

Results. The study included 9,994 health professions students, primarily in the field of medicine, aged between 18 and 23 years. The majority of the students were unmarried, females, and most were in clinical years. The prevalence of behavioral addiction was 36% (95% CI: 20–51), with smartphone addiction being the highest at 46%, followed by internet addiction (42%), social media disorder (22%), and gaming disorder (4%). Substantial heterogeneity was observed among the studies. A funnel plot analysis assessed the potential for publication bias, revealing no significant indication of bias. A significant difference was observed between the groups.

Conclusion. This study identifies five distinct forms of behavioral addictions influencing the mental health and daily activities of health professions students. The findings underscore the need for longitudinal and interventional studies to address this technological threat.

Abstracts were reviewed by the RCPsych Academic Faculty rather than by the standard *BJPsych Open* peer review process and should not be quoted as peer-reviewed by *BJPsych Open* in any subsequent publication.

Prevalence and Interrelation of Irritable Bowel Syndrome With Generalized Anxiety Disorder Among Sudanese Medical Students, 2020

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Aims. This study aimed to determine the prevalence of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) among medical students at Khartoum University and to examine its association with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD).

Methods. This cross-sectional study was conducted between December 2020 and February 2021, using the Rome IV criteria to diagnose IBS and a 7-item generalized anxiety disorder (GAD-7) scale to assess GAD. A total of 395 self-administered questionnaires were distributed using proportional allocation based on percentages of students in each academic year and their gender. Simple random sampling was used to select participants. The analysis was done using SPSS, and a p-value of <0.05 was considered significant.

Results. We included 325 medical students with a mean age of 21.4 ± 2.2 years, and 69.5% females and 30.5% males. The overall prevalence of IBS was 16.6%, with the most common subtype being IBS-M (35%), followed by IBS-D (31%), IBS-C (28%), and IBS-U (6%). The prevalence of GAD was 22.8%, and anxiety was detected in 54.5% of students. 7.7% of students had both IBS and GAD, and there was a statistically significant relationship between IBS and GAD (Chi-square = 20.385; $p < 0.001$).

Conclusion. The study findings aligned with previous literature underscoring the prevalence of IBS and GAD among medical students at Khartoum University. Also, sheds light on a substantial association between them. Providing psychological support and stress management programs to medical students is paramount and key to a favorable prognosis.

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Comparative Psychological Evaluation of Individuals With and Without Cleft Lip and Palate: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

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Aims. This study sought to assess and compare the psychological well-being of both children and adults with cleft lip and palate (CLP) in contrast to those without CLP. The focus was on self-satisfaction regarding facial appearance, popularity among peers, and self-esteem.

Methods. This study was registered at the University of Dundee, including various study designs such as randomized controlled clinical trials, longitudinal, cross-sectional, and observational studies. Only studies concentrating on non-syndromic CLP in children and adults were considered. No limitations were set on age or language. Self-reports, including validated and unvalidated questionnaires, interviews, and observational/clinical assessments, were deemed suitable. Database searches were performed in Medline, Pubmed, Scopus, Cochrane, and Web of Science (January 2019). An electronic search yielded 334 results, with 74 articles meeting the inclusion criteria. After screening and risk of bias assessment, four articles were included in the qualitative analysis, three of which were included in the meta-analysis.

Results. The review encompassed four studies conducted in China, Japan, Sweden, and the United States, involving 442 participants (non-CLP control group $n = 305$, CLP group $n = 137$). While the majority of individuals with CLP did not exhibit significant psychological issues, certain challenges were noted, particularly concerning speech or hearing difficulties, depression, anxiety, and interpersonal relationships. Age did not seem to correlate with the occurrence or severity of psychological problems in CLP patients, with gender playing a significant role, as females tended to be more sensitive to facial appearance. The level of self-satisfaction was not statistically significant between the two groups ($OR = 0.85$) while the non-CLP group was more likely to rate themselves as being more popular among their peers ($OR = 1.48$). Also, the non-CLP group has higher self-esteem than CLP patients ($OR = 1.05$).

Conclusion. Limited evidence suggests that some individuals with cleft lip and palate may face psychological challenges, indicating a need for more structured approaches to assess the psychological well-being of CLP patients.

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A Systematic Review of Virtual Reality vs. Standard Social Skills Training for Improving Social Interaction Skills and Reducing Social Anxiety in Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

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Aims. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) poses unique challenges for social interaction and communication skills development in children. Various interventions, including virtual reality (VR) and social skills training, have emerged as potential approaches to address these challenges. This systematic review aims to evaluate and compare the effectiveness of VR Social Skills Training with Standard In-Person Social Skills Training in improving social interaction skills and reducing social anxiety levels in children with ASD.

Methods. A search was conducted across electronic databases (PubMed, PsycINFO, Cochrane Library and Scopus) for relevant studies published from 2000 to December 2023. Inclusion criteria include randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and observational studies comparing VR Social Skills Training with Standard In-Person Social Skills Training in children diagnosed with ASD within the specified age range. Two independent reviewers assessed study eligibility, conducted data extraction, and evaluated study quality. The primary outcomes included changes in social interaction skills and reduced social anxiety levels.

Results. From 1,239 studies initially identified, 25 met inclusion criteria post-screening. VR interventions ($n = 12$) showed significant improvements (80%) in social interaction skills (15% average anxiety reduction). Varied platforms were utilised, including virtual social scenarios. Using conventional techniques, standard interventions ($n = 13$) demonstrated improvements (75%) with a 12% average anxiety reduction. Comparative effectiveness between VR and Standard approaches lacked consistent significance. Subgroup analyses showed shorter interventions (4–8 weeks) induced rapid skill improvements, while longer-term ones (12+ weeks) sustained anxiety reduction. Younger participants (6–8 years) exhibited more pronounced skill enhancements and higher baseline anxiety correlated with greater improvement.

Conclusion. This review provides an overview of the current evidence on the comparative effectiveness of VR Social Skills Training and Standard In-Person Social Skills Training for children with ASD. The implications of this review extend to clinicians, educators, and policymakers involved in developing and implementing interventions aimed at improving social outcomes in children with ASD.

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Admissions to the National Forensic Mental Health Service Anteceding and Succeeding Its Relocation: A Dundrum Forensic Redevelopment Evaluation Study (D-FOREST)

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Aims. The Central Mental Hospital is the Republic of Ireland's only secure forensic hospital and the seat of its National Forensic Mental Health Service (NFMHS). We scrutinised admission patterns in the NFMHS during the period 01/01/2018–01/10/2023; before and after relocating from the historic 1850 site in Dundrum to a modern facility in Portrane on 13/11/2022.

Methods. This prospective longitudinal cohort study included all patients admitted during the above period. The study initially commenced in Dundrum and continued afterwards in Portrane. Data gathered included demographics, diagnoses, capacity to consent to treatment, and the need for intramuscular medication (IM) after admission. Therapeutic security needs and urgency of need for admission were collated from DUNDRUM-1 and DUNDRUM-2 scores rated pre-admission. Hours spent in seclusion during the first day, week, and month after admission were calculated. Data were collected as part of the Dundrum Forensic Redevelopment Evaluation Study (D-FOREST).

Results. There were 117 admissions during the 69-month period. The majority were male ($n = 98$). Most were admitted from prisons (87%). Schizophrenia was the most common diagnosis (55.8%). Mean DUNDRUM-1 triage security scores were in the medium-security range (2.84–3.15) during this period. At the time of admission, 53.8% required seclusion, 25.6% required IM medication, and 79.5% lacked capacity to consent to treatment. Those who required seclusion on admission had worse scores on the DUNDRUM-2 triage urgency scale ($F = 20.9$, $p < 0.001$). On linear logistic regression, the most parsimonious model resolved with five predictors of hours in seclusion during the first day and week, which were: D1 item 8 – Victim sensitivity/public confidence issues, D1 item 10 – Institutional behaviour, D2 item 2 – Mental health, D2 item 4 – Humanitarian, and D2 item 6 – Legal urgency. 50% required IM medication during their first week of admission and these patients had significantly worse scores on: D1 item 8 – Victim sensitivity/public confidence issues, D1 item 10 – Institutional behaviour, D2 item 2 – Mental health, and D2 item 4 – Humanitarian (all $p < 0.05$).

Conclusion. There was an increase in the frequency of admissions since relocating to Portrane. The results suggest that there was no change in overall triage security and urgency needs during the time period in question. Major mental illness related factors impacted the need for seclusion early in the admission, whereas factors linked to prison behaviour or personality-related factors were more associated with an ongoing need for seclusion at month one.

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Ketamine Efficacy Across All Formulations in Treatment Resistant Depression in Adult Population: A Rapid Review

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