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The Appearance of Computer/Internet Dependency in Turkey

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to reveal the prevalence of computer/Internet dependency in Turkey in the light of the existing research. With the rapid growth of technology, communication technologies have rapidly penetrated everyday life. More and more people express themselves with different types of technology, such as the computer and the Internet [19]. The most important communication tools that have emerged with the rapid development of technology are computers and the Internet. According to the Internet usage statistics of the world (Global Web Index, 2014), in 2014, 34% (Global Web Index, 2015) in 2015, and 34% (Global Web Index, 2015) in 2013 of the world total population in 2013 (IWS 2013) (Global Web Index, 2016) reported using the Internet. Internet users in Turkey increased by 1,225% between 2000 and 2008.

Keywords: Dependency, Internet dependency, computer dependency.

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1.Introduction

The most important communication tools that emerged with the rapid development of technology are computers and the Internet. The Internet is a concept that is formed by combining the words Inter (national) and Net (work) as the word 'international network' or 'general network', according to the Turkish Language Institute. According to the generalisation of the Ministry of National Education (2004), it is defined as 'a set of resources established between multiple local networks that enable millions of networks in the world to communicate with each other within a common protocol framework and share each other's resources'. It is emphasised that computer and the Internet are the most effective communication tools today, and it is seen that people change their lives in many different dimensions [13, 14].

According to the Internet usage statistics of the world (Global Web Index, 2014) in 2014, 34% (Global Web Index, 2015) in 2015, and 34% (Global Web Index, 2015) 2013 World Population (IWS, 2013) (Global Web Index, 2016) reported Internet usage. The number of Internet users in Turkey increased by 1,225% between 2000 and 2008. The percentage of the number of Internet users in our country is 46% in 2014, 36 million people have an active Facebook account, one person spends 4.9 hours in a day on personal computer and 1.9 hours (Global Web Index, 2014) via mobile devices. In 2015, 49% of active Internet users, 52% of active social media accounts, 80% of mobile social networking accounts were reached (Global Web Index, 2015). However, according to the data of 2016, it is reported that there are 2,307 billion active social media users in the world, 85% of the reported number consists of social media via mobile devices. The same report shows that 58% of the total population is based on the year 2016 of our country, and 42 million of Internet users are actively involved in social media. 85% of these users have reached social media from mobile devices. According to statistics for 2016, 77% of Internet users in Turkey are online every day and 16% are connected to the Internet at least once a week. 51% of the web traffic is on laptops and desktops, 46% on mobile devices and 4% on tablets. When you look at the most used social media platforms in Turkey, Facebook occupies the first place at 32%, Facebook with 24% with WhatsApp, 20% with Facebook Messenger, 17% with Twitter, 16% with Instagram, followed by Google+, Skype, LinkedIn, Viber and Vine (Global Web Index, 2016). These data show that the number of Internet users in Turkey is increasing rapidly and that the individuals in the country are making way for being a digital generation (new millennium students). The students of the new millennium (digital generation) are used to describe the 'generation' of the 21st century children and young people who start their day with modern technology, in-the-loop environments and new technologies [4]. It has been mentioned that there are two basic features of this generation: Internet access at home and the use of computers in the past 5 years or more [12]. The research has shown that 66.7% of these digital children are not monitored for Internet use. In addition, of 61.6% of these children, 59.8% don't read their books, the Internet usage was controlled and the children who use Internet for educational purposes had high reading habits, in other words, children who did not use problem Internet [8].

Another research was on those who have spent more time in their social life because of the time they spend on the Internet, escaping from the problems of the Internet, depression, anxiety, responsibility and desperation. High-school graduates use computer and the Internet as communication and leisure activities. It is reported that primary school graduates show computer-dependent tendencies because they use computer and the Internet according to the requirements of the information society [14]. Adolescence is defined as a period of maturation in terms of biological, psychological, mental and social aspects, and is generally expressed as covering the period between the ages of 12 and 20. This period, which has not reached sufficient psychological status, is shown to be the most risky period in terms of Internet dependency, compared to other developmental periods [2]. This is because both the development period and the weakening of the control power of parents in this period make it difficult to restrict activities in the virtual environment. Adolescents generally enjoy communicating online during this period [19]. It is reported that the age group of 16–24 has the highest rate of computer and Internet usage.

In another research conducted on the subject, it has been reported that the 8–18 age group spends an average of 5–6 hours per day using mass media such as computer and the Internet [11].

With developing technology, activities for leisure time evaluation have increased in both quantity and quality. Traditional media such as books, newspapers and magazines, which were used for entertainment, information and leisure, are now based on technological tools such as television, computers and the Internet. The concept of Internet dependency was first proposed by Goldberg in 1995 and the first study on the subject was carried out by Young in 1996 [1].

High-school graduates use computers and the Internet for communication and leisure activities. It is reported that primary school graduates have computer-dependent tendencies because of the requirements of information society [14].

Dependence, which was conceptually defined in 1964 by the World Health Organization (WHO), included the subheadings of physical and psychological dependence. Dependency is used in the sense of a versatile relationship in which an individual has a continuity and sameness with the object of his choice. Addiction is defined as the failure to control or control an item/behaviour and this item is a negative condition. Addiction is mostly used in the literature as ‘addiction’ and ‘dependence’. Addiction can develop not only for a substance (cigarette, alcohol ...) but also for behaviour [9, 15]. Behavioural dependence is defined as the abnormal appearance of a certain behaviour and its frequent occurrence, the loss of balance in the psychological, physical, social structure and functions of the person, deterioration of regulation and inability to adapt to the environment.

The common feature of both chemical and behavioural (non-chemical) dependence is that behaviour or action cannot be controlled and cannot be tolerated despite its negative consequences [9]. However, it is mentioned that dependence, treatment, but addictive substance has the ability to relapse rapidly and severely when it is used again [15].

Behavioural dependencies include eating, gambling, etc. Technological dependencies are established on human–machine interaction. Individuals can be active in passive aspects in technology dependencies. According to the Turkey youth profile research conducted by Gur *et al.* [12], it is determined that one of the three most frequent activities of young people in their free time is to participate in social media networks [12]. This concept, introduced for the first time in the international literature with the term ‘Internet addiction’, is defined as the most recent problem with the use of the Internet, impulse control disorders and potentially more dangerous [16]. The criterion of problematic Internet usage is that, even though you are not online, you constantly think about the activities that are done on the Internet, dreaming about it, needing more Internet every time each time, spending more time each time on the Internet, changing the mood while using the Internet and constantly lying about activities on the Internet [20, 21].

There is a significant difference between Internet use time and Internet use time between 5 and 9 hours and 1 and 4 hours per day, 40 hours/week [18]. Internet usage increases as the Internet use period increases. Again, in a study conducted in Taiwan, it is seen that the majority of young students who go to Internet cafes are more common in males, where Internet dependency is observed in these students [2]. In another study conducted in Turkey, it was emphasised that 77.37% of those who go to Internet cafes are children and those who go to Internet cafes only go for entertainment [17].

Healthy Internet use is to use the Internet for a specific purpose, within a reasonable period of time, without feeling cognitive or behavioural discomfort. Healthy Internet users can distinguish real-life communication from Internet communication [5]. However, many people, especially children and adolescents, use the Internet in an unhealthy manner and face problems. The most important of these problems is the opposite of ‘Internet dependency’ or ‘Internet usage problem’. Internet addiction is a type of technology addiction that manifests itself as being unable to limit the duration of Internet use, to continue to use despite the social or academic harm and to feel anxiety when Internet use is limited. At first, children and adolescents read the colourful world of web pages, rich information archive, multimedia presentations, the opportunity to communicate with different people are

attractive, the quality of the computer over time and the programmes in it become insignificant and the only requirement is to have Internet access programmes. Over time, being knowledgeable about using a computer or using a computer/Internet, it is only left to want to be at the computer [19]. The use of unhealthy Internet also reveals 'Internet addiction' in children and adolescents. It is stated that the people who enter the Internet between 8 and 40 hours per week are evaluated as 'dependent' [10]. Young (1996) reports that economic, academic, occupational and social problems emerge in individuals who are addicted to the Internet, and that if the individuals who are addicted to the Internet are young and children, the effect may be more destructive and lasting. For this reason, it is very important to determine Internet identification, identification and taking measures for children and young people. It has been suggested that research works, Internet addiction/use of pathological Internet/problematic Internet use increase very rapidly and that it is a necessity to develop preventive, preventive and therapeutic interventions. It is suggested that the relations between Internet use and mental health of adolescents should be revealed in the generation of healthy generations [3, 9].

A study by Yilmaz (2004) reported that the computer addiction trends were the highest among computer users for 3 hours/day and more, less than 2–3 hours/day, and the least computer-dependent tendency among those using an hour and less. In the study conducted by [6], it was found that 18.89% of university students were Internet addicted and they used Internet for 2.14 hours on average per day.

It has been reported that the Internet and computer usage are related to certain family functions in this study and it is reported that education/training should be arranged for parents/students in this context, developmental characteristics of students, prevention strategies of computer/Internet addiction and use of healthy computer–Internet should be included in these studies.

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