

**Review of  
“Internet Addiction among Cyberkids in China”  
by Qiaolei Jiang**

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**Internet Addiction Among Cyberkids in China: Risk Factors and Intervention Strategies by Qiaolei Jiang, 2019, Singapore: Springer, 199 pp., €84.99(h/c), ISBN 978-981-13-3791-8.**

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Internet-related addictions constitute a large share of the global cost of mental health-related disorders, diseases, treatment and issues that are estimated to be worth more than \$2.5 trillion in 2019. While focusing on the People’s Republic of China (or mainland China) the 2019 publication of *“Internet Addiction Among Cyberkids in China: Risk Factors and Intervention Strategies”* by Qiaolei Jiang is indeed a welcome addition in the fields of mental health, cyber-psychology, behavioural disorder, and internet addiction treatment.

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Originally written as part of her PhD thesis (2007-2011) in the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Jiang has skilfully consulted and implemented a combination of qualitative, quantitative and ethnographic data, as part of her research methodology and sources. In fact, it can be argued that Jiang's arduous and obstinate determination to collect and examine primary data (principally those she collected from a number of Chinese Newspapers, dated between 1998-2009); as well as consultation of hard-to-get secondary sources for her study (particularly 2005-2010 data collected by 'Health Care Professionals') is not only commendable, but also what makes the book unique and exceptional from a marketing perspective. The combination and inclusion of these primary and secondary data within her literature (especially when referring to risk theory and analysis) and theoretical framework is also remarkable and adds much value to the contents and strength of arguments within the eight chapters of the book.

Then again, "*Internet Addiction among Cyberkids in China*" can in effect be considered as the largest comprehensive study to this date published in English, on the persistence of internet addiction amongst the youth as an emerging health risk in mainland China; as well as the most comprehensive in its treatment, prevention and recovery there. Undeniably, mainland China's growing internet connection and popularity combined with its extensive internet addiction population and treatment programs are noteworthy, topical and cannot be ignored. Having overtaken the United States in the overall internet connections back in 2008, a recent 2019 report found that with more than 850 million people (about 21% of the world internet users) mainland China is home to the largest online community in the world. In consequence, the book and its findings enriches available literature on the internet addiction and its treatment in mainland China, and can too shed light (or lead to further multidisciplinary research) particularly on the Chinese youth, governance, policies, political developments/infrastructures, challenges, economic burdens and the impact of social media outlets there. Thus, it can be argued that from a comparative and a multidisciplinary study (including from a social-sciences perspective) the choice of mainland China by Jiang is indeed of much value and global relevance.

In the book, Jiang (viii, xviii, xi, 8, 142), and a number of scholars contributing to the forward, identify and refer in passing on the similarity of China to its Asian neighbours in its internet addiction age groups and reasons that differs considerably to that of the United States and other Western nations. This can certainly be an area that can be further expanded and explored by the author to complement the study. Certainly, as far as Iranian internet addiction is concerned, there is much

similarity with China on its rational and the affected age groups; while much it can learn from China's extensive treatment program such as those discussed, studied and analysed by Jiang.

"*Internet Addiction Among Cyberkids in China*" is highly recommended to both academics and students particularly within cyber-psychology and those looking at the subject from a multidisciplinary perspective. It should; however, be cautioned that much of the book and its research is derived from Jiang's 2011 PhD dissertation and thus its composition, context and timeline/data reflects and reads like that. I do not consider this as a weakness, but rather hope that in the future edition of the book (if any) its writing composition and style adjust to reflect that reality. On the other hand, to most unfamiliar with contemporary Chinese history, politics and developments the inclusion, or references, in the book to that of 'Greater China' undoubtedly create confusion and misunderstanding. The author/publisher in later editions of the book should thus omit data, statistics, graphs, and tables on Taiwan, Macau and Hong Kong (referred by the author as the 'Greater China') since the focus of the book and the content analysis is just on mainland China (a fact that she pointed out on pages 2, 55, 59, and 64). This too includes avoiding single sources for facts/statistics and views; as well as the expansion of secondary sources in order to further corroborate their validity (such as over-relying on information from the 'China Internet Network Information Centre' or CNNIC, particularly in Chapter 3 of the book).

Later editions of the book or publications by the author could indubitably benefit from post-2011 and more recent primary and secondary sources and literature on the topic and related issues (especially on the impact of social media, rural-urban divide and the recent controversy surrounding mainland China's treatment programs).

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### **Biography**

Maziar Mozaffari Falarti (PhD) is an academic in the Department of South, East Asia and Oceania in the Faculty of World Studies, University of Tehran. He has taught, researched and published in an eclectic array of subjects in political science and Asian studies.