked certain applications utilizing applications like Google Family Link. As one mother described, "These applications allow me to set limits on time, see how much time per application, and shadow in-game chat conversations, but it only works if I stay involved and vigilant." (M-5)

Communication and structuring are also important strategies. Mothers make their best efforts to have open conversations with their children about the distinction between enjoyment and addiction, provide alternative and more productive engagements like reading, outdoor play, or other creative pursuits, or otherwise explain the point of limits. One of the participants explained to him the importance of the limits and recommended a balance between the games and other activities, (M-1) said.

5.1 Results

The study examined how the parents viewed Free Fire and the impact of the game on their children daily lives, sleep patterns, academic performance, socialization, psychological levels, and limitations placed on the children by parents. With this purpose, there were interviewed fifteen mothers and the analysis showed that there were some themes:

Parental View about Free Fire: Free Fire is a game that has a lot of violence and is highly competitive, which is why most of the mothers were bewildered and worried about it. Those mothers with complex technological and educational levels were able to explain the mechanics of the game through characters, game modes, weapons, and socializing on the Internet. Since the game provoked children, making them angry, impatient, and with a lot of emotional pandemonium, the parents, working in single parenting and co-parenting families, did not consider such to be an activity that children should engage in.

Mental and Emotional Effect: Mothers observed violent, impatient and emotionally unstable children following extended gaming. Children started using the language they acquired on the one hand playing games in their daily speech and on the other hand were characterized by emotional stress, mood swings, and lack of ability to control their dissatisfaction. Biting of nails, fatigue, and lack of personal cleanliness

were also observed many times in which the patient showed physical signs of mental distress and emotional depletion manifested by dark circles beneath the eyes.

Social Behavior and Peer Interaction: The children showed preference towards their online gaming friends as compared to their friends in real life, at the expense of their outdoor plays and time with their relatives. Mothers reported less family engagement, a more hostile form of communication and spent their time and energy outside of social interaction. Competitiveness in the context of virtual interactions raised the safety and mental health concerns of parents as a number of their children were communicating with strangers.

Academic Performance: The children were experiencing reduced attention duration, incomplete assignments, lack of time management ability, and reduced classroom involvement. Teachers confirmed the worry of most mothers regarding lowered performance and inability to concentrate in school. The interruption with the games that is produced outside of the home impacts the motivation and the practice consistency of the students academically.

Sleep Patterns: Overuse of gaming also affected the sleep pattern of children where late gaming, inability to wake up in the mornings, and being fatigued during the day of gaming increased. Behavioral and physical cues of sleep disturbance, including jerking, sleep talking and repetitive game language were common among mothers.

Parental Control Measures: Strategies in Parental Guidance: Parents Google Family Link and app time, console time restrictions or time, and left the determination of the time of the amount of time children could spend on screens to manage and restrict screen time. Organised procedures and managing the gameplay and discussion surrounding healthy use promoted healthy screen use. Mothers were especially keen to mention that technology could not be enough on its own without frequent adult contact and instructions.

6. CONCLUSION

The research highlights the growing role of gaming Free Fire in the perceptions of the parents regarding the daily activities of their children, their achievements in school, socialization, and their psychological well-being. More gaming is linked to increased irritability, aggressiveness, emotional dysregulation, sleeping problems, and lack of attachment to face-to-face social relationships. The parents and teachers continuously noted decline in academic performance and attention which adversely affected academic engagement and attention among children.

On the part of the parent, he complained of being seriously worried with the violent images of the game, the possibility of the internet gaming interaction with strangers, and the addictive nature of the gaming. Although digital gaming brings fun and social interaction, an unregulated degree of exposure may cause negative influences on the emotional and physical well-being of the child, not to mention his/her connections with the family.

The study findings highlight the importance of parental monitoring, involvement and routine balance to ensure children are not exposed to the psychological, scholastic and social harms of spending too much time online gaming. The communication, frequent observation of gaming habits and organization were found to be important strategies by the parents in an attempt to minimize the harm and yet give their children an opportunity of experienced gaming in a controlled setting.

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Conflict of Interest

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