

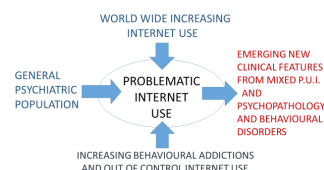


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Problematic internet use in psychiatric patients: A complex evolution of specific diseases symptom profile?

The use of Internet is a global phenomenon that now affects all areas of private and public life. Although it is commonly accepted that it is aimed at increasing general well-being and represents a powerful tool to support the majority of social and work relations, aberrations of its use grow in parallel with its general development. The still not precise definition of Problematic Internet Use (PIU) includes behavioral addictive behaviors such as internet addiction, online gambling, online shopping, online sexual addiction, etc., which are in themselves areas of pathological conduct. Even the use of the internet for the detection of progressively new and unrelated to the normal circuits of drug addiction substances of abuse is rapidly increasing. The dark web is the preferred location for illegal online pharmacies, as well as other networks linked to antisocial and criminal activities. The different forms of PIU often constitute the only or principal pathological course of people otherwise exempt from defined mental disorders. But recently there is a marked increase of PIU in patients primarily affected by psychiatric disorders, both personality disorders and specific mental disorders such as psychotic disorders, depressive or bipolar mood disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, etc. The use of internet often produces new ideational contents, alterations of the sense of reality, relational problems or behavioral compulsions in patients in which it often has a strong symptomatic value and can powerfully modify the basic clinical picture, as well as its response to treatments. The emergence of new forms of psychopathology as a result of the meeting of previous mental disorder and PIU seems to be a phenomenon deserving of the greatest clinical, legal and social attention.



Biography

Giuseppe Bersani is associate Professor, qualified Full Professor and Chair of Psychiatry of the Faculty of Pharmacy and Medicine of the Sapienza University of Rome, Head of the University Clinical Unit of the Fiorini Hospital of Terracina, Guest Professor of the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine. He has worked for many years in the fields of the psychiatric clinic, clinical neuroscience, clinical psychopharmacology and addictions, with particular reference to addictions to Novel Psychoactive Substances and behavioral addictions. On these issues he personally organized numerous international conferences. He is the author of 192 articles indexed on Scopus.

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