

The study of Psychometric Properties of the *Internet Addiction Test – Short Form* as a contribution for a conceptualization of Internet Addiction in Adolescence

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Abstract

Introduction: The expansion of technology during the last two decades and the current COVID-19 pandemic have dramatically increased the use of Internet for socialization and gaming, raising the prevalence and severity of Internet Addiction (IA). Alarming high prevalence of IA has been found among adolescents in different part of the world. Nowadays, the most used tool to investigate IA is the *Internet Addiction Test* (IAT), of which different short versions have been developed. However, there is a less agreement on its construct structure, which some studies indicate as unidimensional and others as a two-factor structure, in line with the current debate on the conceptualization of addictions as one-dimensional or multi-dimensional constructs. The aim of the present study was to investigate the psychometric properties of a six-item version of IAT in a sample of Italian adolescents. *Methods:* Participants were 2290 high school students (60% male; *mean age* = 16.43, *SD* = 1.19). *Results:* Confirmatory factor analysis highlighted the two-factor structure had a better fit to the data in comparison to the unidimensional one. Moreover, validity analysis considering criterion variables, such as problematic use of smartphone and videogames, showed a different weight of the two IAT – SF dimensions, with a greater explanatory capacity for the subscale *Social Problems*, adding support for the multidimensional conceptualization of IA. *Discussion:* Results confirm that IAT- SF is a valid brief assessment tool to investigate the multidimensional construct of IA in adolescents. Moreover, this study provides a contribution to the current debate on conceptualization of addictions.