Motives for Committing Crime and Addiction to Digital Drugs

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Abstract:

The phenomenon of addiction manifests in diverse, intricate forms, intricately woven with multiple causative factors, especially amidst the swift advancements in technology and information systems. The digital age has ushered in novel forms of cybercrime, notably the rise of digital drugs, a new addiction paradigm. These digital drugs, alarming in their prevalence within Algerian society, pose dire consequences for its populace. Utilizing audio files that emit specific vibrations, these drugs alter brain chemistry and electrical activity, mimicking the effects of traditional psychoactive substances.

The burgeoning issue, particularly among vital community segments, demands a multidisciplinary scientific approach to dissect the underlying motives and exacerbating factors threatening societal cohesion and stability. This paper seeks to explore the motivations behind this virtual malaise and the broader implications of digital drug addiction.

Keywords: Crime, Addiction, Digital Drugs.

Introduction:

Human behavior is a complex amalgam influenced by myriad factors, it is dynamic, molded by varying situations and shaped by individual culture, beliefs, desires, motivations, and the interpretation of external stimuli and environmental contexts. Moreover, no society is immune to deviant behaviors and criminal activities, as these are intrinsic characteristics of human social structures.

Thus, crime is as old as history itself. The rapid advancements in media, communication, and notably within the information and technology revolution have significantly expanded the reach and impact of the internet and its applications. The internet has become integral to human life, deeply ingrained across various backgrounds, orientations, races, genders, and cultures. It serves as a vital medium for accessing information, knowledge, and news freely.

However, recent technological developments have also spurred a rise in numerous crimes, jeopardizing the safety and stability of societies worldwide. Among these are the promotions of music with unusual tones, later identified as digital drugs, which stand out from other new phenomena due to their ostensibly positive portrayals aimed at attracting diverse societal groups.

Exploring the nature of digital drugs, this music functions not just as entertainment but as a sonic drug that mimics, and possibly exceeds, the effects of traditional narcotics in both effectiveness and impact. This criminal trend initially impacts the human brain upon exposure to the repetitive, sound-containing music.

Digital drugs have found significant popularity, particularly among the youth. Experiences vary: some users perceive it as a "great illusion," noting no effect beyond financial expenditure. Others suffer symptoms ranging from dizziness and elation to heightened activity levels, comparable to those of traditional drugs, and sometimes rapid heartbeats and severe headaches, coupled with a desire to terminate the experience as quickly as possible (Misoum, 2016, p. 164).

In Algeria, cases of addiction to digital drugs have emerged, indicating that these substances have infiltrated Algerian society, similar to trends observed in other Arab countries and globally. This phenomenon is posing a significant threat to the mental and physical health of the youth, driven by technological advancements and the globalization facilitated by the internet. This development necessitates urgent attention to address this

32

new form of electronic and digital addiction, which is considered harsher and more severe than traditional drugs according to numerous studies (Misoum, 2016, p. 164).

This research paper aims to explore the causes and motivations behind the engagement in this crime and addiction to digital drugs, as well as the effects that arise from it.

1- Definition of Crime:

Crime is a social phenomenon that emanates from beings possessing both body and psyche, with individual variations in composition and structure. Similar to war, crime originates in the minds of people and is continuously fueled by deteriorating social, economic, and psychological conditions. The distinction between criminality and deviance lies in their societal impacts: criminality entails behaviors that are legally punishable, whereas deviance only attracts disapproval and disdain, as it diverges from general laws and the moral codes governing society.

Deviance manifests as behavior that departs from the norm but does not incur legal punishment unless it escalates into crime. Broadly, crime is defined as behavior that violates the moral rules of a society, which are enforced through formal negative sanctions, or penalties. (Jaber, pp. 16-17)

1-1 Definition of Cybercrime (Information Technology Crime):

Cybercrime is characterized as unlawful activity aimed at copying, altering, deleting, or accessing information stored within a computer or diverting it through a system. This definition extends to include any unauthorized or illegal behaviors related to the electronic processing or transmission of data.

Cybercrime often involves entering forged data into systems, misusing outputs, and committing acts that become criminal due to their technical complexity, such as computer tampering. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development defines cybercrime comprehensively as any act or omission that results in an assault on material or intellectual property, facilitated directly or indirectly through the intervention of information technology.

This definition is particularly significant as it covers all aspects related to information crime and reflects the technical complexities of these offenses, providing a framework to address scientific and technical innovations. (Jubairi, 2015, pp. 56, 570)

1-2 Forms of Cybercrime:

Cybercrimes associated with the internet present unique challenges due to their novel and evolving nature; hence, a comprehensive listing of these crimes is not the goal here. Recognizing the critical need to combat information-related offenses, most Arab countries have enacted specific legislation aimed at mitigating the severe impacts of computer-related crimes.

These laws have achieved broad consensus through legal frameworks targeting information crimes. The discussion will touch upon several common forms of cybercrime:

- **Crimes of Insult and Defamation:** These offenses impact personal privacy through the use of modern electronic devices or by defaming individuals via various information technology methods, with the intent to cause harm. These are among the most prevalent cybercrimes. (Fattouna, 2017, p. 76)

- **Electronic Espionage Crime:** The widespread adoption of the internet among individuals and governments has heightened the risk of unauthorized spying or eavesdropping on communications through computers or information networks, irrespective of the eavesdropping's intent. This category of crime also includes breaches of the confidentiality of electronic correspondence, with some legal systems incorporating specific provisions targeting espionage on banking data. (Fattouna, 2017, p. 77)

- **Online Drug Trafficking:** In response to the pervasive issue of drug trafficking, Arab countries have enacted stringent measures, penalizing individuals who create websites on the information network with the intent to trade or promote drugs, psychoactive substances, or similar items. This legal framework is further reinforced by the Arab Convention to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking, adopted in 1996. The proliferation of the internet has not only facilitated traditional drug trafficking but has also expanded the methods of instructing drug use across various substances, intensifying parental concerns over their children's exposure to harmful influences beyond the traditional fears associated with bad company. As drug dealers' tactics become more sophisticated, a slew of related crimes have emerged, including the advent of digital drugs. (Fattouna, 2017, p. 78)

34

3- Definition of Drugs:

Drugs encompass any natural substance or laboratory preparation that, when used for non-medical purposes, can induce a temporary, partial, or total loss of consciousness, with the severity of this loss contingent upon the type and quantity of the substance consumed. Habitual use or addiction to these substances detrimentally affects the physical, psychological, and social well-being of an individual. (Radwan, 2007, p. 401)

Drugs also include all natural or chemical substances intended to alter feelings, mood, or mental perception, whether for medical applications or to modify an individual's state of consciousness. (Ziad, 2014, p. 181)

The World Health Organization characterizes drugs as any raw or prepared synthetic material that contains sedative, hypnotic, or stimulating properties, which, if misused for non-medical purposes, can foster dependency or addiction, thus inflicting psychological or physical damage on both the individual and society.

Similarly, the National Academy of Medicine defines them as natural substances whose psychotropic effects generate euphoria, driving repeated consumption that sustains these effects until psychological and physical disorders manifest. (Harboush, 2018, p. 184)

3-1 Nature of Digital Drugs:

The term "drugs" is derived from notions of numbness, laziness, lethargy, and relaxation, similar to the sensation described when a limb becomes numb, too relaxed to perform any movement. Drugs are agents that induce a loss of consciousness to varying degrees, as seen with substances like hashish and opium, or they dull the mental acuity necessary for normal functioning, characteristic of intoxicating substances that inhibit regular activities.

They also encompass any raw or manufactured substance containing stimulating or sedative elements that, when misused, can lead to addiction and inflict significant physical, social, and psychological harm on both the individual and the wider society. (Azouz, Gricha, 2020, p. 42)

3-2 Historical Roots of Digital Drugs:

The interaction between humans and sound waves is an ancient connection, arguably more ancient than commonly presumed. Humans are inherently responsive to rhythmic sounds, a trait rooted in the very rhythm of their heartbeats. This responsiveness is evident in ancient and primitive cultural practices where specific rhythmic sounds played

a central role, such as the rain dance among African tribes, the zar beats among Arabs, and the Liwa dance among tribal communities.

The concept of using sound waves as a therapeutic intervention was first identified by German physicist Heinrich Dove in 1839 and was not applied until 1970, when it was used to treat patients with mild depression who were averse to medication. This treatment utilized electromagnetic vibrations to stimulate the release of mood-enhancing chemicals in the brain. Today, the use of these sound wave treatments aims to replicate the effects of traditional drugs like morphine and cocaine.

However, the relief users feel is largely imaginary, a result of their mental conditioning to expect such effects. Typically, individuals are drawn to these sites out of curiosity or due to promotional activities, and they experience doses of 15 to 20 minutes during which they may feel euphoria and pleasure. (Azouz, Gricha, 2020, p. 42)

3-3 Concept of Digital Drugs:

Digital drugs consist of audio files that may be accompanied by visual elements, shifting shapes and colors designed to synchronize with the audio to enhance the brain's sensory deception. These files deliver sound waves at different frequencies into each ear. The brain, encountering these unfamiliar frequencies, attempts to synchronize the sounds from both ears to stabilize itself, which disrupts its electrical balance.

Depending on how the brain's electrical activity is altered, users can experience sensations similar to those produced by certain drugs, like euphoria. This effect is akin to a psychological, hallucinatory, or suggestive impact resulting from the audio-visual stimulation. Neuroscientists have linked certain sound waves and vibrations to specific brain waves and states.

Brigitte Forgo, an American expert in neuropsychological effects, elaborates on this process, explaining that digital drugs utilize a technique that involves tapping into the ears with two similar sounds at different frequencies. This disparity causes the brain to produce slow waves, such as alpha waves associated with relaxation, and fast waves, such as beta waves linked to alertness and focus.

Users often report feeling a disconnection from reality, accompanied by hallucinations and a loss of physical, psychological, and mental equilibrium. (Jaloul, Farhat, 2020, p. 69).

36

3-4 Mechanism of Action of Digital Drugs:

In the realm of digital drugs, the brain engages in an intricate process of trying to synchronize the audio frequencies received through both the right and left ears to attain a unified auditory perception. This synchronization effort leads to a state of electrical instability within the brain. Users select the type of 'drug' experience they desire based on the specific brain state and nature of electrical signals emitted after exposure to a particular digital drug.

By mapping these signals, researchers can replicate the brain states associated with various feelings, such as euphoria, tailoring digital drugs to induce specific patterns of brain activity that mimic the effects of physical drugs. (Al-Saffar, 2020, p. 23).

4. Reasons and Motives for Using and Becoming Addicted to Digital Drugs:

4-1 Definition of Addiction:

According to the Mental Health Organization in 1988, addiction is defined as the psychological or physical state that develops from the interaction between a living organism and a psychoactive substance, resulting in a variety of behavioral responses. These responses include a persistent compulsion to use the substance continuously or intermittently.

The World Health Organization further defines addiction as a state of temporary or chronic intoxication that is detrimental to the individual and society, arising from the habitual use of a natural or synthetic drug. Notably, addiction engenders an overwhelming need or craving, a tendency to increase dosage over time, and culminates in psychological or physical dependency.

Dr. Kumers delineates the progression towards addiction through five stages: 1- Predisposition and ease of access, 2- Experimentation, 3- Drug dominance over bodily functions, 4- Establishment of true addiction and loss of consciousness, 5- Physical and psychological decline. (Abou Saad, 2015, p. 267).

The symptoms and complications of addiction vary depending on the individual, the drug, and the environment, with continuous interactions reflecting the complex interplay among these factors. (Adam, 2005, p. 238).

4-2 Causes and Motives:

The motivations for using and becoming addicted to digital drugs are diverse and context-dependent. These include:

- **Globalization of the rights system and the fourth-generation right to information networks:** The open information space is increasingly recognized as a fundamental right under modern global laws and conventions. This recognition might inadvertently foster the global spread of digital drug trade under the guise of protecting these rights. Any restriction on access to the network could be perceived as an infringement on public freedoms, thus complicating efforts to regulate or curb the promotion of these drugs. Despite attempts to block harmful content, the effects are often limited unless there is concerted effort to immunize youth and users against the dangers posed by such sites, which may include not only digital drugs but also pornography, terrorism promotion, racist propaganda, and other societal harms.

- **Lack of religious and moral restraint in the individual:**Adherence to religious and moral teachings significantly influences individual behavior, particularly regarding activities that could harm oneself or society. A devout individual, deeply committed to their faith, typically avoids behaviors that could impair their mental faculties or corrupt their senses. For such individuals, there exists a clear dichotomy between the path of righteousness and the path of sin, with no intersection between the two. This separation reinforces their avoidance of harmful substances or activities, including the use of digital drugs. (Jubairi, 2015, p. 581).

- **Associating with Bad Company:** Social influence among youths plays a crucial role in their behavioral choices, whether these influences are positive, leading to beneficial outcomes, or negative, resulting in detrimental effects. Particularly in the context of digital drug use, some young individuals actively seek to involve their peers in such activities, measuring their own success by their ability to do so. This phenomenon has been well-documented in psychological and sociological research, which identifies curiosity and peer pressure as primary drivers for initial experimentation with digital drugs, often framed as a form of emotional bonding among friends. (Jubairi, 2015, p. 583).

- **Use of Digital Drugs for Entertainment:**The recreational use of digital drugs is increasingly becoming a part of Western culture. Despite its illegal status, it remains largely unprohibited by societal norms, indicating a disconnect between legal regulations and cultural acceptance. (Al-Hajjar, 1998, p. 182).

- **Feeling of Emptiness and Void:** Research indicates that a significant number of adolescents who lack a meaningful occupation or fail to value their time are particularly vulnerable to addiction. This susceptibility often stems from an underlying sense of emptiness or boredom, making such individuals easy targets for substance abuse, including digital drugs. (Jubairi, 2015, p. 583).

- **Travel and Influence by Foreign Nationals:**The exposure to different cultures and lifestyles, particularly in environments with minimal supervision, contributes to the awareness and experimentation with digital drugs among youths. Travel abroad often exposes young people to various temptations and recreational activities where digital drugs are more accessible, especially in private settings.

- **Availability of Excessive Money:** Financial affluence can sometimes lead to reckless spending among youths, including expenditures on luxury items and recreational activities. This financial freedom also provides opportunities to experiment with new forms of entertainment, including digital drugs, often driven by curiosity and a desire for novel experiences. (Jubairi, 2015, p. 584).

- **Personal and Family Social Issues:** Family dynamics play a significant role in the behavioral tendencies of young individuals. A turbulent family environment, characterized by discord among parents, divorce, or neglect, can lead youths to seek solace in alternative experiences, such as digital drugs. The lack of stable parental figures or emotional support within the family often pushes these individuals toward such harmful coping mechanisms.

- **Desire to Imitate:** In their quest for self-affirmation and to prematurely display signs of masculinity, some youths mimic adult behaviors, particularly those associated with the internet, to project an image of maturity. This often includes imitating Western habits and lifestyles, driven by a desire to embody what they perceive as masculine traits or sophisticated behaviors.

- **Spread of False Ideas about Digital Drugs:** Misconceptions about digital drugs prevail among some users who believe that these substances induce joy and

pleasure. Contrary to these beliefs, the reality is that digital drugs often lead to long-term misery and sadness. The social implications are significant, extending beyond job abandonment and poor social interactions to a broader disconnection from family and friends. Additionally, those with vested interests in promoting these drugs exploit these misconceptions, spreading false information to attract and ensnare new users by any available means. (Jubairi, 2015, p. 585)

- **Compensating for Lack of Emotional Containment:** A notable number of individuals turn to digital drugs as a result of feeling emotionally unsupported and rejected by their families and relatives. This lack of emotional security and containment drives them to seek solace in the virtual world, where digital drugs offer an escape from reality.

- **Ease of Access to Promoting Sites:** In today's digital age, the virtual world is a vast, largely unregulated space where nearly anything is accessible with minimal oversight, except what is directly regulated by authorities. This openness makes cybercrimes, especially those involving privacy breaches and system interference, difficult to detect and prove. The challenge of proving such crimes often provides a false hope of escaping punishment. Limited supervision, the ineffectiveness of existing laws and regulations concerning digital privacy, and the protection of certain confidential user accounts hinder regulatory efforts. Authorities often find themselves in a reactive position, only able to block or shut down sites after the damage has been done. (Jubairi, 2015, p. 586)

5- Effects of Using Digital Drugs:

Reports and studies have highlighted various psychological effects associated with the use of digital drugs, including involuntary screaming, muscle spasms, nervous twitching, and body tremors experienced during listening sessions. Users may also suffer from poor concentration, a disconnection from reality, decreased work performance, and academic failures.

More severe symptoms include hallucinations, feelings of persecution, and intense paranoia, with some individuals believing they are being chased by those intent on harming them. Medical interventions, such as the administration of sedatives to reduce spasms, are sometimes necessary, as these conditions can lead to the breakdown of psychological defense mechanisms or even death.

40

Furthermore, prolonged exposure to high-decibel sounds and intense vibrations can cause auditory malfunctions, leading to hearing loss, particularly if users repeatedly increase their dosage in pursuit of elusive euphoric effects. (Al-Sadiq, Muhammad, p. 333)

Additionally, individuals suffering from addiction to digital drugs may experience:

- A profound disconnection from reality coupled with an incessant pursuit of euphoria.

- Adverse effects on the auditory system due to exposure to unhealthy and varying frequencies, resulting in tremors and a lack of balance.

- A noticeable decline in vitality and the depletion of positive, productive energies.

- Psychological dependency, which stands out as a significant detriment stemming from the use of digital drugs. (Jaloul, Farhat, 2020, p. 75).

Conclusion:

Fundamental to human existence is the need for security and safety in all facets of life. Yet, with the relentless advancements in technology and information, human interests and inclinations have evolved. In this era of rapid knowledge expansion, individuals endeavor to stay abreast of every innovation. Despite the myriad benefits this knowledge provides, and the burgeoning use of social networks and internet platforms, there has been an incremental rise in technological dependency.

This dependency often escalates into a robust addiction, leading to deviant behaviors and criminal activities, notably with the emergence of digital drugs. These substances, distinct from traditional drugs, comprise audio clips or sound files and have profound effects on the individual, familial, and societal levels.

Despite ongoing discourse, and varying degrees of agreement or disagreement regarding this issue, the prevalence of digital drug use has intensified within society, posing substantial risks to both individuals and communities. This is particularly concerning given the scarcity of empirical studies and statistical data on the phenomenon.

This gap in research has propelled numerous scholars, especially within Algerian society, to examine the extent of this issue rigorously. Understanding its causes and consequences

is imperative for scientifically elucidating the phenomenon and is crucial for devising a preventive strategy. Additionally, proposing suitable counseling and therapeutic interventions is essential to effectively combat and mitigate the issue in the future.

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