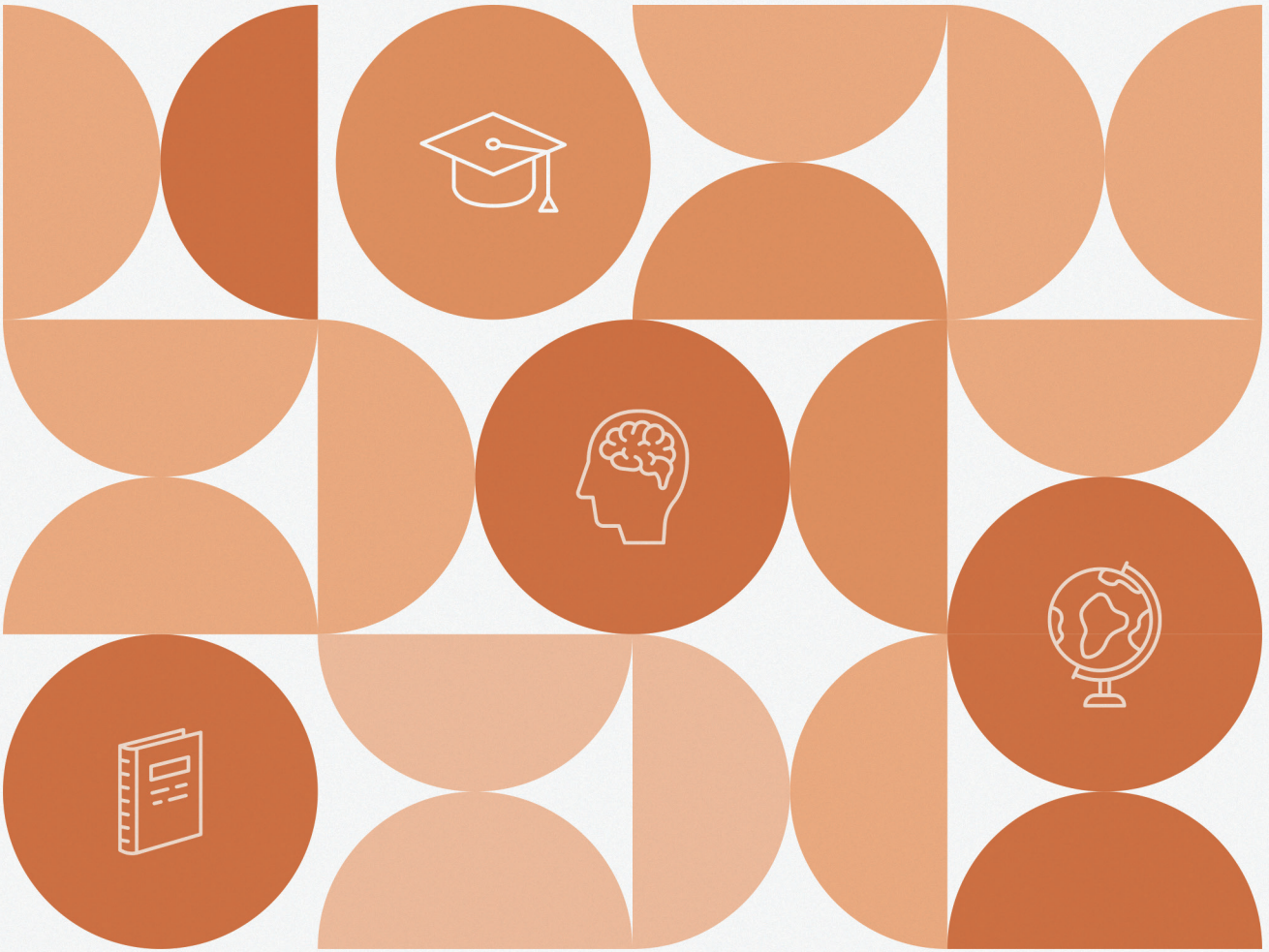


# Technology Overuse Amongst Adolescents in Qatar – Preliminary Report



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Excessive technology usage, called informally as Digital Addiction, is on the rise whether for legitimate reasons or due to a problematic experience. Adolescents excessive technology use is claimed to impact their health, education and family relationship. However, the majority of research took an adult perspective to the issue while the perspective of adolescents themselves was not a focus. We hypothesize that the problem is bilateral where parenting style and parents' technology usage may impact their kids' behavior in relation to technology use. We also question the type of arguments used by parents when trying to handle the issue in their adolescent kids to whether it is substantiated with facts, persuasive and convincing or being emotive and coercive. We also revisit the relation between excessive internet use on one hand and adolescents' health, education and family relationships on the other. The reasons for revisiting that relationship is due to the cultural impact including family structure and living styles and environment and also due to the new changes COVID 19 has imposed on all such as the increased reliance on technology for work and education. With the scarcity of validated and specialized approaches to combat the issue, whether in prevention, harm minimization or treatment, we also study the services provided to families, their content, public attitude to them and evidence of success. This project focuses on the population of Qatar to answer these questions.

In this interim report, we provide initial findings of this project related to the parents' views of the issues. We report on the preliminary analysis of a series of interviews we have conducted with parents in Qatar about their adolescents' technology usage. We then report on the descriptive analysis of a survey that we disseminated amongst parents in Qatar about the issue.

The results showed that the issue is widespread, and most families needed help in dealing with it. Approaches used by parents to combat the problem are yet basic and mainly based on limiting time, taking off devices and distracting kids with alternative activities. Most families frequently have serious arguments with their adolescent kids about their excessive technology usage. At the same time, a considerable part of the parents who completed the survey exhibit themselves symptoms of problematic internet usage and this positively correlated with their kids score in the same behavior, i.e. the higher the behavior in parents, the higher it is in their kids. There does not seem to be awareness of available services to deal with the issue in the country despite the need for help.

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