

# The Digital Sanctuary: A Comprehensive Literature Review on Chinese Parenting Styles, Attachment Theory, and the Neurobiological Architecture of Adolescent Gaming Addiction

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## Abstract:

The present literature review synthesizes the psychosocial and neurobiological predisposing factors of Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD) in modern China exhaustively. The study tries to balance between the idea of training (chiao shun) parenting and the Western theory of attachment in order to suggest the hypothesis that gaming addiction can be used to balance the lack of needs (need dissatisfaction). Based on the analysis of the 7th International Conference on Behavioral Addictions (ICBA 2022) and S2ORC interdisciplinary datasets, the review traces the shift between the external pressure on parents to internal neurobiological vulnerability. The main argument is that the “digital sanctuary” is a response to the environmental setting, which puts instrumental usefulness above emotional relatedness.

**Keywords:** Internet Gaming Disorder(IGD), Chinese Parenting(Chiao Shun), Attachment Theory, Neurobiological Mechanism, Self-Determination Theory(SDT)

## I. Introduction

The Socio-Cultural Crucible of the “Instrumental Child”

Rapid economic transition in China has also been more disadvantaging to only-child generations. In this topography, development in adolescence is often reduced to the one-dimensional measure of academic performance. Gaming disorder has been a result of the culture of success at all costs. The modern

literature, such as a systematic review by Kuss and Griffiths (2012), has considered the phenomenon of addiction as a complex biopsychosocial problem instead of a vulnerability of the willpower.

The instrumental child is the term for the adolescent that can gain values within the family system based on the fact that he can serve the purpose of social mobility. When this pressure continues, adolescents are forced to experience self-extinction as they repress their own desires to fit what the expectations

of parents are. In contemporary large-scale data processing models, such as the S2ORC (Semantic Scholar Open Research Corpus) that enables scholars to make easily available their linkage of sociocultural constraints and behavioral outcomes, it has been demonstrated that contextual stressors are significant predictors of IGD (Lo et al., 2020). This review leaves the “bad game” story and examines the “cold home” story.

## II. The Cultural Paradox: Authoritarianism vs. Training (Chiao Shun)

In order to comprehend Chinese gaming addiction, it is imperative to comprehend the particular structure of Chinese parenting. The western authoritarian parenting style (high control, low warmth) would not reflect Chinese family intricacy.

### 2.1 The Concept of “Training” and Conditional Regard

The cultural concept of chiao shun (training) introduced by Chao (1994) is a combination of high control and high involvement and devotion. In the contemporary society, which is highly competitive, commitment tends to turn into a conditional regard. According to the ICBA 2022 proceedings, the concept of conditional regard causes parental love to appear as a commodity, which can be acquired by performing.

### 2.2 The Deprivation of “Restoration Time”

The vital requirement, which IGD literature neglects, is the biological requirement of restitution time. The Chinese academia of Gaokao brainwashed adolescents with intellectual work. According to recent S2ORC studies, gaming provides so-called high-efficiency recovery. Games offer a dopaminergic reprieve to a wearied brain that is too tired to engage in social or physical rest that involves intensive effort because the reward of games is immediate and effort-free.

## III. Attachment Theory: The Invisible Tether and the Secure Base

This review has its psychological anchor on attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969). The quality of bonds formed in the early years is the one that defines the adolescent Internal Working Model of self and other (IWM).

### 3.1 Insecure Attachment as a Predictor of IGD

Having an emotionally dismissive parent who focuses his or her interest on achieving results and not on feelings

will leave the child without a secure base. Schimmenti et al. (2014) discovered the online usage of the internet by teenagers to substitute the emotional bond because of poor bonds developed as a result of dismissive parenting.

I Avoidant Attachment & Numbing: To the avoidant child, the game is a predictable enthraller. Emerging programs do not demand any vulnerability in emotions, as the child is afraid of it.

I Ambivalent Attachment & The Belongingness Deficit: The presented data at ICBA 2022 highlights the supposed concept of a model, specifically the so-called compensatory model, which suggests that the existence of ambivalent-style attachment will drive a person to fill a deep-rooted need to seek regular social validation using the virtual avatars (Billieux et al., 2022).

### 3.2 The “Safe Proximity” of the Digital World

To a child whose attachment has been broken, the world of the Internet provides him or her with safe proximity. They can be close in a MOBA or MMORPG without being met with rejection or loss of face associated with the mentioned parents.

## IV. Neurobiological Mechanisms: The Architecture of Escape

Mostly the brain is influenced by parenting techniques. Addiction is not a vice but a neurobiological adjustment to a situation that is intolerable.

### 4.1 The Reward Circuit: The Nucleus Accumbens

Ko et al. (2009) established that addicted gamers have hyperactivated nucleus accumbens when being subjected to gaming cues. The game produces a dopamine hit after every 30 seconds for a child who might wait several years before being accepted into the university. This real-life lack of competence signaling makes this direct feedback loop addictive on a neurological level to the child.

### 4.2 The Braking System: Prefrontal Cortex (PFC) Impairment

This is caused by chronic stress due to parental pressure leading to an increase in cortisol, which is neurotoxic to the prefrontal cortex (PFC). The brain, as the CEO, is known as the PFC, which manages the impulses and executive functioning. This neuroimaging symposium of ICBA 2022 refers to this as an inhibitory control deficiency, and it implies that the child cannot biologically prevent playing. Stress in the household over a long period of time deteriorates the stress-resistant brakes of the brain.

### 4.3 Negative Reinforcement and the “Amygdala Hijack”

Gaming is indeed a form of negative reinforcement; we do not play a game because we enjoy the game but because we enjoy the silence that it offers. It suppresses the brain center of fear, the amygdala, that is always on edge due to failure at school or not meeting parental expectations.

## V. Genre as a Mirror: Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

But why is it that one child will prefer League of Legends and the other will prefer Minecraft? The genre shows the psychological deficiency of the child. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), well-being is determined by:

1 Autonomy: It is in the form of the sandbox games that child in a schedule-driven world can use to create their own reality.

1 Competence: FPS games are a mastery experience that a school system would name as average. The S2ORC corpus demonstrates that academic self-esteem decreases in the case of skill-based gaming since the gaming process is the sole source of efficacy.

1 Relatedness: MMORPGs provide a “digital tribe.” In the case of the “Only Child,” the guild is his/her lost sibling group.

## VI. Discussion: Moving Beyond “Digital Detox”

There is a synthesis between cultural and neurobiological evidence to indicate that existing intervention programs in China, typically incorporating boot camps or forced abstinence, are flawed. These strategies apply the dictatorial authority that created an addiction.

### 6.1 Relational Repair as the Primary Cure

The only permanent remedy, in this case, is to make the “home warmer” in case the addiction is a sort of stretch of a digital safe haven that was constructed to avoid the cold bedroom. It has been shown that mindful parenting and empathic affirmation have better functionality than routers and firewalls. The aim is to convert the household, where the house is where one can always be studied, to a psychological refuge.

### 6.2 The Role of Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

The consequences of the future interventions should be aimed at educating adolescents to learn how to control emotions inside. Parents usually inhibit emotions, and children never get to know reappraisal. Their emotions are

controlled with the help of the game. In order to reinstate relationships between parents and children, parents once again need to be external regulators of the children.

### VII. Conclusion: A Call for Cultural Transformation

The gaming addiction amid Chinese teens is a belligerent ringing of a coal mine of a results-driven society. In the review, the ability to access digital space as a haven of safety is revealed to be a rational, albeit maladaptive, reaction to the utilitarian society.

Future Directions: We need to use large-scale data such as S2ORC to carry out longitudinal research that is used to follow “Relational Interventions.” Do communication styles of a father influence the restoration of the prefrontal cortex of a child? Evidence suggests yes. The final IGD solution is not technical. A child is not a tool to boast about his or her family or family prestige. A child is only a human being with an innate, non-negotiable desire for an unconditional belonging.

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